



FROM THE OFFICE *of* THE PRESIDENT

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PRIVILEGED, PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

13 May 2008

The Honourable Thabo Mbeki
President of the Republic of South Africa
Pretoria

Dear President Mbeki

On behalf of the National Executive of MDC and millions of voters betrayed by Zimbabwe's chronic election disasters, I am writing to respectfully request, once again, that you recuse yourself from your role as exclusive mediator of our nation's crisis.

You will recall that on 8 April, as we peacefully and patiently waited for results to be announced by ZEC -- although we knew the result -- a document was brought to my attention by sympathizers in the Zimbabwe military establishment. This document showed that a decision had been taken by the Zimbabwean government to deploy military, war veterans and militia in a violent campaign against supporters of MDC. This operation has now resulted in many of our supporters being beaten, maimed and killed.

I immediately alerted the SADC leadership including you of these developments. As you know, it is this information that precipitated the Extraordinary SADC Summit on 12 April.

Two days before this meeting I met with Your Excellency in one of the few times we have met face to face. (You will recall that the first time I held a private meeting you in five years was in December 2007). On 10 April I gave you copies of the documents, and briefed you fully about the destabilizing and violent plans of the Zimbabwean security forces. You expressed deep concern and suggested you would convene a meeting between myself and Mr. Mugabe before the SADC Summit. I traveled to South Africa and waited for a full day for this meeting that you said you would set up. No one from your office ever contacted me.

In view of continual mixed messages about your role, I feel in the next few pages I must explicitly outline several of the key reasons that the MDC again kindly requests that you no longer serve as the exclusive mediator for the Zimbabwe crisis.

Lack of confidence in your neutrality

Your lack of neutrality became increasingly evident when I arrived to the Lusaka Summit to see you and Mr. Mugabe on television together proclaiming there is “no crisis” in Zimbabwe. The fact you made this inexplicable comment after a meeting I learned about only on television, naturally alarmed both me and MDC’s National Executive, given what you knew. Following this comment, and others you made to SADC Heads of State, it became clear to MDC’s National Executive that it must urgently review our relationship with you and your role in the mediation.

May I respectfully mention that when you started mediating, Zimbabwe still had a functioning economy, millions of our citizens had not fled to other countries to escape political and economic crisis, and tens of thousands had not yet died from impoverishment and disease. In fact, since the 29 March election, Zimbabwe has plunged into horrendous violence while you have been mediating. With respect, if we continue like this, there will be no country left.

Not only have you been unable to denounce the well-documented post-election attacks on our people, but your government even played a role in Zimbabwean government procurement of weapons of repression (tear gas and batons, for example) and agreed to allow passage of arms of war purchased by the same government through South African territory during the troubled post-election period.

Attempting to intervene in the internal affairs of our party

We made it clear to Ms. Mojanku Gumbi and Minister Sydney Mufamadi that MDC was no longer willing to participate in any initiative in any form or shape under your mediation. At one point, we were forced to formally communicate this in writing to Ms. Gumbi. It is therefore with considerable disappointment that I later learned that you have continued to make representations in meetings and to the media that you are the mediator and that you are in discussions with MDC and ZANU-PF.

I do not understand how this can be so when I personally communicated our position. Most recently, Isaac Maposa of the Zimbabwe Institute came to see me saying that he had been sent to try to set up a discussion between you and me with respect to mediation. I told Mr. Maposa to convey to you that the position taken by MDC’s National Executive with respect to your role in the mediation had not changed.

A few days later, it was suggested that you were again in contact with a member of my National Executive, Secretary-General Mr. Tendai Biti. This interaction is reminiscent of that which happened prior to the break up of the MDC in October 2005. I respectfully submit to you that such "private" meetings contributed to the misunderstandings that later led to a split in our organization. I urge in the future if there is any matter that requires my attention, that you please communicate with me directly, unless it has been otherwise arranged in writing.

Blocking United Nations Security Council discussions on Zimbabwe

As you know, when MDC attempted to appeal to the United Nations Security Council to investigate and help stop the carnage, it was you, the so-called "neutral" mediator, who blocked a possible road to resolution of the crisis. Given your role as formal mediator, South Africa should have recused itself from this discussion. Another principle of mediation is that a mediator cannot publicly defend or endorse the position of one side or the other, which South Africa did at the United Nations.

Ignoring and suppressing the Khampepe Report on the 2002 elections

At the time of writing, I have just been made aware a further development that would seem to incontrovertibly compromise your perceived neutrality. If it is true that you both ignored and suppressed the detailed 2002 election report written by judges Sisi Khampepe and Dikgang Moseneke, then you certainly must stand down with immediate effect. I will quote the words of Jeremy Gauntlett who led MDC's 2002 Presidential Election challenge, "there can be no good reason to keep secret the Khampepe-Moseneke report. By doing so Mbeki implicitly confirms what it must contain and that he has no moral claim to mediate a state of affairs at which he has, in secret, connived."

With regard to the above report, I have not yet had time to investigate the matter but given the gravity of the allegations, I believe it is your responsibility to immediately and publicly explain to the Zimbabwean people any perceived complicity in perpetuating Mr. Mugabe's rule in 2002. We will follow up with you on this matter in due course.

Breaching the principles of mediation

It is a universally accepted principle that in a mediation between two parties, if one party does not have confidence in the mediator -- irrespective of qualification, level of knowledge or perceived sense of success -- that mediator must stand down. This is what you did in a similar situation in the Cote d'Ivoire mediation.

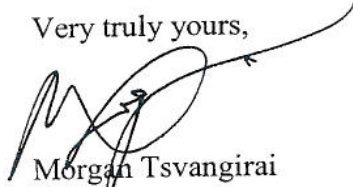
I am aware that MDC's decision regarding your role in the mediation was brought directly to your attention. Once I had formally advised the Chairman of SADC of our decision, as it is this body that appointed you mediator, we then held a press

conference at which I publicly announced the same message – that the crisis now required a new mediator.

Please note, irrespective of the fact that we kindly request you to please stand down immediately as mediator, MDC, of course, still considers South Africa a vitally important neighbour and member of SADC. We remain fully committed to SADC's critical role and have no problem with South Africa's participation in mediation efforts. It is your own involvement as exclusive mediator to which we take exception.

In closing, as our people continue to die in post-election violence, as the Zimbabwe Election Commission still refuses to announce a runoff election date, and as our economy continues to drive the Zimbabwean people into poverty and despair, I am writing to once again respectfully inform you that MDC sees your role as mediator as neither appropriate nor effective. As a leader, whilst you may not have respect for me as a person, I can only ask you to respect the position that I hold, which position and responsibility has been endorsed by the majority of Zimbabweans who voted for me.

Very truly yours,



Morgan Tsvangirai
PRESIDENT