



Zimbabwe
HUMAN RIGHTS
N G O F o r u m

POLITICAL VIOLENCE REPORT

January 2009

27 February 2009

A report by the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum

OVERVIEW

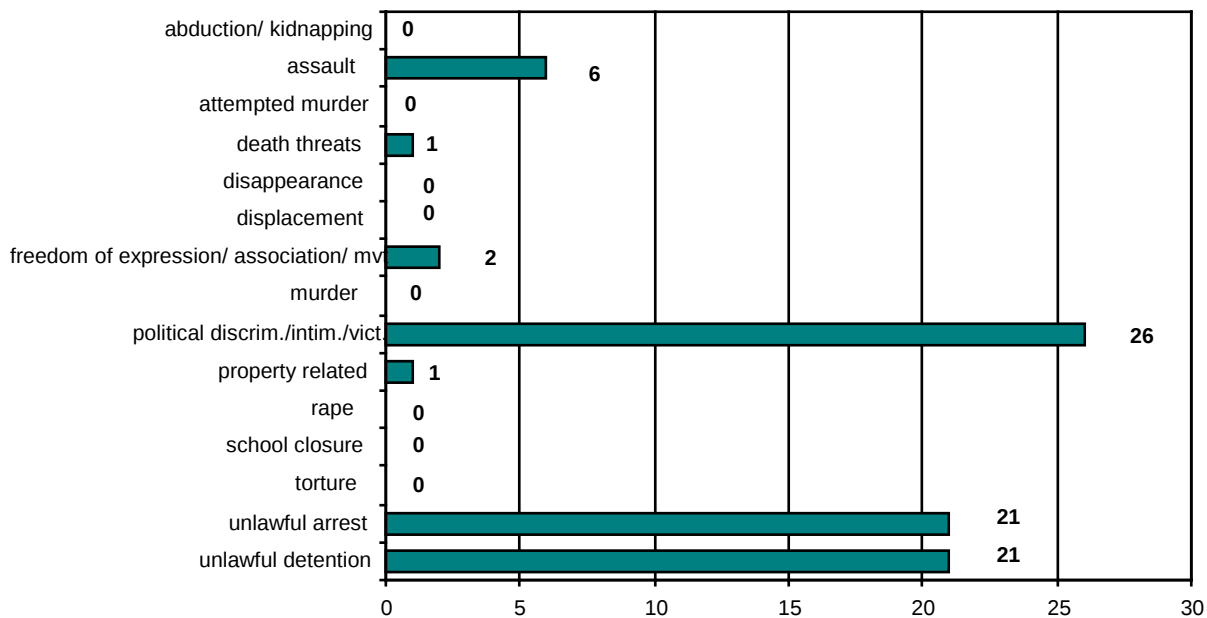
The month of January saw a marked decrease in the number of cases of politically motivated violence as compared to December 2008 as well as the months prior to the June 2008 Presidential Election Run-off. However, it is important to note that the figures of violations recorded in this report are not substantive as actual numbers of victims were not indicated in some of the incidences. The violence that characterised the month of January was mainly property-related reportedly perpetrated by members of the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) as compared to the inter-party violence that was characteristic of January 2008. This report documents the looting of traders' wares by soldiers in Chitungwiza as well as the assault of residents and looting of property in Masvingo. It is alleged that the soldiers, irked that the traders were selling their wares in foreign currency, demanded to see authorisation from the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) to sell goods in foreign currency. The City of Harare authorities are also reported to have had a scuffle with members of the ZNA and war veterans who had forcibly occupied flats belonging to the city authorities.

Members of the ZNA are also reported to have forcibly closed private schools that had opted to open on the dates originally proposed by the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture. This followed postponement of the opening date for schools. Furthermore, this report documents the raiding of an out-door adventure camp in Ruwa by security forces on allegations that it was being used to train bandits. These allegations of banditry have also been levelled against several human rights activists including Jestina Mukoko, Director of the Zimbabwe Peace Project, as well as several members of the MDC T party, a move that has threatened the Global Political Agreement between ZANU PF and the two MDC formations.

War veterans were also reported to have looted goods from shops in Ngundu along the Harare Beit-bridge highway, in actions reminiscent of the farm invasions that have taken place over the past nine years. The Human Rights Forum strongly condemns such actions by the war veterans and calls upon the ZRP to take steps to protect property owners from abuse by such groups.

Although the levels of violence recorded in the month of January were much lower than those in most months in 2008, there was a lot of activity in the courts as human rights activists and members of the MDC-T party accused of banditry and other crimes, were taken back and forth through the judicial system. The Human Rights Forum implores the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC) to give effect to the letter and spirit of Article xviii of the Global Political Agreement, which

guarantees the “Security of Persons and Prevention of Violence”, and take positive steps to ensure the immediate release of all abductees from prison.

TOTALS: 1 January to 31 January 2009**Cumulative Totals: 1 January –31 January 2009**

The graphs should be read along with the table depicting the monthly totals of violations for January 2009 on page 10.

Key Abbreviations

AIPPA – Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act

CIO – Central Intelligence Organisation

MDC – Movement for Democratic Change

MP – Member of Parliament

NCA – National Constitutional Assembly

OVT – Organised Violence and Torture

WOZA – Women of Zimbabwe Arise

ZANU PF – Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front

ZCTU – Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions

ZNA – Zimbabwe National Army

ZPS – Zimbabwe Prison Service

ZRP – Zimbabwe Republic Police

POSA – Public Order and Security Act

ZNLWVA – Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association

PTUZ – Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe

ZIMTA – Zimbabwe Teachers Association

ROHR- Restoration of Human Rights Zimbabwe

ZINASU – Zimbabwe National Students Union

UMP – Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe

ZUPCO – Zimbabwe United Passenger Company

Sources: The information contained in this report is derived from statements made to the Public Interest Unit of the Zimbabwe

Human Rights NGO Forum, its members and statements taken by a network of human rights activists and newspaper reports,

Notes to the tables:

Torture:

All cases of torture fall under the definition of torture according to the general definition given in the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment and Punishment.

The four elements of torture are:

- 1 **Severe** pain and suffering, whether physical or mental
- 2 **Intentionally** inflicted
- 3 With a **purpose**
- 4 By a state official or another individual acting with the **acquiescence of the state**.

Those individuals referred to in point # 4 as state officials include the ZRP, ZNA,

Unlawful arrest and detention:

Arrest by the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) with no reasonable suspicion that an offence has been committed. Detention thereafter for a period exceeding 48 hours without access to redress through the courts or subsequent release without charge.

Abduction/kidnapping:

A kidnapping by a member(s) of an organised group that is not the ZRP, ZNLWVA, ZNA, ZPS and the ZNLWVA (as a reserve force of the ZNA).

Disappearance:

Kidnapped persons whose whereabouts remained unknown at the time of reporting.

Property related

These are incidents in which property rights have been violated. This includes arson, property damage and destruction and theft.

Cases of Political Violence

Note: The identities of victims whose names have not been published in the press and are not public officials are protected. This is done in order to protect the victim from further violence, intimidation and possible recriminatory attacks.

The purpose of this report is to record the nature of the politically-motivated violence and intimidation that continues to prevail in the country. The Monthly Political Violence Reports are primarily based on victims' accounts, accompanied by medical evidence where possible, obtained from member organisations of the Forum and other partner organisations. Use is also made of press reports.

The Report cannot be considered as the exhaustive record of all incidents of politically-motivated violence in Zimbabwe in the period under review. Nevertheless, every incident reported to the Human Rights Forum directly or through its members is meticulously documented and included in the reports. Care is also taken to record the incidents in the language in which they were reported to the Forum.

The situation prevailing in the country is such that it has not been possible to verify all of these accounts. The Human Rights Forum has done what it can to verify the reports, and is satisfied that the vast majority of them are substantially true. It is also not possible to rule out whether a victim's account is exaggerated or contains inaccuracies.

All reports derived from the press are denoted with the symbol Σ .

HARARE

Budiriro

1 January 2009

The male victim, an MDC supporter, reports that he was assaulted by suspected ZANU PF youths for

his political affiliation. He was at Current shopping centre with a female MDC supporter who was a polling agent during the Harmonised Elections, when they were confronted by a group of seven ZANU PF youths. One of the assailants shouted that the victim and the other female MDC supporter should be killed. They ignored the ZANU PF youths and they left them alone for a while. After the female MDC supporter had left the shopping center, the youths returned and began assaulting the victim with booted feet and a knuckle-duster. The assailants also allegedly stole US\$60 from the victim. A soldier who was passing by the shopping center eventually rescued the victim from the youths who fled from the scene.

Chitungwiza*Zimonline**10 January 2009*

Σ.A group of rowdy soldiers reportedly assaulted informal traders and stole their wares in Chitungwiza. The soldiers who were in uniform but unarmed went on the rampage at Makoni shopping center, apparently incensed that the informal traders were selling basic commodities in foreign currency without the authorisation of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ). The soldiers reportedly came to the shopping center around 3pm and started assaulting traders selling their wares in foreign currency, demanding to see foreign currency trading licences from them. It is alleged that the soldiers eventually sped off in a minibus they had loaded with mealie-meal and other basic commodities they had taken from the traders.

Harare Central*TimesOnline**25 January 2009*

Σ.Members of the ZNA reportedly turned away students attending private schools at was supposed to be the start of the new term. It is reported that the soldiers were at the gates telling the pupils to go back home. It is alleged that the soldiers told the pupils and their parents who had come to leave their children at the schools that they could not go to school while other children were unable to do so. This followed a postponement of the opening date by the Ministry of Education Sport and Culture.

*Zimonline**27 January 2009*

Σ.It is reported that military police had to be summoned to evict scores of soldiers and war veterans from Harare Municipality-owned residential flats they had invaded. The soldiers and war veterans reportedly moved into the flats that are still under construction claiming they had nowhere else to stay because they could not afford the foreign currency rentals that most landlords were demanding. Officials from The City of Harare reportedly spent the day trying to persuade the group of about 40 war veterans and soldiers to move out of the three blocks of flats so that construction work could continue, but the invaders insisted they would move out only if the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe governor Gideon Gono gave them hard cash to pay for accommodation elsewhere. They latter moved after the intervention of military police officers.

MANICALAND

Chipinge

Radio VOP

14 January 2009

Σ.Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) MP for Chipinge South, Meki Makuyana was arrested on allegations of kidnapping. Makuyana was reportedly arrested together with 15 MDC activists at his Chiredzi business offices. A Chipinge magistrate reportedly granted Makuyana bail, however a State prosecutor appealed against the decision. The Magistrate ruled that Makuyana would remain in prison until the State's appeal is dismissed or the State has failed to prosecute its appeal.

MASHONALAND CENTRAL

Bindura South

Zimgreats.com

15 January 2009

Σ.Two MDC officials Dumiso Wakatama the mayor of Bindura and Tongai Jack a security officer in the party, were reportedly arrested on charges of threatening police officers investigating the shooting of the country's air force chief Perrance Shiri. The two were accused of threatening to kidnap and kill police officers investigating the shooting of Air Marshal Perrance Shiri. The two were remanded into custody until 26 January 2009 after the prosecution appealed against a court decision to grant them bail.

MASHONALAND EAST

Goromonzi North

The Zimbabwe Independent
8 January 2009

Σ.Armed soldiers and state security agents reportedly raided an outdoor adventure camp in Ruwa on suspicion that it was a military training base for bandits intending to topple President Robert Mugabe. It is reported that a large team comprising police officers, Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) agents, Air Force of Zimbabwe personnel and military police descended on Kudu Creek camp in armoured vehicles with a helicopter hovering overhead. The camp is known for training Boy Scouts and young Christian groups in adventure activities and personal development. The security agents reportedly arrested the campsite owner John Naested and two farmers, Angus Thompson and Brian Baxter who live close by. Naested reportedly served in the Rhodesian army.

MASVINGO

Masvingo Central

The Zimbabwe Times
4 January 2009

Σ.A group of about 10 soldiers clad in full military gear reportedly deserted from 4 Brigade Headquarters outside Masvingo on New Year's Day and went on a rampage assaulting people and looting goods from shops. The soldiers allegedly went from door to door, assaulting people and demanding cash. At least five people, among them a three year old were reportedly injured during the disturbances, which lasted almost three hours. It is reported that one of the deserters was arrested while nine others are believed to have fled to South Africa.

Masvingo South

Radio VOP
13 January 2009

Σ.A group of war veterans reportedly raided goods and foreign currency from shops at Ngundu shopping centre along the Masvingo-Beitbridge highway and several other outlets surrounding Ngundu. It is alleged that well known war veteran and ZANU PF councilor for Ward 26, was part of the group. They accused some of the shop owners of illegally selling commodities in foreign currency and took all the money they had made for the day. It is also reported that the war veterans spent the day looking for known Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) supporters in Chivi who operate the business. The war veterans were allegedly seen sharing the looted foreign currency at Ngundu around 19:00hrs that day and spending it on alcohol.

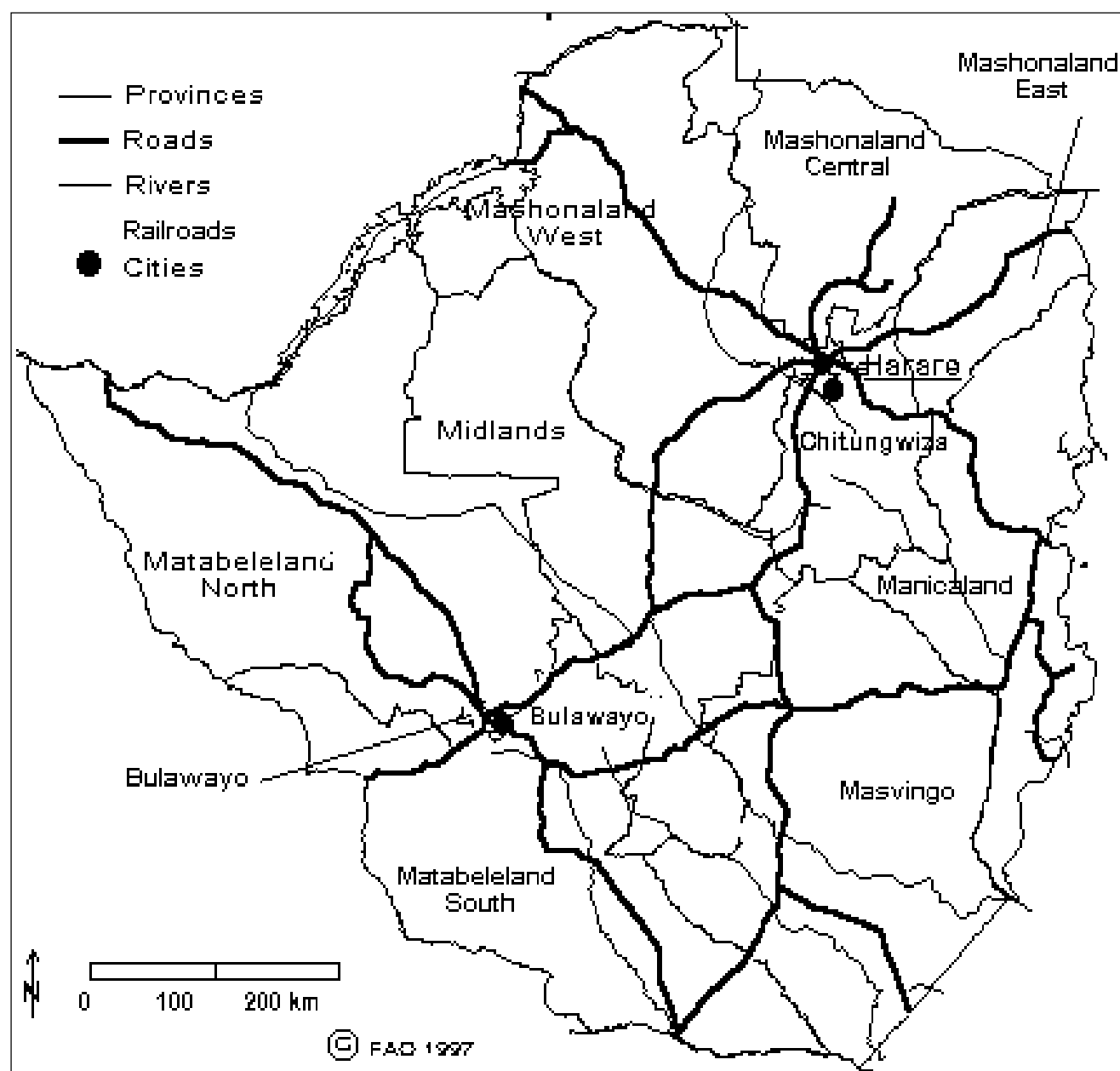
Monthly totals of human rights violations from 1 January 2009 – 31 January 2009

Table 1

	January	Total
Abduction/ kidnapping	0	0
Assault	6	6
Attempted murder	0	0
Death threats	1	1
Disappearance	0	0
Displacement	0	0
Freedom of expr/ass/mvt	2	2
Murder	0	0
Political Discrim/ Intim/vict	26	26
Property related	1	1
Rape	0	0
School closure	0	0
Torture	0	0
Unlawful arrest	21	21
Unlawful detention	21	21
Monthly Totals	78	78

	MAIN EVENTS 2009
January	
1	A group of soldiers in Masvingo goes on the rampage assaulting residents and looting property.
8	Armed Security personnel raid an outdoor adventure camp in Ruwa on allegations that it is being used to train bandits.
10	Rowdy soldiers assault traders and loot goods at Makoni shopping Center in Chitungwiza.
13	War veterans loot goods and cash at a shopping center in Ngundu.

ADMINISTRATIVE MAP OF ZIMBABWE



The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (also known as the “Human Rights Forum”) is a coalition comprising 16 member organisations. It has been in existence since January 1998 when non-Governmental organisations working in the field of human rights joined together to provide legal and psychosocial assistance to the victims of the Food Riots of January 1998.

The Human Rights Forum has now expanded its objectives to assist victims of organised violence, using the following definition:

“Organised violence” means the inter-human infliction of significant avoidable pain and suffering by an organised group according to a declared or implied strategy and/or system of ideas and attitudes. It comprises any violent action, which is unacceptable by general human standards, and relates to the victims’ mental and physical well-being.”

The Human Rights Forum operates a Research and Documentation Unit and offers legal services to assist victims of organised violence and torture claim compensation from perpetrators through its Public Interest Unit.

Member organisations of the Human Rights Forum are:

- Amnesty International (Zimbabwe) (AI (Z))
- Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP)
- Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)
- Legal Resources Foundation (LRF)
- Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA)
- Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe (MMPZ)
- Nonviolent Action and Strategies for Social Change (NOVASC)
- Transparency International (Zimbabwe) (TI (Z))
- Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA)
- Zimbabwe Association for Crime Prevention and the Rehabilitation of the Offender (ZACRO)
- Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights (ZADHR)
- Zimbabwe Civic Education Trust (ZIMCET)
- Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights)
- Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR)
- Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP)
- Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association (ZWLA)

The Human Rights Forum can be contacted through any member organisation or through:

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