

NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY (NCA)

Election Climate Report No.11

Week ending 5 March 2005.

The Election Climate Reports are produced by the NCA in order to provide information on the prevailing climate for citizen participation in the forthcoming Parliamentary Election. The NCA has already communicated its condemnation of the constitutional framework under which the elections are being conducted. The Report is a consolidated statement of the reports sent in by a national network of community monitors.

The community reports sample a number of electoral "atmospherics" (described below), which aim to provide a clear description of the state of affairs prevailing in any one constituency:

- *Freedom of Association;*
- *Freedom of Assembly;*
- *Freedom of Movement;*
- *Freedom of Expression;*
- *Incidence of Political Violence;*
- *Disputes over electoral procedures and electoral irregularities;*
- *Occurrence of voter education;*
- *Use of food as a political weapon.*

The reports sample 18 critical indicators and hence provide a simple score for any one constituency, which we have termed the "Electoral Irregularity" [EI] score: the higher the EI score, the worse the electoral climate in a constituency.

Overview

The **EI** ratings in this second report on Bulawayo are lower than in the first, with the range between [5] and [13]. The mean **EI** rating for the first week of March [9] has decreased on February [10], indicating that the election climate has improved slightly worsened. This is shown in the figure overleaf.

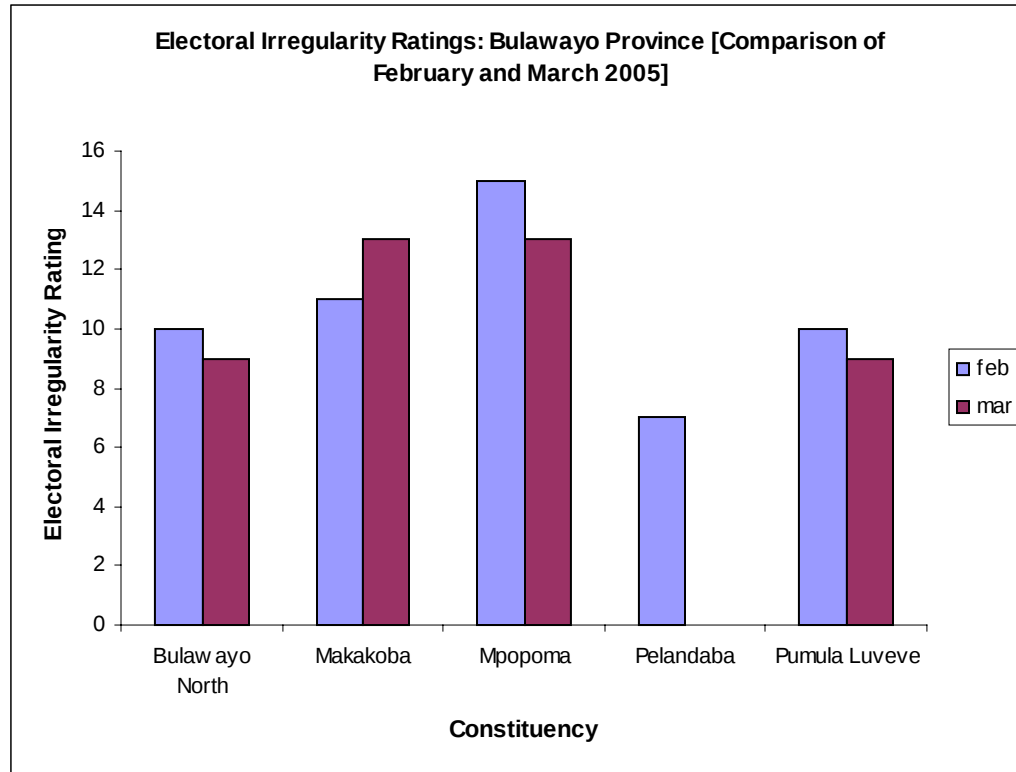
There are 4 constituencies with a rating of less than 10; Pumula Luveve [9], Bulawayo North [9], Bulawayo South [7], and Nkulumane [5]. Makokoba [13] has worsened slightly since the reports in February.

The political climate in Bulawayo has not improved in the last week as full citizen participation cannot be guaranteed, and interferences with basic freedoms continue. Only Nkulumane reported that the freedoms of association and assembly were not infringed upon, as everyone was able to put up posters and wear their insignia. There were no incidents of residents being forced to attend political meetings. It was stated that Bulawayo residents are not able to exercise their freedoms of expression and movement as these are curbed by ZanuPF supporters, the police, and the militia, as they beat up and harass them.

There are some reports of politically motivated violence in the form of assaults, unlawful arrests and torture, but these however were not reported in every constituency. There were reports of gender-based violence where women were indecently assaulted and forced to go to party bases, but these were few. However, there were many reports of hate speech and intimidation, as well as inter- and intra-party violence. Militia bases were said to exist in 4 constituencies reported on.

Some disagreements over electoral procedures were reported, and there was slightly more voter education reported, with this being done by the ESC in two constituencies. Reports of food distribution being based on what party one belongs to (Zanu PF) were in all constituencies except in Bulawayo South and Nkulumane.

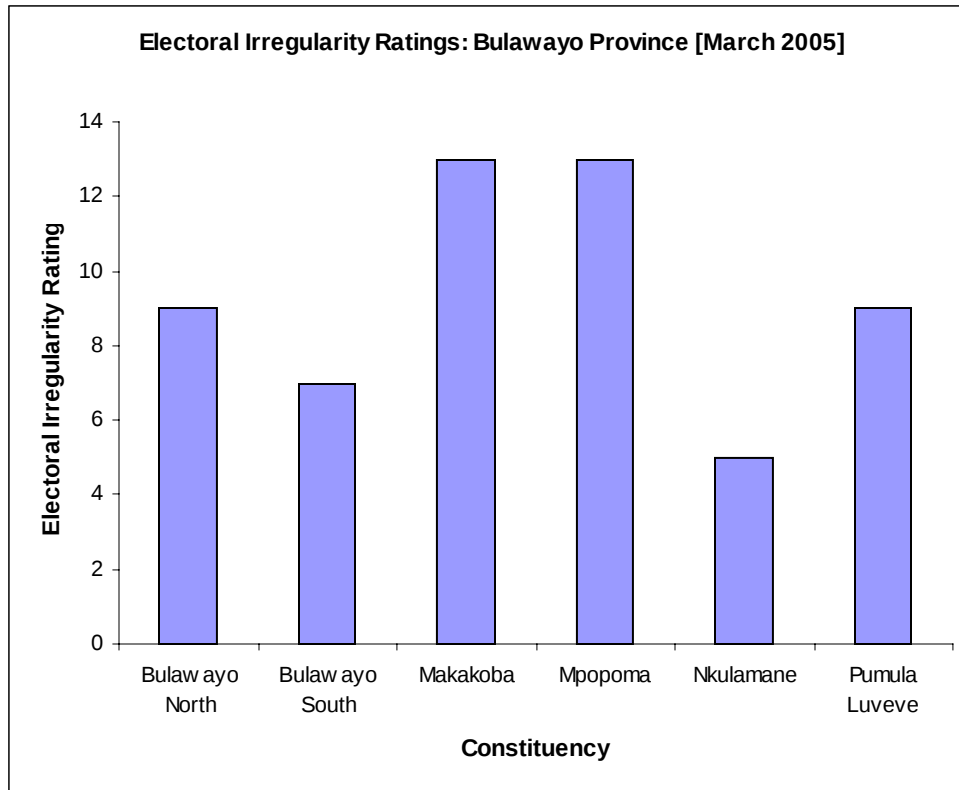
The NCA calls upon all concerned parties – government, the political parties, and the civics concerned with peace building – to take immediate steps to investigate these allegations, and to take firm steps to correct all irregularities confirmed.



Bulawayo

Infringements of the freedom of association were reported in most constituencies, and these affected mainly the opposition, as they are the one being prevented from putting on their party regalia and putting up their posters. In Mpopoma, however, it was reported that ZanuPF cannot exercise this freedom. In Pumula Luveve, it was alleged that MDC members putting or distributing posters or flyers were arrested. As regards freedom of assembly, it was reported that ZanuPF is forcing people to attend political meetings and rallies. There were no reports of any other party forcing people to meetings.

All constituencies reported interference with freedom of movement. The police, militia and ZanuPF supporters were reported to be interfering with the residents' movement within and out of the constituencies. In Nkulumane and Bulawayo North, the police are reported to be harassing people moving around in groups at night, beating these people up. In Makokoba, people are prevented from going to certain places in the constituency, which are allegedly ZanuPF controlled. There are reports of new residents moving in to the constituencies, and these reports mainly indicate the militia moving in. In Makokoba, it is reported that there are many new lodgers moving into the area, and this makes the residents nervous. In Pumula Luveve, a number of new people have been moved into new houses.



Again all constituencies reported interference with the freedom of expression: residents are reported to be harassed and threatened if they voice their opinions in public. It is reported that MDC members are afraid of AIPPA and also afraid of the State, as they might be intimidated later if they say what they truly feel. In Bulawayo South, it was reported that people are afraid as they have known colleagues that have disappeared after having said certain things. Reading of newspapers of your choice is not possible as in some areas there is only the Herald and if one is caught reading international newspapers they are serious consequences.

With politically motivated physical violence, a number of assaults were reported. In Nkulumane, there were victims reported that do not belong to any political party. In Bulawayo North, it was alleged that a man was beaten up because he was wearing an MDC T-shirt, whilst, in Bulawayo South, WOZA women were beaten up. These were the only three reports of physical violence, but there was gender-based violence in Bulawayo North, where an MDC supporter was indecently assaulted. In Makokoba, there was a report of forced attendance at a party base. Hate speech and intimidation were reported in most constituencies, and these were reported to be both from Zanu PF and the MDC. Militia bases were reported in ward 22 in Nkulumane, and, in Makokoba at Milikazi Primary School. Militia are also said to be based at Mpopoma. There were reports of inter- and intra-party violence involving both main parties: the MDC were said to be fighting in Makokoba, whilst ZanuPF were reported to be involved in Pumula Luveve, and Makokoba.

There were several reports of electoral disagreement where Zanu PF and the MDC have disagreed on election administration. This was reported in Mpopoma, Makokoba, and Bulawayo North. There were two reports of voter education being done by the ESC, in Nkulumane and Mpopoma. The political parties are also doing some, as are some civic organisations, even though they are apparently banned from doing so. Food as a political tool was being used in all but two constituencies, in Bulawayo North and South. In ward 3, Bulawayo North, ZanuPF was buying people drinks, beer and meat at a rally. In Nkulumane, it was reported that no other

officials was allowed to distribute food other than ZANU supporters, and it was reported that, in Pumula Luveve, food and money were given to the aged at Amhlope Secondary school.

Recommendations

There has been no improvement in the election climate in the past two weeks, and, in fact, the overall climate has worsened as the date for elections approaches. There is a pressing need to build a climate of peace and tolerance, and the NCA calls upon all organizations concerned with peace building to investigate these allegations, and to take immediate steps to rectify all problems identified.

Women's organisations should take steps to investigate the claims of abuse to women as a matter of urgency, as there are allegations of the ill treatment of women which are not receiving appropriate attention.

The National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) is a network of civic organizations and activists as a grouping of individual Zimbabwean citizens and civic organisations including, labour movements, student and youth groups, women's groups, churches, business groups and human rights organisations. It also includes political parties formed in 1997. These individuals and groups formed the NCA to campaign for constitutional reform after realising that the political, social and economic problems affecting Zimbabwe are mainly a result of the defective Lancaster House Constitution and can only be resolved through a new and democratic constitution.

A democratic Constitution is the basis of good governance and leads to social and economic development. Thus a democratic constitution leads to:

- *Free and fair elections*
- *Observance of and respect for fundamental human rights*
- *Respect of human rights*
- *Respect for rule of law and an accountable and responsive government.*

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Bulawayo Province [March 2005]

Constituency	Interference with Freedom of Association	Interference of Freedom of Assembly	Interference with Freedom of Movement	Interference with Freedom of Expression	Political Violence	Electoral Disagreements	Voter Education	Political use of food	Electoral Irregularity Rating
Bulawayo North	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	9
Bulawayo South	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	7
Makokoba	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	13
Mpopoma	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	13
Nkulumane	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	5
Pumula Luveve	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	9