

## HIGH TIME MANGUDYA RESIGNS



RBZ Governor Dr John Mangudya

*Zimbabweans, angered by the central's bank plan to introduce more bond notes in circulation, have called for the resignation of central bank governor Dr Mangudya. Mangudya, acting under instruction from ZANU PF, recently told media that he intends to introduce 300 million worth of bond notes into an already struggling banking system to bring the total value of bond notes in circulation to 500 million.*

Under pressure from his masters at Shake Shake building, the central bank 'conveniently' introduced bond notes in October 2016 with the hope of solving the liquidity crisis that was hitting hard on Zimbabwe's economy. In an effort to convince Zimbabweans and please his masters, Mangudya sensationally claimed that he would resign if bond notes fail to resuscitate Zimbabwe's crippling economy. Dr Mangudya made the remarks when he met activists and members of social movements in 2016, after they petitioned him not to proceed with his plans to introduce bond notes into Zimbabwe's ailing economy.

The recent decision to introduce 300 million worth of bond notes by central bank governor acting under the instruction from ZANU PF angered Zimbabweans who are now calling for

his. A number of Zimbabweans feel that this move will boost the parallel market, benefiting the few who have access to cash direct from the bank and those who have hired agents for black market to trade foreign currency and bond notes while the poor will continue to lose their hard earned money to the black market.

Commenting on the issue, Claris Madhuku pointed out that "Upon introduction of bond notes facility, Mangudya promised Zimbabweans that bond notes will not exceed the USD200 million loan facility from Afreximbank. However, the additional 300 million worth of bond notes will bring the total value of bond notes to 500 million, which is in sharp contrast to what Mangudya promised Zimbabweans.

"The governor emphasised as well on the need to set up an independent board to oversee bond notes which he, unfortunately, has not yet done to date. He also lied in front of the nation that bond notes would be at 1:1 with the USD. Also, in one of his numerous addresses, Mangudya pointed out that no one will be forced to use bond notes in a multi-currency situation. What we see is however different as we have more if not only bond notes in circulation."

Responding to this publication, ZIMCODD director Patricia Kasiamhuru noted that "The bond notes' value tumbled simply because people did not accept/recognise them as an equivalent form of money and one of the characteristics of money is acceptability. ....Cont on page 3

## ZEC ON FIRING LINE



**ERC Director Tawanda Chimhini**

*The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission is on the firing line due to its failure to open space for interaction with civic society and other stakeholders in the run to the 2018 elections.*

At a recent Election Resource Centre and Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition organised meeting participants raised concern over the failure by ZEC to build public and stakeholder confidence and in the process ensuring some level of accountability and transparency in the 2018 election.

**“The necessary procedures for voter registration are still to be made public while more importantly, both the voter registration and the election implementation plan with clear time lines is yet to be prepared and publicly shared,” said ERC in a statement.**

To date, ZEC has not shared operational procedure in line with regulatory frameworks which, under normal circumstances, are developed before the training and deployment of election process personnel. The ERC pointed out that operational procedures govern all as-

pects of the voter registration process and aid in providing clarity in terms of operational guidelines. Operational procedures ensure equal treatment of every applicant and limit the discretion of election process officials.

The ERC further notes that requests to be allowed access to observe the receiving and the warehousing of the kits in the spirit of enhancing transparency in the pre-voter registration processes were turned down while the request to observe the training of master trainers was also turned down. The requests follows reports that ZEC received 400 kits for the BVR process from Laxton Group Limited while another batch of 2 600 kits is expected to be delivered before October 2017.

The ERC contends that the credibility of the 2018 elections hinges on the election administration body's capacity to be transparent, inclusive and professional in planning, implementing and reviewing of all electoral processes going forward.

One of the workshop participants Pride Mukono wrote to ZEC on the 6th of September requesting for publication of names and qualifications of master trainers and technicians being trained by ZEC and those who will conduct Biometric Voter Registration. The request was made in terms of section 61 of the Zimbabwe Constitution which guarantees access to information to every citizen of Zimbabwe for any information held by the State or an agency of government insofar as this information is required in the interest of public accountability.

*Mangudya must re-sign...continued from pg 1*



Zim Activists protesting against bond notes in Harare (2016)

Lack of acceptability emanated from lack of confidence on the authorities which put in place the bond instrument/measure.”

Concerning the black market that is on the rise, ZIMCODD indicated that “The unacceptability of bond notes compared to other currencies, (US\$, Rand, Pound, Euro, etc), brought about the foreign currency black market. The liquidity crisis introduced the use of plastic money to aid transactions. Again the public failed to totally accept plastic money as equivalent to hard cash (bond note, US\$, etc.). This brought about another form of black market, where the bond note was traded with electronic money (swipe and mobile money transfers). These two parallel/black markets are cur-

rently holding money from the banking industry as money that ever gets out of the bank never finds its way back.”

ZIMCODD also emphasised that the authorities failed to curb the two parallel markets (electronic and hard cash) and anything liquid in the market is being mopped out and the problem remains. The additional US\$300 million bond notes into the market will not be a solution to the current economic crisis in Zimbabwe. Rather the introduction of this money will fuel and boost the parallel market, benefiting the few who have access to cash from the bank who have hired agents for black market to trade foreign currency and bond notes.

A recent research by BMI Research warned that there is a likelihood of shortages of imported goods as the supply of hard currency with which to access foreign goods continues to fall. The research noted that businesses, retailers, bankers and individuals, among others head to the parallel market for hard currency — sourcing it out at premiums of between 15% and 25% — the aggregate effect would most likely be an increase in the prices of goods.

BMI Research warned last week that increasing money supply would contribute to an accelerated growth of inflation from 1,4% by year-end to 8,5% in 2018 — making the steepest growth since 2009.

## Spokesperson's Corner: Sowing the seeds of democracy and learning from Kenya



*Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of democratic societies anywhere in the world. Kenya sowed the seeds of democracy in Africa following a landmark ruling by its Supreme Court that declared the August 8, 2017 elections declared the August 8 elections invalid.*

In a 4-2 decision, the Supreme Court determined that the recently concluded presidential election "was not conducted in accordance with the Constitution and ... is invalid". **The ruling is a clear sign that Africa needs more than 'good enough' but free, fair and credible elections.**

Funny enough, regional and international observers had already declared the election as free and fair raising questions as to how these observers reach to such conclusions. Such pronouncements are not new to Zimbabwe in its past elections.

Political parties in Africa, especially the opposition political parties should not **view the decision taken by Kenya's supreme court as a walk in the path.** Raila Odinga leader of the largest opposition party the National Super Alliance

(NASA) who was challenging the outcome of the polls should have channelled a lot of energy in scrutinising policies that facilitate elections. Without understanding the policy framework, there is now way those opposition political parties can prove in court that elections were rigged at the level of policy.

There are also assumptions that the opposition had developed relations with some offices in government departments who provided the much needed information and evidence of rigging by the ruling party. This is something that opposition political parties should be focusing on. Creating relations with those in authority and enhancing their understanding of the vision of their political parties is central. The opposition, even in a coalition, cannot do it alone.

Opposition political parties have always been asking for observers who are not aligned to any political parties. However, events in Kenya point out that observers are not as important as most opposition political parties thought. It is easy for them to announce elections as free and fair but it takes a lot of work for opposition parties to discredit the elections. Towards elections, focus should not be on who is observing elections but more on policy frameworks, evidence of intimidation and violence and rigging at vote counting level.

What was more important was the ability of NASA in Kenya to mobilise citizens to vote. While there are challenges with any electoral system in many African countries, there is however need to ensure that citizens receive more positive information on voting and allow political leaders to focus on policy and regulatory issues at other level.

## Election Update

*We wonder if ZEC was already pointing on the outcome of the elections when they said the opposition will have no ground to contest election results as the commission will tightly stick to election regulations in the country.*

*We understand that the Biometric Voter Registration equipment is already in the country and we hope that ZEC will resume the voter registration process soon enough to meet its December 2017 deadline.*

ZEC Preparedness

Zimbabwe Electoral Commission's (Zec) capacity to conduct a free and fair election in 2018 has been questioned due to the current circus bedevilling the electoral management body, by a number of stakeholders except ZANU PF of course. The electoral management board has always been acting under instruction from Robert Mugabe and his ZANU PF party.

Ahead of the elections, ZEC is expected to deliver a new voters role. The 2018 elections will only be credible if a new voters role is delivered. One of the major contestants in the last elections was the existence of ghost voters which opposition political parties said worked to the advantage of Robert Mugabe and his ZANU PF party. Veritas predicted that Zec **would only be able to complete a new voters' roll in April next year despite earlier claims that the roll would be ready by December this year. This therefore means that Zec could, but only just, be ready with a new voters' roll in April next year, in time for a May proclamation for elections in July/August 2018 — but not in time for a March election.**"

There are indications that Robert Mugabe and



**ZEC Chairperson Rita Makarau**

his ZANU PF party could push for an early election and analysts have pointed to the on-going youth interface rallies/campaigns as one of the reasons why ZANU PF would be comfortable in going for an early election.

Recently, Zec chairperson Rita Makarau told Parliament that the roll-out plan for voter registration is anticipated to be completed December 2017, where 2 585 biometric voter registration kits will be deployed for the national exercise, which will use 9 663 static registration centres, and one kit in each province is expected to register 6 400 voters during the four phases, averaging 1 600 registrations in each phase.

Registrar-General Tobaiwa Mudede has also announced commencement of mobile registration for identity documents, birth and death certificates throughout the country that are crucial for voter registration.

## Zim's Civic Society Calls for Electoral reforms



*Stakeholders attending a recent media stakeholders conference have called for media to stick to principles of fairness, accuracy and balance ahead of the 2018 harmonised elections. The conference, organised by the Media Alliance of Zimbabwe (MAZ) under the theme “Strengthening the media’s role in fostering free, fair and peaceful elections in Zimbabwe and beyond” is meant to strategically prepare the media for the 2018 elections.*

MAZ Director, Patience Zirima expressed concern over polarised and partisan coverage of elections in Zimbabwe.

“International observers generally noted polarised and partisan coverage of elections by the media. The Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC countries observed that despite there being a media monitoring committee chaired by ZEC, coverage given to political parties and their candidates was done in an openly partisan manner by both the public and private media. Public print and electronic media predominantly gave coverage to the activities, rallies and views of candidates from Zanu (PF) while the private media on

the other hand was generally biased and sympathetic towards the opposition.”

She further stated that while ZEC noted the bias, and unfair coverage during the election, the Commission still stated in its election report that, “there was general compliance with the relevant laws that govern media by both public and private media during the election period.”

Delivering his keynote address at the MAZ conference, Dr. Ibbo Mandaza, a Zimbabwean academic, author and publisher, alluded to the recent Kenyan election and said observers and the media needed time to understand all the electoral processes so as to contribute to ensuring free and fair elections.

“The media and election observers should understand the nerves of electoral processes. These include voter registration, delimitation, printing of ballot papers, monitoring of the election day and the counting of votes. In all this, it’s important to assess whether the conditions for free and fair elections were in place,” Mandaza said.

Mandaza urged the media to educate citizens on the nature and content of politics to the electorate. He bemoaned the capture of the media by politicians across the political divide as a poison that could lead to churning of concocted information that may prevent the holding of free and fair elections. His sentiments were echoed by Reuben Barwe, the Chief Correspondent of the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) who highlighted the polarisation of both the private and public media during elections.