

Socialist Worker

**Build United Front
of Resistance
Now!!!**

Newspaper of the International Socialist Organization (Zimbabwe)
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**ZM\$ 10Billion
July 2008**

Mobilise against illegitimate Zanu PF Regime

On 29 June Robert Mugabe was announced the winner of the presidential runoff "elections" with a vote of 2.1 million as opposed to 233 000 for Tsvangirai and 131 481 spoilt ballots. The regime claimed a sweeping victory, "winning" in all constituencies even in areas where it did not win a single seat in the March elections.

As ISO had warned these elections were not going to bring real democratic change. Rather the regime would ensure a victory for Zanu PF by hook or crook and then seek a government of national unity with MDC as a junior partner to deal with the imploding economic crisis.

The decision by MDC to pull out of the run off was therefore correct. Participating in such a sham election would have been disastrous. Activists desperately needed breathing space to re-organize and begin the fight-back. This would have been much more difficult after a sure defeat on 27 June. The pull-out exposed the elections for the sham they are even for Mugabe's buddies.

SADC and AU observer teams have declared the elections undemocratic. The issue now is what is the way forward?

The crisis of legitimacy for the regime and the escalating economic crisis with inflation over two million, creates three main possibilities: an elitist negotiated settlement or removal of the illegitimate regime through people power and the holding of proper elections under a new democratic people driven constitution or on failure of these an all out Zanu PF-military dictatorship.

The negotiated option is being pushed by elites locally, regionally and internationally. With its structures decimated, its supporters traumatized, brutalized and killed, the elites in the MDC leadership will use this to push this option, arguing that there is no other way.

Yet the paralysis of MDC results not only from the repression but also critically the massive blunders of strategy of the MDC leadership. They, and their followers

to page 3

**NO TO GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY - FIGHT FOR FRESH
ELECTIONS UNDER NEW CONSTITUTION**

Why do people migrate?

The majority of immigrants who were recently attacked come from countries to the north of South Africa. They migrated looking for better lives because the conditions they live under in their countries are worse than in SA. They often find it difficult to get money to live in their countries of origin because they have been thrown out of jobs or because terrible wars or dictators are forcing people to leave their homes and look for safety. Immigrants come to SA to find jobs and peace.

The same bosses that rule over people in SA are the ones throwing immigrants out of work, causing wars or propping dictators. Companies like Anglo American and Coke have made huge profits out of workers in these countries. If they feel they can make more profits elsewhere they dump a country and move their business causing hardships to many. The bosses' World Bank makes lots of money out of loans to the rulers of African countries. This money could have been spent on schools, houses and clinics instead it is used to pay interests on loans.

In many countries the bosses have created such poverty that people fight each other for food. Often people find it difficult to fight to change matters because their governments side with bosses. Many immigrants come from countries where there is military rule or dictatorships. Many Zimbabweans who have crossed the border to SA come from a country in absolute ruin where the price of bread often doubles overnight and that is if you can get some. Their vote for change in government gets stolen from them at every opportunity. If one attempts to strike at work or protest the government's policies one gets severely beaten by the police if not worse.

Do immigrants force wages down?

The bosses force the wages down. All they want is more profits for themselves. Immigrants are forced to accept low wages. If they complain or protest for better wages, the bosses use immigration controls to send them back to where they come from. The bosses also use this to force other workers wages down. If workers won't accept low wages then the bosses threaten to retrench them and replace them with immigrants.

We can all keep our wages up by fighting against immigration controls. The bosses know they can force wages down if workers are divided. They do little to stop the spread of lies like saying immigrants are our enemies. Without immigration controls, immigrants would not be in fear of being sent home for fighting alongside other workers for better conditions. A united fight would get everyone higher wages.

Do immigrants cause unemployment?

Unemployment is growing all over the world. In some places it is worse than in others. It is caused by the bosses not immigrants. The bosses are always taking the wealth that workers produce from one place to another. They use this wealth to make more money for themselves and not for making everyone's lives better. If more money can be made elsewhere factories are closed, they have no concern for the millions that are affected by their decisions. When the bosses need lots of workers, the rulers loosen immigration controls. They did this under Apartheid to create a workforce for the mines. They made billions from immigrants' labour. Immigration laws are no different from apartheid pass laws. The pass laws said the workers were not supposed to choose freely where to work or live. Immigration laws do exactly the same.

Do immigrants cause crime

It is the bosses' system of capitalism that causes crime. Millions of people across the world are thrown into crime because poverty and unemployment leaves them no other ways to survive. The majority of people move from one place to another because they hope to find a job so that they can avoid a life of crime. They leave their homes simply to make an honest living.

Why we say immigrants should be welcomed

We want all workers to be allowed to move freely where ever they want to. We want everyone to have a chance of meeting people of different countries and learn about how they live. We will learn that we have a lot in common. The bosses want us to believe that the world is divided into different countries. But the real divide is between workers and the bosses and the rulers. Across the world, a handful of people control the wealth and the destiny of the world. They are fast destroying it with wars and environmental damage. The majority of us, working people and their families are poor although we are the ones that create all the wealth but are not allowed to share in its rewards. Workers across the world need to unite to throw out the system of capitalism and with it the bosses and the rulers. We can not do that if we accept the immigration controls. We should welcome immigrants and alongside them fight our real enemies- the capitalists.

from **Socialism from Below** No 65 June 2008

Mobilise against illegitimate Zanu PF Regime

in civic society, naively believed in a central strategy of From page 1 ...elections without a new constitution as the main way to achieve change. They steadfastly downplayed the need for people power or mass action based alternatives, including critically the need to establish a democratic united front of the opposition and civic society.

They rejected advise that the central strategy in dealing with a dictatorship like Zanu PF must be mass action, with elections, if used, only taken as a secondary tactic to mobilise for the mass action strategy. Instead working class and left militants were marginalized and substituted by cowardly and opportunistic middle class and capitalist elites. Even after the rigged March elections, Tsvangirai was imploring civic society not to do anything to provoke the regime and thereafter fleeing the country for a month on a futile "diplomatic offensive" that left a fatal leadership vacuum locally. As we have warned a boycott not backed by mass action is a dangerous strategy that only gives the regime time to consolidate and an upper hand in any negotiations.

Today, the GNU option will be vigorously pushed by Mbeki, SADC, AU and the UN, under the guise of a transitional authority. The western imperialists will pile further economic and political pressure, including more sanctions to ensure the Mugabe regime plays ball. In his inaugural speech, Mugabe has indicated a willingness to negotiate such a power-sharing deal. We had long forewarned of the likelihood of a negotiated elitist settlement as shown in our January and September 2007 perspectives, quoted elsewhere in this issue.

But we do not believe a GNU with the regime is the way forward. The experiences of ZAPU in 1987 should teach us that there should be no marriage with a regime that murders, maims, rapes and destroys to remain in power - it belongs to the dustbin of history. The GNU is a project for the dictatorship to perpetuate itself and for the capitalist and the imperialist elites, to ensure that the poverty that the Zanu PF state started with its ESAP programme is perpetuated forever but now buttressed by elites in the MDC leadership and their equally neoliberal RESTART programme.

Mobilise for a united front and Rally for Democracy

There is need for an urgent regroupement of civic society and the opposition to launch a serious and determined programme of civil disobedience and mass action supported by regional and international solidarity from working peoples and progressive movements.

Some question whether it is realistic to expect a people power based solution given the massive attacks that people and activists have suffered under the regime?

We acknowledge that it will not be easy, both because of this and because of the disastrous strategic blunders of the opposition leaders. But the massive boycott of elections, the spoilt papers and the various acts of resistance by individual opposition activists show that the willingness to fight is there. The refusal by the regime's buddies to endorse the fake elections will help whilst the masses will grow more angry with the sharpening economic crisis over the next few weeks. With leadership this can be channelled into a serious fight-back against an increasingly isolated regime.

The key though is united action. No single organisation can carry out the massive tasks required. What is needed is to urgently set up a united front of resistance, at two levels. Firstly amongst the civic groups themselves and secondly with the opposition. The need for a radical and autonomous united front of civic groups arises from the domination of MDC leadership by elites, its pro-neoliberal ideology and its propensity to enter into compromise deals with the dictatorship. We need a united body capable of initiating united front-based mass actions without necessarily being subordinated to MDC or continuing with the struggle against the dictatorship should MDC leaders sell out and go into a deal with the dictatorship as happened in Kenya. And one based on a pro-working people and anti-neoliberal capitalist ideology. Any struggle that fails to do this will be outflanked on its left by this crafty regime, which has shown, most powerfully around the land question, strong capacity to cynically manipulate the poor's concerns to remain in power and demonize the opposition as a stooge of the west and business class. The Peoples Charter of the Peoples Convention offers a powerful starting point.

We nearly established the basis of such a united front at the Peoples Convention but we unfortunately allowed our tactical differences on whether to support or boycott the March Elections, to divide us and stop us from the bigger project of building such united front. Today we all pay a heavy price. But it is not too late to regroup, re-organize and offer leadership in action along with MDC.

To kick-start the campaign of civil disobedience we propose the urgent holding of a massive national Rally for Democracy in Harare, convened by a united front of the opposition, civic groups, trade unions and churches. The Rally must be supported by a full scale general strike by workers and traders and class boycotts as well as regional and international solidarity actions from organisations of working people, socialists, the anti-capitalist movements and democrats. These are our true allies and not the western imperialists or their regional state lackeys who pursue an anti-people solution to the

..to page 4..

Build united front against Regime

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Zimbabwean crisis. The purpose of the Rally is first to fight the veil of fear and secondly to send a message to the dictatorship that we will not be cowed and that we reject the illegitimate June 27 elections.

Our demands must include: fresh free and fair elections under a new democratic constitution and consistent with the AU Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections. We further demand the immediate cessation of the reign of terror, compensation of all victims; immediate release of all political prisoners and confinement of soldiers to the barracks.

No to any exclusive MDC - Zanu PF talks!

Re-groupement of civic groups and establishing of the united front of resistance of civic society and the opposition to spearhead mass action is therefore the way forward. And whatever negotiations for a transitional arrangement are made, must be carried out by such a united front, and not just Zanu PF and MDC. We hope MDC has truly learnt from the abortive Mbeki talks that *"tsvara chimwe hachitswanye inda...or divided we fall and united we conquer."* Even the SADC and AU Observers have noted the need to involve all stakeholders. In any case if negotiations fail, Mugabe's likely Plan B to counter western pressure will be to massively escalate repression on the democratic movement supported by a command economy with Peoples Shops to quiten the masses. Eventually he will give power to a chosen successor, possibly acceptable to business and the west. Only united mass action can stop this.

Thus negotiations can only bring real results if supported by peoples power, which is why we must urgently proceed with the civil disobedience campaign.

Its time we allow the ordinary people to take charge of the struggle that is rightfully theirs and ensure an outcome that achieves real democracy, economically and politically, for the majority and not just political and capitalist elites as we have so many times seen in recent history in the region and internationally in Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, Nigeria, S. Africa and Eastern Europe. Following working people in Latin America we say no to capitalism and yes to international socialism as the way forward for humanity. Real struggles are only just about to begin.

Now even the capitalist press sees it

"Tsvangirai returned home to mount an incoherent and disjointed campaign. He was definitely disoriented by the violence he found ... but had he campaigned on a massive united front platform and grassroot-based strategy, not fleeting visits, he could have defied the odds... The problem with MDC and Tsvangirai is over-reliance on self-serving advice from money-grabbers and political upstarts behind the party, instead of utilitarian counsel from those in the established structures." Editor's Memo, Zimbabwe Independent, 27 June 2008

Zimbabwe crisis We said it before

January 2007: Revolutionaries, Resistance and Crisis in Zimbabwe, M. Gwisai (pp 45 - 47):

"Thus any strategy of fighting the dictatorship based on a movement dominated or controlled by the MDC will remain prisoner to the glaring ideological and strategic confusion it has shown since 2000 and is bound to fail...its primary pre-occupation is towards reaching a sell out settlement with the Zanu PF dictatorship that will not benefit the poor and working people..."

Indeed the perspective of a government of national unity between the opposition and Zanu PF is shared by the elites now dominant in the ruling party, in the two main opposition parties and local and international capitalists. Their main efforts, despite current disagreements are driven towards achieving such goal, as an instrument in pre-empting social revolution in an important periphery capitalist state sent into mortal crisis by the failure of neo-liberal capitalism..."

The drive towards a settlement is driven by several factors including the ruling classes' fear of an economic-social implosion because of the worsening economic crisis with unforeseeable political implications and the fact that both parties are now dominated by elites who subscribe to neo-liberalism and are exhausted and fearful of the crisis of the last decade... (Zanu PF) elites now want the peace to grow and launder the wealth acquired in the last decade but cannot do so in the context of a crisis ridden state under siege from the west. But to ensure that Zanu PF elites do not relapse as they did in 1997, the forces of global neo-liberalism demand a political guarantee in the form of co-option in government of their trusted agents in Zimbabwe, the MDC. On the other hand, the opposition is dominated by the petite bourgeois elite, who long ago prostrated themselves before western neo-liberal political and economic forces and are now eager to get into state power, even as junior partners, and accumulate property as a neo-colonial dependent capitalist class."

ISO Perspective Paper - September 2007

"...despite his rhetoric, Mugabe is now ready to capitulate and enter into an elitist compromise deal with the MDC, the west and business. But only after the 2008 elections, which he hopes to use to legitimize his party's claim to being the senior player in such alliance, deal with his party's succession problem as well as protect his legacy, person and family besides his little burial plot at Heroes Acre."

Presidential Run-off... In their own words

Zanu PF Manifesto promises free-market onslaught after elections

Reflecting its massive shift to the right as well as the domination of capitalists, the Zanu PF manifesto for the run-off openly and unashamedly called for the massive escalation of neo-liberal free market policies after the elections. This policy is no different from the free-market neoliberal policies promised by MDC in its BRIDGE – RESTART economic programmes, thus making a government of national unity between these two parties of the bosses most likely. Amongst the "100 Reasons to Vote for Zanu PF" were -

Reason 77. Most recently, as a direct response to representation from the business community and in the interest of harnessing scarce foreign currency, the Zanu PF Government has liberalised the country's trade, financial services and foreign exchange market systems so as to **allow free enterprise** for growth and development in the interest of all Zimbabweans.

Reason 80. Against the backdrop of the recent Zanu PF Government initiative to improve the availability of foreign currency led by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, Zanu PF will promote the urgent formulation and implementation of fiscal and other economic measures to complement the liberalization of the foreign exchange market. *[Translation: the government will introduce full free market policies across the board]*

Reason 81. In line with the ongoing liberalization of the foreign exchange market, the Zanu PF Government will remove price controls and distortions to allow the pricing of goods and services to reflect the full production and distribution costs and a reasonable return that is consistent with movements on the foreign and other source markets. *[Translation – capitalists and businesses will be allowed to charge whatever they wish]*

Reason 83. Zanu PF will implement a cost reflective tariff through the automatic trigger mechanism which has already been approved by the ruling party's Government as a response to the nationwide concerns on the unreliable and obviously poor service delivery by public utilities such as ZESA, NOCZIM, ZINWA, NRZ as well as telecommunication providers and local authorities. *[Translation – removal of all subsidies on public goods and services and charging of market related prices for water, electricity, transport etc. Goodbye Freedom trains and the still born Peoples Shops!]*

Reason 89. Zanu PF will through its Government promote investment in the country by Zimbabweans in the Diaspora, on the back of the liberalization of the foreign exchange market, by allowing remittance of 100% profit or dividends to non resident Zimbabweans with investments in the country. *[Obviously such non resident Zimbabweans will be in partnership with foreigners, who will also join the feast of looting the wealth created by working people]*

**We say ...
No to fake anti-imperialists! Viva
Socialism! Join ISO!**

WHAT WE STAND FOR

SOCIALISM

Capitalism is a system of exploitation, which generates inequality, crisis and war. Although workers create wealth, it is controlled and consumed by the ruling class for its own selfish interests. Socialism can only be built if the working class takes control of the wealth and democratically plan its production and distribution to meet human needs not private profits. This will eliminate all class divisions in society.

Socialism from below

The working class is the most powerful class in the struggle for socialism. We stand for their alliance with all other socially oppressed classes in particular peasants and the urban poor under the leadership of workers.

Socialism can only be attained by mass self-activity of workers such as strikes and demonstrations.

We support trade unions as essential to the fight for workers economic and political rights.

Revolution or reform

Reforms in capitalist society cannot end oppression and exploitation. Capitalism must be smashed. Contrary to what is said by middle class opposition parties, institutions like parliament, the army, the police and the courts are not neutral things that can simply be taken over by workers. Reformists fight for reforms as an end in themselves, whilst we accept reforms only in so far as they increase the confidence of the working class in order to smash the entire capitalist system.

Internationalism

Workers in every country are exploited by capitalism so the struggle for socialism is global. We campaign for solidarity with workers in all countries. We are internationalists because socialism is about spreading working class revolutions to all countries around the world.

Opposition to oppression

Capitalism divides workers by using sexual, tribal, racial and national distinctions. The specially oppressed groups within the working class suffer the most under capitalism. We oppose the oppression of women, blacks, minority tribes – ethnic groups and gays and lesbians. We fight for real social, economic and political equality of women including access to safe, free abortion facilities. We call for an end to discrimination against gays.

Revolutionary party

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organized in a mass revolutionary party. We are currently in the early stages of building such a party through involvement in day-to-day struggles of workers and the oppressed.

All those who accept these principles are urged to join ISO

To Join ISO -

**Write to: Box 6758 Harare Tel. 04 - 704209
e-mail: iso.zim@gmail.com**

An ISO account of the run up to June 27

Precarious security situation – Regime unleashes Reign of Terror

As the nation geared up for the presidential run off on June 27 and before the MDC made public its withdrawal from the presidential race, the Mugabe regime had unleashed a reign of terror across the country. The levels of violence and political intimidation far exceeded those ahead of the 2000 elections in the midst of a severe and unprecedented economic collapse. The Reserve Bank governor Gono's floating of the dollar led to its collapse to \$1USA to ZW\$6 billion with inflation over 2 million percent and prices going up twice a week. The people are truly suffering.

Since May 1 there have been arbitrary arrests of civic leaders starting with the two weeks detention of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union president and secretary general. Fourteen WOZA leaders were detained for nearly a month for protesting the delay in releasing the election results. Two of their leaders, Jenni Williams and Magodonga Mahlangu remain detained at Chikurubi Prison. Also arrested and harassed were church, student and NGO leaders and teachers.

NGOs and movements were effectively closed down by the regime, despite assertions to the contrary. A few weeks before the election day state agents moved door to door in NGOs offices forcing them to close or confiscate computers and files, including the raid on offices of ZimRights, NCA, ZINASU, Padare, Bulawayo Agenda, Crisis Coalition, CHRA and ISO. Humanitarian NGOs providing food relief, drugs and support to AIDS/HIV patients were particularly hit. Bases were set up in townships where MDC and civic groups activists were being forced to attend night vigils and/or assaulted. Several of our ISO members from Mbare, Sunningdale, Epworth and Chitungwiza had their houses raided forcing them to flee whilst others were brutally assaulted. Tec Shingai Bara, the ISO Harare gender co-coordinator and Zimbabwe Social Forum national deputy convener for gender was hospitalized after being brutally assaulted at her home on Friday night of 20th July. Three of our Mutare comrades were also assaulted and brutalized. A hostel in Kambuzuma housing fleeing women and their children by the Women Coalition was raided and people forced to flee. In Budiriro township the national deputy of the war veterans, J. Chinotimba turned an AIDS/HIV clinic into a war chamber.

The MDC received the brunt of the attacks. Tsvangirai was on many occasions arrested, his rallies banned and campaign buses and vehicles impounded. MDC was totally blacked-out from the state controlled daily newspapers, radios and TV whilst under **Operation Dzikisai Madhishi** people were forced to remove their satellite dishes. Detained MDC secretary general Tendai Biti still faces treason charges, carrying the death penalty. The wife of the MDC Harare Mayor-Elect was abducted and killed, houses in townships fire-bombed with four people killed and twenty houses in the Chipinge rural village of NCA chairperson L

Madhuku torched and his mother arrested. The Attorney General said no bail to be granted to those facing political violence charges (virtually all from the opposition) whilst Patrick Chinamasa, the Minister of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, announced his intention to declare a general amnesty for all petty criminals to create room for the political prisoners.

Zanu PF virtually closed off the rural areas from the opposition under **Operation MakaVhoterepi** (Operation Where Did You Vote). As presidential spokesman, G. Charamba put it in his Nathaniel Manheru column – *“Fundamentally, MDC cannot win the runoff; will not win it...Unlike in March, rural Zimbabwe is now another country for MDC...and hey Tsvangirai will be lucky to find even election agents. In towns yes, but nowhere else. From end of 1976, I saw war and the making of structures that nourish it. There are many in Tsvangirai's camp old enough to interpret the times for him. I am sure they have seen what is happening in the country side, watched and correctly read the furrowed foreheads of those who will take the necessary decisions should and when that becomes necessary. Enough hints have been dropped regarding what will wash and will not wash come the morning after June 27. A mere twiddle by a blunt pen cannot return this country to bondage...”*

The situation created by ZANU PF on the ground all meant an inevitable win for ZANU PF but the struggle continues!

Solidarity Fund Appeal

Help us raise US\$5 000

Support working people's struggles in Zimbabwe against the repressive regime and its neoliberal policies. The crisis continues to worsen and massive struggles lie ahead to stop the dictatorship from getting away with its blatant robbery and disregard of the people's will through an elitist GNU. ISO is at the forefront of building a radical united front to help fight this. We are desperately short of funds. Help us raise funds for us to effectively participate in such struggles by making a donation or join the ISO Solidarity Subscription List for small but regular monthly donations.

**To make donations to ISO Zimbabwe please
Contact our national office on**

iso.zim@gmail.com

Can parliament bring fundamental change?

One of the biggest lies of the society we live in is that power to change society lies in parliament. Most social democrats and labour parties believe that if they win a majority of seats in parliament and presidency then they would introduce radical changes through the parliament.

In Zimbabwe the labour movement facilitated the formation of a party, MDC, which nominally believes in social democracy. Social democrats believe that the working class can overcome exploitation and oppression by simply electing the correct party to parliament.

The basis, therefore, of social democratic politics is not encouraging working people's self activity and revolution but winning elections every five years or so to head government. The idea being that by winning a majority in parliament, the state can be taken over and used for working people's interests. This is false.

Parliamentary democracy

As an institution for change, parliament is thoroughly ineffective. In reality the democracy offered by parliament is always extraordinarily restricted and limited. Firstly parliamentary democracy offers no means by which the electorate can control their representatives. Secondly MPs do not in practice control government. Rather it is government that controls MPs. To pursue power through parliamentary democracy is therefore to preserve a system of affairs in which working people continue to be excluded from effective control of their lives.

The idea that parliament equals democracy, the rule of the people is nonsense, a complete pipe dream. Democracy in the parliamentary sense, is a shame, not just because its purpose is to decide once after every 5 years which members of the ruling class are to repress and crush the workers and peasants but because of the separation between politics and economics.

Becoming an MP is usually sufficient to cut off any aspiring leftist from such connections as s/he may have with workers and peasants. Becoming a minister puts you in a different world altogether. Even the most radical labour ministers will soon find that far from taking control of part of the government machine, they are trapped by it.

The State

The capitalist state is not a neutral referee of conflicting classes as social democrats think. It is often an apparatus designed by the ruling class to preserve the existing order, therefore it tends to oppose any government, which even verbally, threatens the current order dominated by the rich and bosses.

Parliament is the only elected branch of state. The daily running of the state is done by appointed bureaucrats and senior civil servants, who if they do not agree with the social democratic government policy, often sabotage it by not implementing it. The civil service, judges, the armed forces and the police as well as such bodies like the Reserve Bank and the media remains in the hands of people who are part of the wealthy ruling class as the directors of businesses and banks.

Faced with a reforming government whose policies and principles represent a challenge to the capitalist priorities, the state machine acting in concert with big business has immense resources of obstruction and pressure. Should the government resist those pressures the state can still resort to direct force as the Chilean state did in 1973 overthrowing an elected reformist government.

Capitalism operates as a system with a logic of its own. Economic crisis is built into its running. It is this dynamic, not the will of the parliamentarians, which determines how much bosses are willing to spend on wages and welfare and how high unemployment will be. Voting for social democratic MPs will not transform the state machinery into an obedient servant of the popular will. The fact is that decisions as to how many workers lives are destroyed through retrenchments, decisions on price rises, on the number of buses on the road, on food and rent increases and other economic decisions are not decided by parliament. The power of the capitalists depends on their control of the economy, which is protected by state - whether or not it has been given democratic parliamentary blessings.

It is always the class that controls the economy which controls the state. The ruling class exercises this control directly by ensuring that senior positions in the state are held by loyal members of its own class. It can also use its economic power to make sure the state protects its interests. See how unelected RBZ governor Gono was able to push the Zanu PF state to reverse price controls last July when the capitalists stopped production or put the goods into the black market in protest. Today, under similar influence, the Zanu PF presidential Manifesto openly pledges to do everything the capitalists want after the elections!

Socialists and Social Democrats.

The historical record is abundantly clear - social democracy serves the interests of capitalism against that of the working people. But as revolutionary socialists we can not prove that by mere assertions. We prove that by standing with the best fighters for reforms. This means in our case, unconditionally but critically engaging with MDC and reformist civic groups on fighting the Zanu PF dictatorship and demanding a new people driven constitution. But never with any illusions that an MDC in power in parliament will bring fundamental change for ordinary people but rather that a bourgeois democratic state under a democratic constitution guaranteeing free and fair elections, a multi-party state and full political and civil liberties is a better platform for working people, especially to organise, unlike a dictatorship. Also the great thing is to get the working class moving together as a class in such struggles and once that is achieved they will soon find the correct direction through experience. This way we show our support to rank and file action and encourage working people who share the same view that working class self activity is the best way forward for the conquest of both political and economic power by the masses. In so doing ISO is able to win a wider periphery to its ranks - those willing to fight and break with the old ideas.

Revolution – Wayward

As revolutionaries we are for real democracy in which masses have a direct control over the whole state, including parliament as well as the economy, in a way that parliamentary democracy does not even begin to touch. This is the only kind of democracy on which Socialism can be built. It can only come about as a result of struggle against dictatorship of the capitalists and their state - a struggle in which the capitalists' right to exploit, to private ownership of the means of livelihood and to rule has to be repressed and violently if necessary...i.e. revolution.

What it means in practice is disbanding the police, sacking the judges, breaking the bosses' army by winning the rank and file over to workers and removing the bureaucratic institutions of government. Above all it involves replacing all old state apparatus by a new apparatus arising from working class struggle like the soviets of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917. The capitalist state can not be reformed but has to be smashed – there is no parliamentary road to Socialism.

Adopted by Mike Sambo

Even Mugabe's buddies reject fake presidential elections...

SADC Election Observer Mission Preliminary

Statement 29/06/2008

4. CONCLUSION

The pre-election phase was characterized by politically motivated violence, intimidation, and displacements.

The process leading to the run-off held on 27 June 2008 did not conform to SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. Based on the above mentioned observations, the Mission is of the view that the prevailing environment impinged on the credibility of the electoral process. The elections did not represent the will of the people of Zimbabwe.

5. CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We reiterate our conviction that there can be a solution to the profound problems facing Zimbabwe through dialogue amongst all political stakeholders, involving the people of Zimbabwe... SADC should establish a mechanism on the ground in order to seize the momentum for a negotiated solution."

Pan African Parliament Observer Mission Interim

Statement 29/06/2008: The Mission noted that ...

- 2 Hate speech, incitement of violence and war rhetoric instilled fear and trepidation amongst voters.
- 3 Restrictions on the fundamental civil and political rights such as freedom of assembly and freedom of movement...
- 4 Overwhelming lack of access to the public media by the Opposition...
- 5 Lack of transparency of the postal voting process...
- 6 Politicisation of security forces led to lack of impartiality....
- 7 The independence and impartiality of the Zimbabwean Electoral Commission is rendered questionable.

Voting Day

1. In many polling stations... it was noted that certain male-dominated groups intercepted voters and gave them pieces of paper on which they were required to write the serial number of their ballots.
2. An unusually high percentage of spoilt ballots were recorded ... Unpalatable messages were written on many of these spoilt ballots.

Conclusions

- 1 The Mission concludes that the current atmosphere prevailing in the country did not give rise to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections.
- 2 Conditions should be put in place for the holding of free, fair and credible elections as soon as possible in line with the African Union Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections.
- 3 In the interim, the PAP Mission calls on the SADC leaders working together with the African Union to engage the broader political leadership in Zimbabwe into a negotiated transitional settlement."

Africa Union Observer Mission Preliminary Statement 29/6/2008

In the light of these observations, the AU Observer Mission ... notes that:

1. There was violence in the run down to the elections.
2. The fear of violence deterred popular participation in the electoral process;
3. There was no equitable access to the Public Media.

Against the backdrop of the foregoing factors... it is the view of the Mission that the Election process fell short of accepted AU standards.

The Mission is however encouraged that both parties have shown willingness to engage in constructive dialogue as a way forward for ensuring peace, stability and development in Zimbabwe."

The Peoples' Charter had already said it

The Charter adopted at the Peoples' Convention of February 2008 declares that:

1. Political Environment

In the knowledge that our political environment since colonialism and after our national independence in 1980 has remained characterised by:

- a) A lack of respect for the rule of law;
- b) Political violence ...
- c) A lack of fundamental rights and freedoms, including freedom of expression and information, association and assembly, all characterised by the militarisation of arms of the state ...

(We) hereby further declare that never again shall we let lives be lost, maimed, tortured or traumatised by the dehumanising experiences of political intolerance, violence and lack of democratic government.

2. Elections

Fully believing that all elections in Zimbabwe remain illegitimate and without merit until undertaken under a new democratic and people-driven constitution, The People shall have all elections under a new people-driven constitutional dispensation characterised by:-

- * Equal access to the media.
- * One independent, impartial, accountable and well-resourced electoral management body;
- * A process of delimitation which is free from political control... and undertaken with full public participation.
- * A continuously updated and accurate voters' roll...
- * Transparent and neutral location of polling stations...
- * Voter education with the full participation of civic society...
- * International, Regional and Local Observers and Monitors being permitted access to everyone... in the electoral process...
- * An Electoral Court, which is independent and impartial, well-staffed and well-resourced to address all issues relating to electoral processesand results in a timely manner

3. Constitutional Reform

Holding in relation to constitutional reform that a new constitution of Zimbabwe must be produced by a people-driven, participatory process and must in it guarantee:-

- a) That the Republic of Zimbabwe shall be a democracy, with separation of powers, a justiciable Bill of Rights that recognises civil, political, social, economic, cultural and environmental rights;
- b) Devolution of government authority to provinces and to local government level;
- c) A multi-party system of democratic government based on universal suffrage and regular free and fair elections and the right to recall public officials:

continued on p9

Peoples Convention

CIVIL SOCIETY PRESS STATEMENT ON THE JUNE 27 PRESIDENTIAL RUN-OFF

Civil society organizations in Zimbabwe, being witnesses and victims of the politically motivated violence that is occurring in our country since the March 29 harmonised elections, make it known to our fellow citizens, fellow Africans and the global community that we hold that the Presidential runoff scheduled for 27 June 2008 cannot be free and fair and is therefore void of legitimacy. The acts of brutality that have occurred over the last three months have made any semblance of a free and fair election impossible. We therefore urge the people of Zimbabwe not to vote, unless doing so in order to protect their own lives or wellbeing.

The atrocities have been characterized by the burning of peoples' homesteads, the forcing of people to attend rallies during the day and night, the targeted killings of opposition and civil society activists, the disruption of church services as well as the complicity of the state security services through their participation in the violence and failure to protect innocent Zimbabweans. Moreover, as civil society organizations we cannot participate in any monitoring or observation processes around this election as we view it as an electoral fraud...

In light of the foregoing, we view the only solution to our current national crises as one that requires the holding of fresh elections under a new, democratic and people driven constitution. This will entail instituting changes to our political environment which will include:

1. **The immediate dismantling of all government sponsored militia bases in the country.**
2. **The immediate dismantling of the Joint Operations Command that has been running this country on a military basis and is accused of being the primary organizing entity of all the political violence being meted out on the people of Zimbabwe.**
3. **The immediate establishment of a refuge council to address the plight of internally displaced people in the country.**
4. **The allowing of humanitarian aid agencies to resume their invaluable work of providing food, shelter and health services to the people of Zimbabwe.**
5. **The bringing to justice of all perpetrators of political violence.**
6. **The release of all political prisoners from Zimbabwe's prisons.**
7. **The establishment of a peacekeeping and monitoring framework that is spearheaded by the SADC.**

In this framework, we implore the SADC Heads of State and Government, the African Union and the United Nations to urge the main political parties in Zimbabwe to respect the will of the people of Zimbabwe which because of the ongoing political violence has been compromised. We urge SADC, AU and UN to work with political parties, civil society, churches and the people of Zimbabwe to facilitate the holding of fresh elections under a new democratic constitution and assist in the healing the wounds of politically motivated violence that has affected our country. **Harare, 26/06/2008**

...from page 8

Peoples Charter had already said it...

- d) The right to citizenship for any person born in Zimbabwe...
- e) A credible and fair election management body and process;
- f) An independent, impartial and competent judiciary;
- g) The protection of labour rights and the right to informal trade;
- h) The protection ... of the rights of people with disabilities;
- i) Independent and impartial commissions which deal with gender equality, land, elections, human rights and social justice;
- j) An impartial state security apparatus.

The People shall have a constitutional reform process, which is characterised by the following:

1. Comprehensive consultation with the people of Zimbabwe wherein they are guaranteed freedom of expression and information, association and assembly.
2. The collection of the views of the people and their

compilation into a draft constitution that shall be undertaken by an All-Stakeholders' Commission composed of representatives of government, parliament, political parties, civil society, labour, business and the church with a gender and minority balance.

3. A transparent process of the appointment of the All-Stakeholders' Commission members as well as their terms of reference.
4. The holding of a national referendum on any draft constitution.

Socialist Worker

No to starvation wages We want to be paid in Rands!

As the campaign for the presidential run-off intensified we witnessed the collapse of the economy at unprecedented levels with prices increases taking place daily. By the weekend of elections business had stopped restocking the shops accelerating the levels of crisis. At the time of writing this article the Zimbabwe dollar was trading at US\$1: ZW\$25 billion. Inflation is now well above two million %.

Whilst the economy continues to worsen the workers are getting miserable starvation wages that do not even see them getting through a week. Workers are getting less than \$50 billion a month which is a total insult to them. For a family to survive they currently need a salary of more than \$2 trillion. Workers cannot afford anymore to fight for this amount. Bosses are paying themselves in US\$ to cushion themselves against inflation on top of the benefits they give themselves.

Workers can no longer afford to keep on getting salaries in Zim dollars even on a fortnight basis as inflation is quickly eroding any incomes that they might get. Besides that landlords are now demanding rentals in Rands and US\$. Basic commodities are now sold in rands on the parallel market.

Amidst all this crisis there are those who are praying for it to continue as they have benefited especially those who are in the close circles of Zanu PF and bosses. They can afford to order groceries that are delivered on their doorsteps from South Africa. They drive the latest car models.

Union leaders must now demand that collective bargaining agreements be in Rands or the equivalent thereof.

This demand is going to be met with resistance by the bosses and workers must brace themselves for a tough fight. This is why we are calling on the ZCTU to lead this fight and insist that all its affiliates refuse the useless Zanu PF money. If bosses or the state refuse, then an all-out general strike now. Kusiri kufa ndekupi? Companies are charging prices that are rand or dollar denominated and well above the inter-bank rate. Workers must get their share too, after all they produce the wealth.

Joined to this demand must be the demand for no taxation on workers' wages. Why should workers continue to be taxed when they are being asked to pay subsidies to schools through continuous top ups on school fees, groceries, text book and exercise books. Medical services have virtually collapsed with the money that is supposed to go there being abused. During the campaigning period cars were bought for top civil servants, instead of buying drugs and equipment. At the same time medical aid has become useless due to exorbitant and unaffordable top-ups.

It is not only the workers who are suffering in this economic crisis and therefore the fight for a rand salary should also be joined by ordinary people.

by T. Sando

**Free Jenni Williams &
Magodoga Mahlangu of WOZA
and all political prisoners now!**