

ZIMBABWE HUMAN RIGHTS NGO FORUM

POLITICAL VIOLENCE REPORT

May 2006

14 July 2006

A report by the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum

OVERVIEW

The month of May was characterized by a marked increase in the number of torture cases numbering 84 in the period. Twenty-seven students were arrested following class boycotts at Bindura State University and the police reportedly tortured 16 of the students. After a computer lab at Bindura State University was burnt down, around 80 students were arrested and many of them were also tortured in police custody. The Human Rights Forum notes with great concern that violence and torture continue to be used in Zimbabwe by state agents as a way of quelling dissent, as well as extracting information from the public, be it for political or criminal purposes. The Forum implores the State to respect its international obligations under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other international instruments to which it is party and also to ratify the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel or Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT).

The NCA held demonstrations on 11 and 18 May in support for a new Constitution. The demonstrators were reportedly assaulted and tortured by the police. The Human Rights Forum deplores the heavy-handed manner with which the police quelled these demonstrations and urges the State to respect the right to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

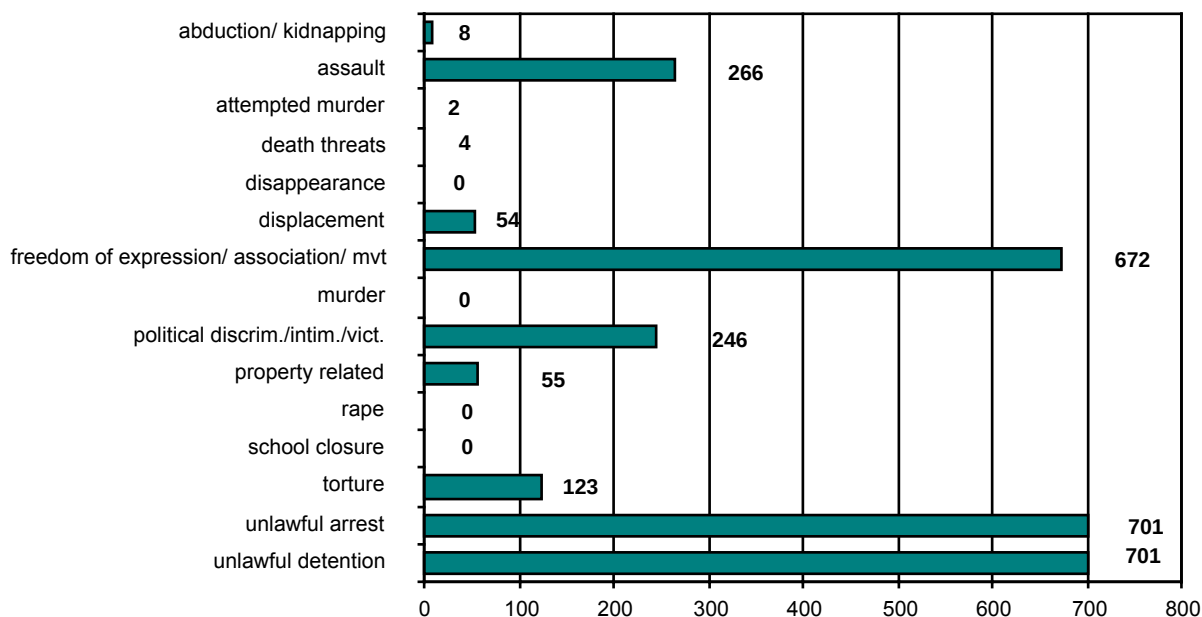
The Budiriro House of Assembly by-election was the focus of many violations of human rights. In the run up to the by-election, a house was destroyed, activists victimized and pro-Senate MDC President Arthur Mutambara and his entourage were arrested for holding a campaign procession in the area. In this by-election allegations of intolerance were reported from both opposition and the ruling party. The Forum urges Zimbabweans to exercise tolerance and respect the constitutional rights of others regardless of their political persuasion.

Civil society in Zimbabwe started the 8 weeks commemoration of *Operation Murambatsvina* on 18 May 2006. This was exactly a year after the operation began in 2005. In the process, Dr. John Makumbe and some church leaders were arrested in connection with the commemoration. The ongoing harassment and arrest of innocent citizens who are exercising their civil liberties is of continuing concern to the Forum and needs to be addressed by the State and its agents as a matter of agency.

Totals: 1 May 2006 – 31 May 2006



Cumulative Totals: 1 January 2006 – 31 May 2006



The graph should be read along with the table depicting the monthly totals of violations from 1 January 2006 to 31 May 2006. The total quantifiable number of victims reported in May 2006 is 259.

Key Abbreviations

AIPPA – Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act	PTUZ – Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe
BSA - Broadcasting Services Act	UMP – Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe
CIO – Central Intelligence Organisation	ZANU PF – Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
MDC – Movement for Democratic Change	ZCTU – Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
MP – Member of Parliament	ZNA – Zimbabwe National Army
ZPS – Zimbabwe Prison Service	ZRP – Zimbabwe Republic Police
NAGG - National Alliance for Good Governance	ZNLWVA – Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association
NCA – National Constitutional Assembly	ZIMTA – Zimbabwe Teachers Association
OVT – Organised Violence and Torture	ZUPCO – Zimbabwe United Passenger Company
POSA – Public Order and Security Act	

Sources: The information contained in this report is derived from statements made to the Public Interest Unit of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Forum, 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 include the ZRP, ZNA, ZPS and the ZNLWVA (as a reserve force of the ZNA) and by any other grouping when directly sanctioned by the state.

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, political party, ZNLWVA, ZNA, MDC, Zanu PF etc

Disappearance:

Kidnapped persons whose whereabouts remained unknown at the time of reporting. Their whereabouts have still to be ascertained through follow up reports or further investigation.

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 Human Rights Forum and other partner organisations. Use is also made of press reports on politically motivated violence. The Monthly Political Violence Report cannot therefore 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 .

BULAWAYO

Makokoba

16 May 2006

Σ . It is reported that on the date in question, 3 church leaders from the Christian Alliance were briefly held on accusation of coordinating the commemoration of the first anniversary of *Operation Murambatsvina*. The church leaders, along with other NGOs, were allegedly planning nation-wide demonstrations in commemoration of last year's *Operation Murambatsvina*. After their release police then cancelled a permit they had initially issued to the religious leaders to visit areas affected by the operation.

HARARE

Budiriro

19 May 2006

Σ . It is reported that Arthur Mutambara (MDC pro-Senate President), Gabriel Chaibva, Priscilla Misihairambwi-Mushonga, Edwin Mushoriwa, Goodwill Chimbaira and 49 other MDC pro-Senate supporters were arrested for holding a procession in vehicles in Budiriro constituency a day before voting in the House of Assembly by-election for the constituency. They were held in custody at Budiriro Police station before being released into the custody of their lawyer Shepherd Mushonga. The MDC pro-Senate faction had reportedly applied to the police to hold the procession in accordance with POSA regulations.

20 May 2006

Σ . It is reported that violence broke out between MDC activists and ZANU-PF youth during the Budiriro House of Assembly by-election. Shakespeare Sibanda, Langton Kamuchoriwo, Dzidzai Kufazvinei, Onias Maraire, Francis Chityeza and others reportedly mobilised each other and planned to raid ZANU-PF supporters at Budiriro 5B Shopping Centre. They allegedly assaulted Tinashe

Chindawata, Edmore Chikombe, Tererai Method Mutasa and Struggle Mutsvene using clenched fists, booted feet and knives. Chindawata reportedly sustained a cut near the left eye, and Chikombe sustained a severe cut on the forearm. The perpetrators also allegedly destroyed a house, shattering its windows.

12 May 2006

On the date in question, 4 victims, 3 female and one male, were allegedly abducted by ZANU-PF supporters and handcuffed on allegations that they were involved in the assault and destruction of a house of ZANU-PF activists in Budiro. They were allegedly force-marched to the house that was broken into. The 3 female victims were reportedly pushed onto the floor. The assailants demanded to know the addresses of all MDC activists. When the victims told them that they did not know, they claim that they were assaulted. A crowd of ZANU-PF supporters allegedly assaulted them using open palms, fists and booted feet. They were only saved when one of them screamed and a policeman who heard them entered the room and took them to the Glen View Police Station for their safety. One of the victims reportedly lost Z\$ 5 million and the other one Z\$10 million during the assault.

The male victim claims that around 19:00 hrs, ZRP officers handcuffed him at his house. He was driven to the house that had been damaged and was allegedly assaulted all over his body by the police using booted feet. He reports that he lost consciousness and his nephew carried him back home. He went to report the case to the police on that day, who gave him a letter to take to the hospital for treatment.

13 May 2006

The male victim reports that on the date of the incident, around 11:00 hrs, he and some colleagues were putting up posters for a rally that was supposed to occur the following day in Budiro. The client states that some police details tried to arrest them but they refused reasoning that they had not done anything illegal or unlawful. After an hour the policemen returned with 25 other policemen and some ZANU-PF youths and arrested him and three other colleagues. They were taken to Harare Central Police Station and put into cells. The victim alleges that around 23:00 hrs the same night, he was assaulted on the back and beneath both feet by the police using a baton and that he was whipped all over the body on several occasions. He was allegedly assaulted in the same manner every night until 16 May 2006 when he was released after paying admission of guilt fine of Z\$ 250 000 for violating POSA.

15 May 2006

A male victim reports that on the date in question around 17:00 hrs, 13 MDC anti-Senate supporters were having supper at the house of the anti-Senate MDC aspiring candidate, Emmanuel Chisvure's sister. They reportedly saw 4 ZANU-PF supporters running away from the police. In the process, the 4 ZANU-PF supporters allegedly threw 2 petrol bombs towards the MDC supporters. The victim claims that they ran in different directions and 4 of them scaled the security fence and that he got injured on the ring finger. The victim reports that, he was arrested and detained in custody until 22 May when he was released without charges being preferred against him.

16 May 2006

Two male victims reportedly attended an MDC anti-Senate rally for the Budiro by-elections. They were allegedly assaulted by ZANU-PF supporters for supporting MDC.

20 May 2006

A male victim claims that he was at Budiro shops when he noticed some ZANU-PF supporters giving the public some pieces of paper and forcing them to write down their names and national identity numbers and also to indicate which aspiring member of the House of Assembly they were going to

vote for. The victim took the papers from the ZANU-PF supporters who allegedly assaulted him using fists, stones and booted feet.

Harare Central

5 May 2006

The male victim reports that on the date in question he attended a congress for the Zimbabwe National Association of Students Union (ZINASU) at the Management Training Bureau in Masasa. At the end of the day at around 17:00 hrs, he and other colleagues were waiting for transport refunds when 3 policemen and a Central Investigations Department officer arrested them on allegations that they had vandalized the portrait of the President of Zimbabwe. They were taken to Rhodesville Police Station where they were detained. They were reportedly released on 7 May without being charged.

11 May 2006

Twenty-three NCA demonstrators, 8 male and 15 female, were reportedly arrested on the date in question for demonstrating for a new constitution. They were intercepted by the police in Second Street and Nelson Mandela Avenue, who ordered them to sit, which they did. Police trucks came and took them to Harare Central Police Station, where they were allegedly assaulted all over their bodies by the police at the parking bay. They were later taken into cells and reportedly further assaulted in the cells. Sewage water with dead rats was reportedly poured into the cells. They spent the night in cold, filthy and wet cells. They were released the following day after paying Z\$250 000 admission of guilt fines for violating POSA.

12 May 2006

Three male student activists report that the police Law and Order section are victimizing them for representing students. Two of the student activists are currently suspended from the University of Zimbabwe. On the date in question, 2 of the activists were on their way from the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace when they were reportedly stopped and interrogated by the Law and Order police officers in connection with the burning of buildings at Bindura State University. All 3 student activists are now afraid due to constant fear of harassment.

18 May 2006

On the date of the incident, 32 NCA activists, 20 women and 12 men were reportedly arrested for demonstrating in support for a new constitution for Zimbabwe. The victims were reportedly assaulted by the riot police at Africa Unity Square using batons. They were taken to Harare Central Police Station where they were reportedly detained for 4 days. They were allegedly detained in inhuman detention conditions. They were reportedly denied food and the cells had human waste on the floors and were overcrowded. Women with babies were detained in these inhuman conditions together with their babies. They were released after appearing in court.

Harare North

17 May 2006

Σ. It is reported that on 17 May 2006, suspected CIO agents seized Dr. John Makumbe from his office at the University of Zimbabwe. Dr. Makumbe and other civic rights groups were reportedly planning nation wide demonstrations and meetings to commemorate the first anniversary of *Operation Murambatsvina*.

Harare South

19 May 2006

It is reported that residents at Hopley farm, who are former Porta farm residents, demonstrated against their Social Welfare Office in relation to a number of grievances including a removed donor

clinic, which residents had preferred to the Harare City Council clinic and discrimination in the allocation of food and blankets. The residents also alleged that some officials at Hopley farm were hiring touts from Mbare to assault them. The riot police, who have since maintained a heavy presence at the farm, quelled the demonstration.

MANICALAND

Mutare South

6 May 2006

Σ. It is reported that armed policemen raided and searched the home of Godfrey Mubatsa (anti-senate MDC Manicaland Provincial Chair). A police squad of 12 led by inspector Mavhenyengwa aided by dogs reportedly dug up the yard around Mubatsa's homestead in search of weapons of war while Mubatsa was away addressing a rally in Buhera South. Mubatsa's family was also interrogated on the whereabouts of Roy Bennett since the police reasoned that Mubatsa would know where he was since he once deputised Bennett as MDC Provincial Vice-Chair. The policemen did not produce a warrant for the search.

Bindura

8 May 2006

On 8 May 2006, 27 students were arrested following the class boycotts and demonstrations at Bindura State University against the inordinate increase in fees instituted in institutions of higher learning in Zimbabwe. Through a vetting system, which was perceived to have benefited largely students perceived to be loyal to ZANU PF, 11 were released leaving 16 students including 4 female students. All the arrested students were allegedly subjected to severe assaults and torture at the hands of the police, CIO operatives and ZANU PF activists working with the police. The students were allegedly made to crawl all the way to the Charge Office from the car park area and later forced to frog-jump all the way from the charge office to the Police holding cells, a distance of between 60-70 metres away from the charge office. During interrogations, they were reportedly subjected to a form of torture called "drinking whisky". This involved each student touching the ground with his/her finger then being forced to run in circles around his finger until they felt dizzy and fell down. The students were also reportedly forced to walk in a bending posture as if they were going underneath an imaginary fence, wire or line. The students were further allegedly clapped with open palm and forced to say thank you by the police officers. There were reportedly no blankets in the cells notwithstanding the very cold nights. The female students were made to sleep in a cell whose toilet had long broken down and could not flush. The cells were smelling of decomposing human waste.

10 May 2006

On 10 May 2006, a computer lab at Bindura State University was burnt down. In the next few days following the burning down of the computer lab, almost 80 students were arrested under arson charges. Police and security studies students at the University allegedly assaulted the students. The bulk of the students were released without charges being preferred against them and only 10 remained in custody. The 10 who remained in custody were allegedly tortured by the police together with 6 others. The students were released on bail on 15 May 2006.

MASHONALAND EAST

Goromonzi

7 May 2006

It is reported that the 19 victims who were coming from a soccer match were singing political songs as they travelled to their homes on a bus. The bus crew is said to have asked them to stop singing but they defied them. When they got to Mungate Police Sub Station, a herd man who was also in the bus is said to have reported them to the police. Two policemen allegedly ordered all soccer fans to disembark. Eleven of them reportedly ran away but the other 8 were allegedly assaulted by the police using electric codes, sjambok, open palm and booted foot. They were then taken to Domboshawa Show Grounds Police Station where they were made to pay admission of guilt fines for disturbing the peace.

Marondera East*1 May 2006*

The victim reports that on the date in question he was on his way to the market place when he met a male ZANU-PF activist known to him who in a joking manner threatened that one of these days, they would assault him after greeting him as “muchinja”¹. The following day, he met the same activist with 2 other ZANU-PF supporters who allegedly assaulted him in the face and on the head using fists. The victim fell down and on trying to get up the activists allegedly kicked him hard on the left ankle breaking his leg. He tried to rise up again but failed. When he mentioned that he had broken his leg, they all reportedly ran away.

¹ Muchinja refers to an MDC supporter; Chinja is the MDC slogan, which means change.

	MAIN EVENTS 2006
January	- Voice Of the People (VOP) Board of Trustees continue to be victimized by the police under the accusations of breaching the Broadcasting Services Act and in the process 2 employees of one Board member are arrested and detained without charges being preferred against them
February	- WOZA women hold demonstrations on 13 and 14 February in Bulawayo and Harare on the deteriorating state of the economy. - Students mostly from state tertiary institutions hold demonstrations over the increases in tuition fees. - NCA demonstrate for a new constitution on the birthday of the President viz 21st February. - President's birthday celebrations are held in Mutare on 25 February. - The MDC pro-senate faction holds its National Congress in Bulawayo.
March	- 7 people are arrested in Harare and Mutare on 6 and 7 March 2006 on the accusations of plotting to assassinate President Mugabe during the 21st February Movement celebrations. - MDC supporters are assaulted at Mbare Bus Terminus while coming from an anti-senate MDC rally on 12 March. - MDC anti-senate faction holds its congress from 17-19 March 2006 at City Sports Center in Harare. - Demonstrations against the huge tuition fees increases in tertiary education continue in Bulawayo
April	- Residents of Nyenyere flats in Mbare are forcibly evicted from the flats to make way for ZANU-PF youths on 4 April. Widows are the main targets for eviction - NCA demonstrates for a new constitution on 7 April. - Campaigning starts in Budiriro for the Parliamentary by-election to be held on 20 May 2006. - Nixon Nyikadzino a.k.a Mao, an NCA activist is tortured by Military Intelligence officers on 14 April. - Intra-party violence erupts in Zengeza between the two MDC factions on 18 April after Tsvangirai holds a rally there on Zimbabwe's independence day. - About 50 squatters along Macheke river are arrested and their camp burnt down by the police on 20 April -
May	- Civil society commemorates Operation Murambatsvina for 2 months from 18 May to 18 July 2006. - Budiriro House of Assembly by-election is held on 20 May 2006 - NCA holds demonstrations for a new constitution on 11 and 18 May 2006. - Bindura students are arrested and tortured by the police after there are class boycotts on 8 May and the burning of a computer lab at the University on 10 May 2006.

Full alphabetical list of reported deaths related to political violence 1 January 2006 to 31 May 2006 recorded indicating name, political affiliation, date of death, constituency and province.

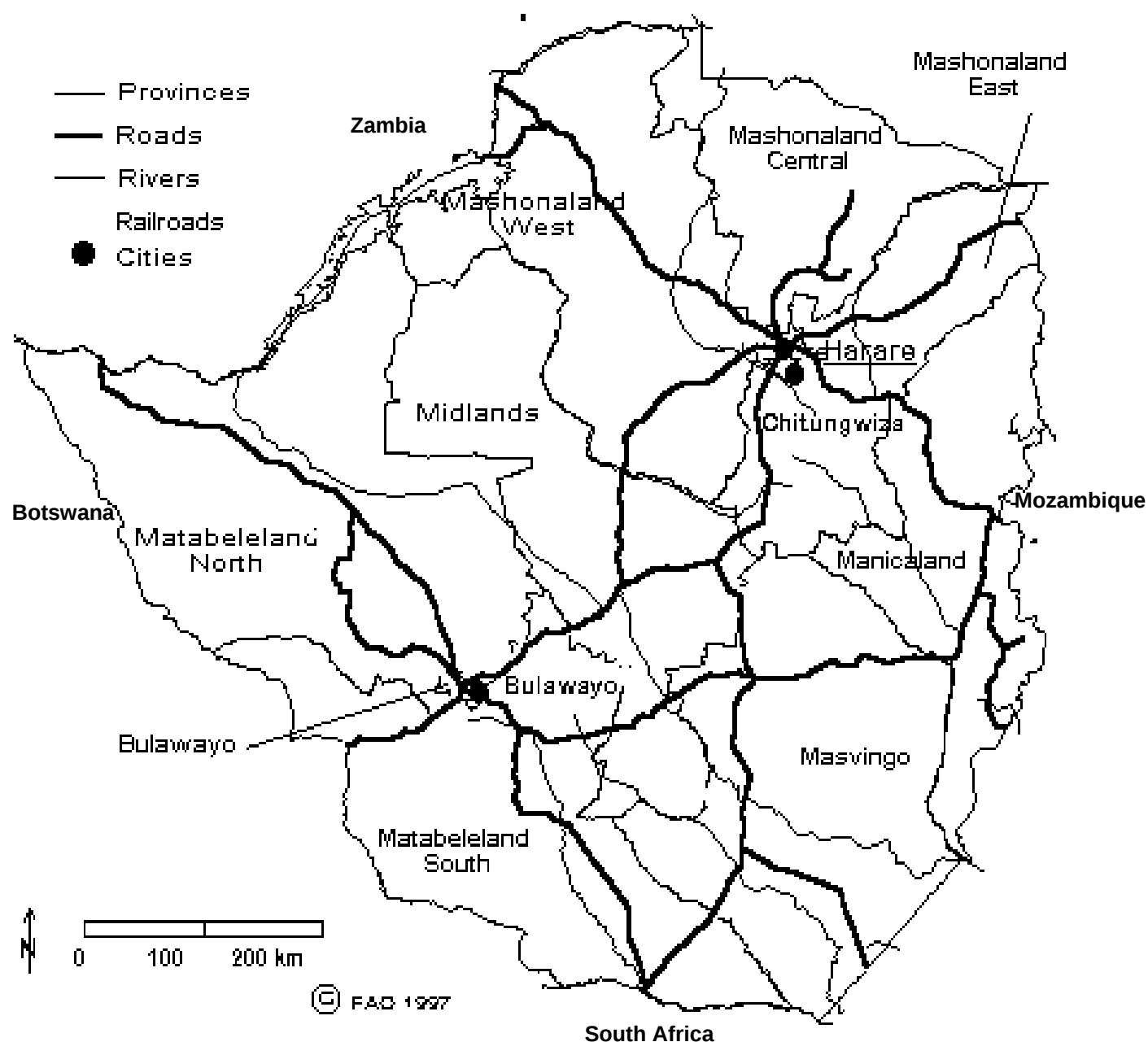
TOTAL: 0

The table below and the graphs on page 3 above depict the number of violations committed on the persons whose circumstances are described in the report. One individual may have been subjected to many violations and thus appear under several categories of violations.

Monthly totals of human rights violations from 1 January 2006 to 31 May 2006

	January	February	March	April	May	Total
Assault	7	32	32	20	175	266
Abduction/ kidnapping	0	0	1	2	5	8
Attempted murder	0	0	0	2	0	2
Death threats	0	0	2	2	0	4
Disappearance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Displacement	0	0	0	54	0	54
Freedom of expression/ass/mvt	7	410	57	24	174	672
Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0
Political Discrim/vict/intim	7	8	29	23	179	246
Property related	0	0	1	50	4	55
Rape	0	0	0	0	0	0
School closure	0	0	0	0	0	0
Torture	3	0	19	17	84	123
Unlawful arrest	8	312	46	103	232	701
Unlawful detention	8	312	46	103	232	701

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 through the Public Interest Unit of the **Error! Bookmark not defined.** (formerly the Legal Unit of the ZHRF.)

Core member organisations of the Human Rights Forum are:

- Amani Trust (AT)
- Amnesty International (Zimbabwe) (AI (Z))
- Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP)
- Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)
- Human Rights Trust of Southern Africa (SAHRIT)
- Legal Resources Foundation (LRF)
- Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe (MMPZ)
- Nonviolent Action and Strategies for Social Change (NOVASC)
- Transparency International (Zimbabwe) (TI (Z))
- 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:

The Administrator, P O Box 9077, Harare – email: admin@hrforum.co.zw

The Public Interest Unit, P O Box 9077, Harare – email: legal@hrforum.co.zw

The Research Unit, P O Box 9077, Harare – email: research@hrforum.co.zw

Address: 8th Floor Bluebridge North, Eastgate, Harare; Telephone: 250511 - Fax: 250494

The International Liaison Office, 56- 64 Leonard Street London EC 2A 4JX– email: IntlO@hrforumzim.com
Telephone+44-20-7065-0945

Website: www.hrforumzim.com

Previous reports of the Human Rights Forum can be found on our website.

**To report political violence incidents occurring to yourself or someone you know,
please contact us on the above addresses.**