

Early Warning Bulletin

Inciting Rhetoric



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Executive Summary

ZIMBABWE is entering an unpredictable terrain laden with potential for progression and regression in the political, social and economic sphere. Replete with history of violence during such political transitions, there are already worrying signs of potential violence. The Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) has been monitoring and documenting reports and incidents from January 2017. These reports and incidents suggest that there are tensions within the country at various levels centred on the political, social and economic state of the country. The use of hate speech has increased, through various mediums including social media, incitement of violence at campaign rallies, gay bashing or labelling of opponents as gay. These statements are pervasive across the political divide with intensity increasing as 2018 elections draw near.

The use of hate speech and statements inciting violence against opposing inter and intra party views have contributed to acts of violence. Youths continue to be used as foot soldiers. Former war veterans, splintered, and dismissed from the ruling party continue to instigate resentment towards the First Family, targeted at Grace Mugabe. The ruling party Zanu PF and opposition MDC-T have all recorded cases of assault, property damage, with little or no tangible efforts at resolving these amicably. Newly formed parties like Zimbabwe People First (ZimPF) have had breakaways within

months of formation. This is directly attributed to lack of adherence to democratic values. The splintering has not been without violence as senior officials were publicly involved in fist fights. The coalition formation processes have also exhibited the underlying tensions in opposition political parties and ethnic undertones.

The economy is not showing any signs of recovery. Policy inconsistency and incoherence continues, increasing rent seeking behaviour, and abuse of government facilities. The liquidity crisis, cash shortages have increased. Efforts to engage with the international financial institutions (IFIs) through a debt repayment strategy appears to have stalled due to non-implementation of other economic reforms. Regional and international institutions are not fully engaged on Zimbabwe post the government of national unity ushered through Southern African Development Community (SADC) mediation, despite signs of potential violence and breakdown.

Key local institutions appear unable to provide the required safeguards, with the security sector caught in the factional fights in the ruling party. Concerns of abuse of state institutions such as the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC) for political and partisan purposes are rife. Commissions such as the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) have remained paper tigers. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) has exhibited

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zeal and eagerness to execute its mandate, despite financial and human resource constraints. Civil society organizations have continued to provide responses and services to communities, though with equally limited technical and financial resources.

Considering these reports and incidents, there is urgent need for civil society to coordinate efforts around early warning monitoring, reporting and response. In addition, political parties are called upon to settle their internal disputes amicably and without resorting to violence to settle political scores. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission is urged to urgently come up with a code of conduct against political violence which has to be signed by all political parties.

Introduction

THERE are noticeable heightened political tensions ahead of the 2018 elections, intra party violence, and a sluggish economic growth causing pressure on families and communities. This report points out early signs of trouble while providing a comprehensive, balanced approach to mitigate and manage the risk factors where possible, that could trigger violent conflict. As an organization ZPP is committed to contributing towards efforts to resolve the underlying root causes of violence. ZPP has been collecting, documenting information against a set of indicators that include political, economic and

social indicators (see annexure 1). The indicators intend to track, monitor and record all possible signs of potential electoral violence ahead of the 2018 elections. The indicators map and anticipate the potential nature, scope and scale of political violence. This is anticipated to allow ZPP and other stakeholders to come up with appropriate interventions and response measures.

These indicators are based on historical experiences of likely triggers of violence at a considerable scale, affecting communities or targeting certain groups of peoples including women, youths, farmers, farm workers, political activists, civil society among others.

From January- August 2017, ZPP monitors have consistently reported with concern the increase in use of ethnicity, hate speech, intra party conflict, and violence, desperation of masses with the economic situation failure to access cash from banks. These indicators of concern are not suggesting that they are more important than the other indicators being tracked, but have been consistently reported and flagged by ZPP monitors.

Indicators of Concern

Increasing Use of Ethnicity and Hate Speech, Incitement of Violence

THE history of Zimbabwe is littered with examples of abuse of ethnicity for political objectives. This predates independent Zimbabwe with colonialists using the differences between tribes and groups to advance their agendas. Historians have observed that during the liberation struggle, formation of nationalist movements and post-independence these tensions and use of ethnicity have continued with grave consequences for national and societal cohesion. The state institutions supposed to safeguard the national ethos and values are equally constrained by their ethnic affiliations.

Senior recruitment and appointments in government are believed to be decided on the basis of ethnicity more than competency. Dr. Ibbo Mandaza a former public service commissioner bemoans “So, ethnic politics has been part and parcel of the world-view post independent Zimbabwean leadership. To some extent, it has helped to mould the State itself, pervading as it does almost every sphere of the polity, from the composition of the Cabinet itself, to that of various arms and levels of the Party, government, defence forces, central intelligence organisation, police, public service and parastatals. Ethnic representation, as opposed to national integration, has been the practice in a country in which colonial and tribal nomenclature – e.g. “Mashonaland”, “Matebeleland”, “Manicaland”, etc – have continued to litter and underpin the political landscape”.¹ As the political tensions escalate in the country, political actors are resorting to their ethnic and economic interests for safe havens. This is likely to escalate as the uncertainty with succession battle within the ruling party, Zanu PF continues to degenerate into open words of hatred, sense of entitlement of one ethnic group of another. This sense

¹ Ibbo Mandaza, “Introduction”, *Tekere: A Lifetime of Struggle*, Sapes Books, 2007:24, see also Muzondidya and Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni, “‘Echoing Silences’: Ethnicity in post-colonial Zimbabwe, 1980-2007,” *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* 7 (2007): 275 - 297,

of entitlement of one group over the other has excluded other voices, and entrenched perceptions of a captured state and state institutions by ethnic and securocrats elites.

The tensions between Shona and Ndebele² have been continued and evidencing themselves in the intra party fights and increasing use of hate speech. In Zanu PF, the absence of a respected senior Ndebele voice with the stature of Dr. Joshua Nkomo or Dumiso Dabengwa in the leadership has exposed the limitations of the Unity Accord. Vice President Phelekezela Mphoko who by virtue of being Zanu PF second secretary has faced resistance and ridicule from within including questioning of his leadership seniority and credentials.³

The Shona “dominance”⁴ and narrative will remain contested as more groups emerge to challenge that tribal hegemony such as Vukani Mahlabezulu, Imbovane Yamahlabezulu, Mthwakazi Action Group on Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing, Mthwakazi People’s Congress (MPC) and the recent declaration of a Ndebele kingdom.⁵ The extent of support of these groups is not the issue, they do have a right to freely associate, assemble and exist. The genuine failure to address historical grievances continues to support their agenda and narratives. Gukurahundi, and its effects are still fresh and a daily reality experienced through poor service delivery, such as failure to access national documents, absence of emotional closure, continued state-sanctioned denial and subterfuge explanations.

Structural, institutional and marginalisation of Matebeleland

² Within the Ndebele community there are also other small groupings such as Shangani, Kalanga, Tonga and Venda who are also contesting the Ndebele dominance

³ President Mugabe at rallies has consistently referred to Dabengwa and his decision to move out as sore issue for his party

⁴ Stuart Doran; *Kingdom, Power, Glory: Mugabe, Zanu and the Quest for Supremacy, 1960-1987*,

⁵ NewsDay, New ‘Ndebele king’ trashes Unity Accord, <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2017/07/10/new-ndebele-king-trashes-unity-accord/> (last accessed 24 August 2017)

provinces continues, suggesting a form of punishment beyond the use of overt violence. Opposition MDC-T has been accused of undermining voices from Matebeleland in their party and decision-making processes, as evidenced by party splits, violence and use of executive powers to make controversial appointments. The intra-Shona tensions are taking a more pronounced state with the battle for the presidency of Zanu PF. The Shona groups are diverse, including the Karanga, Manyika, Zezuru, Korekore and Ndau. The leadership of Zanu PF has been seen as predominantly Zezuru. The Karanga are suggesting that “now it’s their time to rule”. During political rallies, statements celebrating the invincibility of one ethnic group over the other have been recorded.

Hate speech for purposes of monitoring and documenting signs of potential violence and conflict is defined as speeches, statements or any other utterances that intimidate threaten violence (directly or indirectly), incite others to commit violence, or threaten members of the opposition, civil society or any other dissenting voices, for whatever reason. These statements breed intolerance and violence, a sustained campaign of negative publicity and denunciation of the opposing views and dissenting voices, through the public and private media. These speeches provide “moral” and legal justification for use of violence and force by ruling party functionaries and law enforcement agents.

Ethnicity statements are used as part of justifying the ascendancy of one group over the other based on historical agreements or sense of superiority over another. In the MDC-T, the July 2016 appointment of two vice Presidents Nelson Chamisa and Elias Mudzuri has been widely interpreted as part of ethnic balancing, and an insult to Vice President Khupe, a Ndebele and female. MDC-T President Morgan Tsvangirai dismissed the statements.⁶

Senior ruling party officials, such as Vice President Mphoko were quoted stating that the “fact that Mugabe is a Zezuru does not mean that when he goes a Karanga must take over in the succession matrix”, these statements were bolstered by party leadership’s failure to stop the singing of songs celebrating Zezuru “invincibility” at a political rally in

Chiweshe Mashonaland Central.⁷ Chiweshe has experienced violence before including in 2008, 9 individuals were killed and tortured⁸. Speaking at the meet the Youth Rally in Masvingo, President Robert Mugabe openly rebuked those driving the ethnic agenda. He stated that “they are seniors who want to corrupt the youth who say we no longer want to be ruled by Harare... they are tribalists and they claim that their tribe is superior. The liberation struggle was won by non-tribal means. Every tribe contributed to our victory.”⁹

Communities are being threatened with worse violence if they decide to vote for the opposition; on February 17, Murehwa North, ward 16 Zanu PF Chairperson, one Peter Chitaukire, was reportedly quoted threatening to unleash violence, stating that 2008 was ‘little and the real darkness shall come’ in 2018 if orders are not followed.¹⁰ Hate speech targeting ruling party members and opposition supporters has increased with the advent of instigated demonstrations. If not contained, continuous hate speech and inciting language might result in violence especially around the 2018 elections. Examples of some of the reported incidents are below:

- April 3, Zanu PF Mashonaland Central province demonstrated against Saviour Kasukuwere, the party’s national political commissar. Zanu PF members among them Advocate Martin Dinha the Provincial Affairs Minister openly derided Kasukuwere saying a big body does not translate into being a good boxer”.
- April 18, in Masvingo Chivi Growth Point during Independence Day celebrations, traditional leader, Chief Madyangove threatened opposition supporters saying that in the upcoming 2018 polls they will be in danger.¹¹
- May 14, Minister of Youth Indigenization and Economic empowerment, Patrick Zhuwao, was quoted saying “Zanu PF is full of idiots” in direct attack to individuals associated or sympathetic to Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa who were believed to be sponsoring demonstrations against Kasukuwere.¹²

⁷ The Herald, VP Mphoko scoffs at Karanga presidency, <http://www.herald.co.zw/vp-mphoko-scoffs-at-karanga-presidency/>, The Independent <https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2016/02/19/ethnicity-zanu-pfs-messy-predicament/> (last accessed 24 August 2017)

⁸ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Run-up-June-27-election-2008.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.herald.co.zw/live-masvingo-presidential-youth-interface-rally/> (last access 31 August 2017)

¹⁰ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ZPP-February-MMR.pdf> (last accessed 29 August 2017)

¹¹ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ZPP-APRIL-MMR.pdf>

¹² <https://www.thestandard.co.zw/2017/05/14/zanu-pf-full-idiots-zhuwao/> (last accessed 5 September 2017)

⁶ Tsvangirai is quoted “This hullabaloo about the appointment of two vice-presidents is not an issue as far as I am concerned. I don’t look at tribal lenses when assigning party cadres duties. Vice-president Khupe (Thokozani) was not only voted by people from Matabeleland but all the provinces voted for her. (<http://www.newzimbabwe.com/news-34440-Tsvangirai+says+MDC-T+above+tribalism/news.aspx>) Last accessed, 04 September 2017.

- Grace Mugabe’s political ascendancy has been met with scorn. Her ambitions have been described as “delusional”¹³
- July 17, Grace Mugabe at the Youth Rally in Lupane, Matebeleland North declared that the MDC-T should not be allowed in Matebeleland North, a statement that promotes political intolerance. At the same rally President Mugabe spoke in forked tongues “I hear there are groups that are moving around beating people. No, that is not our way of doing things. If you see them push them off the road and give them the punishment they deserve. Do not even wait for the police to come. We cannot have criminals spoiling our good name.”¹⁴
- July 9, Prof. Jonathan Moyo accused top military commanders of tribalism and killing Ndebele comrades at Mgagao potentially heightening tensions within the military and ruling party¹⁵ but also indicating the need to address historical grievances being used to whip up emotions.
- June 2, after the Marondera Youth Interface, Prof Jonathan Moyo tweeted after the that the sun would rise from Mashonaland East. This was construed by political opponents as reinforcing Zezuru supremacy in Zanu PF politics.¹⁶
- February 12, Temba Mliswa, MP for Norton, was quoted, “We cannot have a situation where we are monopolized by one tribe. They are not superior and not even educated. Somebody has to just start fire by throwing a match

stick into the bush. That is what I have done today. The grass is ready to burn. Let us see, how far the fire will go”.¹⁷ Mliswa further stated that “The birth of the tribal agenda is not a secret. I am from Midlands, a Karanga from Shurugwi. My mother is Manyika and my grandmother is Ndebele. I cover three tribes in one. Our worry is that the game of politics is kept at the hands of one tribe being in power and no one else. If you look at the values of the liberation struggle, the president and the generals they were not many Zezuru’s. The general was Karanga (Tongogara) and Nikita Mangena was Ndebele. But when it comes to the presidency it should not be a monopoly of one tribe. I have said this and I will repeat it, they is nothing powerful than a people standing by their tribe. They is going to be a time when a regional balance and they going to be a distribution of power. Where Zezuru’s are in, at some point Karanga’s, Ndebele’s etc should come in. But come 2018, I will not vote for a Zezuru’s president...”¹⁸

- August 17, Mliswa was reportedly quoted again at a press conference that he will not vote for a Zezuru¹⁹.
- Following the coalition fracas and tensions within the MDC-T and MDC Alliance formation, Tsvangirai reportedly stated, “I’m very concerned that we are now forming different groupings and formations. Zezuru unconquerable, Karanga invincible, Ndebele hegemony. This is a very dangerous development. This country should never be divided on the basis

of ethnicity. Those who are promoting ethnicity and ethnic affiliations are dangerous for this country”²⁰

Social media has lately been used by political parties and individuals to drive their narratives including largely hateful and statements that incite violence. For Zanu PF, an effort to rein in individuals on social media has failed, despite Mugabe’s attempts. Professor Jonathan Moyo, minister for Higher and Tertiary Education, and secretary for technology in the Zanu PF politburo is very active on social media platforms and has a created a large following.²¹ His comments have also been laced with hate speech targeting individuals perceived to be associated with Lacoste faction. Professor Moyo allegedly presented a dossier against Mnangagwa before the Zanu PF politburo on 19 July 2017. Moyo has accused Mnangagwa of leading the Lacoste faction, of fanning factionalism in Zanu PF and pursuing unconstitutional methods in leadership change. For opposition parties, the MDC-T allegedly ordered members of its party to desist from making statements considered to incite violence or hate against the party leadership on social media platforms.²² During this period, ZPP documented very concerning trends of hate speech online as indicated below:

- On June 19 Prof. Moyo through a statement released to the media called command agriculture “ugly-culture” accusing Mnangagwa of hijacking and corrupting the program. However, on 30 June President Mugabe praised command agriculture describing it as a “beautiful programme”²³
- On August 19 Prof. Moyo posted “Soon. One day & only one day

¹³ The Newstatesman, Last Days of Robert Mugabe <http://www.newstatesman.com/world/2017/01/last-days-robert-mugabe>

¹⁴ ZBC live broadcast of Lupane rally

¹⁵ <http://news.pindula.co.zw/2017/07/09/prof-moyo-full-statement-responding-allegations-air-marshal-shiri-gen-chiwenga/#.Wa0pUMZLfIU> (last accessed 5 September 2017)

¹⁶ <https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2017/06/12/sun-will-rise-mash-east-mugabe/> (last accessed 5 September 2017)

¹⁷ Sunday Mail February 12, 2017

¹⁸ (<http://nehandatv.com/2017/08/21/will-never-vote-zezuru-president-2018-temba-mliswa-video/>) or (<http://newzimbabwe.com/news-38740-Mliswa+says+no+more+Zezuru+president/news.aspx>) (Last accessed, 04 September 2017)

¹⁹ <http://newzimbabwe.com/news-38740-Mliswa+says+no+more+Zezuru+president/news.aspx> (last accessed 5 September 2017)

²⁰ <https://www.zimeye.net/khupe-fanning-tribalism-says-tsvangirai/>, (last accessed, 04 September 2017)

²¹ As of 31 August 2017, Moyo had over 165 200 followers on twitter

²² <http://www.newzimbabwe.com/news-34027-MDC-T+feuds+Komichi+bans+social+media/news.aspx>

²³ ZBC Live broadcast Masvingo rally, Mucheke Stadium

some idiots who think they can get away with defamation will pay by the nose. Mhosva hayiwori. #Handeitione! (a crime does not expire; the long arm of the law will catch up with you #Itison!) He added in a further tweet “So you & your Lacoste lot think for me to prove that there are other reasonable people in Zim I must agree with your garbage? #Ulimbuluhey!” (you are crazy)

- Pro-Emmerson Mnangagwa activist Energy Mutodi stoked tempers when he accused Ministers Sydney Sekeremayi and David Parirenyatwa of poisoning Vice President Mnangagwa in a statement that is likely to cause more tension in the faction ridden party.²⁴
- August 31, Zanu PF activist Jones Musara called Professor Jonathan Moyo a Satanist on Twitter and accused him of poisoning VP Mnangagwa. Musara tweeted, ED refusal to deny being poisoned means poisoning yakaitika (poisoning happened). Dhiziri and Jonso are at the centre of that poisoning of ED. Pasi nemaG40 poisonists.²⁵ (down with the G40 poisonists)
- August 22, Magura Charumbira a Zanu PF youth activist in Bulawayo threatened violence at late Masvingo Minister of State Shuvai Mahofa’s funeral if Vice President Mphoko officiated ²⁶

Intraparty tensions, violence and conflict

Zanu PF

Factionalism is not new to Zanu PF, but has always been managed for political and economic objectives that benefit the elites, and President Mugabe. Increasingly, there is less cohesion amongst the elites, evidenced by defiance of directives from the leadership. These include war veterans, youths, ministers, and women’s league officials. Seismic shifts were registered with the death of General Mujuru in 2011, dismissal of former Vice President Joice Mujuru in 2014, subsequent dismissal of senior party members like Rugare Gumbo and Didymus Mutasa. Violence and attacks on factional basis have also been recorded, including allegations of poisoning of opponents as far back as 2015, during party conference. Rallies and demonstrations targeting perceived “successionists” or those not loyal to President Mugabe have become the norm.

War veterans were used as storm troopers against Joice Mujuru, only for them to be ejected within a few years. Youths are now

²⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/EnergyMutodi/posts/688851167970558>

²⁵ Jones Musara Twitter account

²⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HaXrx67rCg8>

the new storm troopers. President Mugabe has benefitted from them but also denounced their abuse at Masvingo Youth Rally interface. “We don’t want you to be bought off, we know money is sweet. Those night meetings should end. This habit of using the youths should stop. There is this huge problem that when we get to elections some say we don’t want so and so. Even when you look at Manicaland, the resident minister is not wanted by others so they are split. Even the chairman of the province is not wanted, for what reason? They just don’t want? It’s the same as here”, President Mugabe is quoted.²⁷

Use of state security infrastructure will continue but their reliability is doubted as they have demonstrated loyalty and allegiance to Mnangagwa more than Mugabe’s preferred approach, death in office or a Sekeramayi presidency. Despite the security-civilian tensions in the ruling party, on April 23, Vice President Mphoko reportedly called on the military to intervene in the raging Zanu PF political disputes²⁸. The relationship of the Zanu PF and the military remains complex. Reported incidents of Zanu PF intra party tensions, acts of intimidation and violence recorded during this period include:

- January 22, in Mberengwa South, Shoko Simbarashe Chikati was denied maize handouts, he was accused by Silas Shumba of supporting Member of Parliament Chiratidzo Mabuwa who is accused of aligning herself to a faction led by Vice President Mnangagwa ²⁹
- February 18, Masvingo, youths aligned with the different Zanu PF factions engaged in fist fights at Runyararo West Hall. No arrests were made, the police were informed that it was an internal matter.³⁰
- February 16, Gokwe, in the run-up to President Mugabe’s birthday celebrations, youth officers were allegedly requested to donate \$5 each and collect \$1 from party youths’ beneficiaries of government assistance. Youths from the Youth Project Centre are said to have fallen victim to this. Some youths reportedly questioned this and were threatened with ejection from the Youth Project Centre.³¹
- March 25, Chegutu West, violence broke out during a meeting convened by MP, Hon Dexter Nduna of Zanu PF. Nduna accused party youths of abusing party funds³².
- April 16, Harare, Zanu PF provincial headquarters, youths

²⁷ ZBC Live broadcast Masvingo Youth rally, Mucheke Stadium

²⁸ <http://www.herald.co.zw/mpphoko-defends-kasukuwere/>

²⁹ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ZPP-January-MMR-.pdf>

³⁰ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ZPP-February-MMR-.pdf>

³¹ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ZPP-February-MMR-.pdf>

³² <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ZPP-March-MMR.pdf>

presenting a petition against Kasukuwere and Harare province commissar, Shadreck Mashayamombe were attacked by the duo's supporters. Three people were injured and anti-riot police dispersed the fighting groups³³.

- May 21, Bulawayo, Davis Hall, at a meeting attended by Vice President Mphoko, district youth chairperson Magura Charumbira was reportedly stabbed over differences emanating from the fate of the Political Commissar Saviour Kasukuwere. During this melee, vendors nearby had their wares looted³⁴.

While these incidents appear isolated and dispersed, they do evidence the increasing tensions within the ruling party and the easy resort to violence to resolve differences or assert one's position of authority.

MDC-T and opposition parties

The MDC-T has gone through phases of internal violence since its formation, contributing to splitting of the opposition. Internal processes to address differences seem insufficient and incapable of resolving these differences. The incidents of violence are numerous and have created a narrative of an opposition that is not capable of stamping out violence, equally thrives on use of force to instil discipline, fear and command like Zanu PF.³⁵ The formative discussions for the grand coalition have led to violence in the MDC-T, with Vice President Thokozani Khupe, Chairperson Lovemore Moyo and Organising Secretary Abednigo Bhebhe and other members attacked in Bulawayo offices by identified youths from Harare on August 6. The three were targeted for what was seen as snubbing the signing of the MDC Alliance in Harare the previous day. These actions were roundly condemned. The Zimbabwe People First (ZimPF) also suffered a split (the first on 8 February, and the second at the beginning of May) with senior leaders resigning in quick succession leaving Joice Mujuru to form National People's Party (NPP). Senior staffers and officials within Mujuru's party fought publicly.³⁶ Some of the incidents reported involving the opposition include the following:

- January 21, Gweru, about 150 MDC-T members gathered at Mtapa Hall to elect a new Ward 7 chairperson but the meeting was aborted after violence erupted over alleged

irregular electoral practices.³⁷

- April 2, Chegutu Central, fights ensued between MDC-T members in Ward 6. It is alleged that individuals aligned to aspiring MP Mr. Charlton Hwende fought and injured a party member known as Mai Jojo and in the process property was destroyed³⁸
- April 24, Alaska Ward 4, Chinhoyi town, MDC-T members clashed over 2018 local authority election nominations, in the violence one person was reportedly injured and hospitalized³⁹.

Economic Decline: Run on the Banks

The Zimbabwean economy has seen worse, and continues to decline rapidly characterized by increased informality, unemployment, low industrial capacity utilization⁴⁰, liquidity crisis and depleted foreign currency reserves, increasing domestic debt and significant trade deficit among other negative economic growth indices. Since the official introduction of the multicurrency regime in 2009, Zimbabwe has steadily shifted towards the introduction of its own currency through the printing of bond notes⁴¹, and uncontrolled issuance of treasury bills.⁴² Local bank deposits are not backed by any foreign currency reserves and cannot therefore be used for international payments or trade prompting the Reserve Bank, and banks to issue restrictions on non-priority payments. The local currency of trade has effectively become the real time gross system (RTGS). The overdraft facility under the Reserve Bank has been used to fund several quasi fiscal activities including some contested policies such as command agriculture. The decisions made have grave consequences for the economy. For instance: treasury bills were issued to offset debts owed to electricity authority by local authorities for about \$600 million; treasury bills were issued to cover command agriculture worth over \$250 million⁴³; and treasury bills are likely to fund and subsidize

³⁷ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ZPP-January-MMR-.pdf>

³⁸ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ZPP-APRIL-MMR.pdf>

³⁹ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ZPP-APRIL-MMR.pdf>

⁴⁰ Passing of Statutory Instrument 64 of 2016 was also met with mixed views though it was supported by local business member associations and chambers of commerce, see for instance USAID Strategic Economic Research and Analysis (SERA) Program Draft Report on the Review of the Impacts of Statutory Instrument 64 of 2016 http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00MDKJ.pdf, (last accessed 29 August 2017)

⁴¹ <http://spotlight-z.com/news/zimbabwe-secretly-printing-money-since-2012/> (last accessed 29 August 2017)

⁴² <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2017/06/27/govt-overdraft-stifles-2017-budget-support/> <http://www.financialgazette.co.zw/treasury-bills-fuel-cash-crisis/> (last accessed 29 August 2017)

⁴³ Statutory Instrument 79 of 2017, Agricultural Marketing Authority (Command Agriculture Scheme for Domestic Crop, Livestock and Fisheries Production) Regulations, 2017 has been passed to prosecute those who abuse this facility. There are mixed sentiments of whether command agriculture was successful or not.

³³ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ZPP-APRIL-MMR.pdf>

³⁴ <http://www.zimpeaceproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/MMR-May-2017-1.pdf>

³⁵ <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2017/08/10/mdc-t-violence-history-impunity/> (last accessed 5 September 2017)

³⁶ <http://www.financialgazette.co.zw/mujurus-party-splits/>, <http://www.herald.co.zw/latest-zimpf-splits-again/>

the purchasing of maize from command agriculture at prices that appear beyond the market and regional prices of \$240/per tonne. The government is offering \$390/per tonne. Command agriculture has been viewed as rent seeking and described as “ugly culture”.⁴⁴

The implications of these economic policies are felt by the ordinary person, such as pensioners, students, women, elderly, persons with disabilities have expressed great concerns and challenges in accessing their deposits. Citizens are spending hours in waiting to withdraw money from the banks. The banks have reduced the withdrawal limits to \$50 and \$100 per day or per week depending on the bank. ZPP conducted snap visit to banks in and around Harare and observed that depositors were spending nights and days waiting for withdrawals only to be informed that disbursements have been exhausted. This cash crisis is affecting all banks including mobile money payment service providers who serve a significant number of the underbanked. Opportunities for rent seeking and trading of cash at a premium have been recorded. From interviews conducted, mobile money outlets are charging a premium of 20% for cash transactions. While there have not been reports of any violence targeting banks or in bank queues, the cash situation remains precarious as no respite is evident in the immediate term. Government has indicated that additional bond notes will be printed. Earlier efforts by political parties and citizens to dissuade the government from the issuing bond notes have failed.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2017/06/19/moyo-scoffs-command-ugly-culture/> (last accessed 29 August 2017), government is also commencing a command cattle of \$ 300 million

⁴⁵ <http://www.enca.com/africa/mujuru-loses-bond-notes-case> (last accessed 29 August 2017)

Mitigatory Factors

Food and grain reserves (rural areas, manipulation)

The past harvest season and food reserves have reduced the level of vulnerability of communities in particular rural and farming communities. The exact quantities harvested are not clear as estimates range and vary depending on source. Heading towards an election without food shortages helps mitigate effects of abuse of government food aid facilities in rural areas. Government has consistently disputed this practice though local groups and constitutional commission, the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission has raised concerns in respect of partisan food distribution in and around elections or any other periods.⁴⁶ While food (maize) might be readily available in most communities, the cost for other daily needs remain and worsened by difficulties in accessing cash.

Consideration of maintaining some lines open with international community

After the 2013 election, Zanu PF embarked on a charm offensive to regain confidence of the international community. Efforts were led by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development to engage the international financial institutions (IFIs) through agreement on debt clearance strategy. These efforts culminated in the Lima Agreement to settle the government debt estimated then at over \$2 billion. The clearance of the debt could help restore confidence in the international community but this should be supported by other reforms including the constitutional and law alignment, unfortunately the reforms have been lagging behind. The re-engagement efforts have also been ridiculed by some ruling party members evidencing the factional tensions including the reversal of decisions by the Finance Minister on reducing the wage bill and payment of bonus by President Mugabe.⁴⁷ A balancing approach is being maintained, with Mugabe acts of appeasement of local constituencies and external actors at the expense of broader economic and political reforms needed.

Religion

The rise of Pentecostalism or “prosperity gospel” has provided a window for escapism from daily survival challenges. As observed by scholars Zimbabwe has been under a “prophetic

⁴⁶ Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission: Report on Food Aid Cases <http://veritaszim.net/node/2046> (last accessed 29 August 2017)

⁴⁷ See for instance The Herald, President Orders Reinstatement of 2000 youths, <http://www.herald.co.zw/president-orders-reinstatement-of-2-000-youths/> (last accessed 29 August 2017)

craze”, young church founders “emerged on the scene, preaching the gospel of prosperity and having miracles of varying levels of sophistication attributed to them” with connections to “spiritual fathers from West Africa”. Reception of these individuals have been mixed, celebrated and dismissed as after profits and “gospelpreneurs”.⁴⁸ Some of the more prominent preachers/prophets have been embroiled in different scandals including land, accusations of abuse of women followers, financial abuse and involvement in factional fights through prophecies or declarations. Senior government officials religiously attend these gatherings. The traditional churches through the social arms continue to provide shelter and disciplined messages on ending violence, and peaceful co-existence, though less visible. Apostolic sects are deeply embedded in Zanu PF fights with again prophecies sought by aspiring leaders as testament of being God ordained to lead Zimbabwe.⁴⁹ Zimbabweans of all walks of life have taken to religion as a refuge for their social, political and economic challenges.

Civil society

For years civil society (organized and increasingly informal) have held the line, providing responses, safety nets, humanitarian and legal support to victims of violence, mitigating potential violent scenarios in communities. These groups capacity are constrained due to internal attrition and funding limitations. Through innovation and volunteerism work has continued in different parts of the country. Linkages with communities and citizens will enhance the work of civil society in mitigating against violence or provision of safety nets as needed. With elections in 2018, history has shown that, civil society will also be targeted, with possible media onslaught, de-legitimization, arrests and prosecution undermining their proactive or responsive roles. Considerate of these issues, civil society remains a critical enabler for peaceful co-existence.

⁴⁸ See Prophets, Profits and the Bible in Zimbabwe Festschrift for Aynos Masotcha Moyo

edited by Ezra Chitando, Masiwa Ragies Gunda & Joachim Kügle (2013) available <https://opus4.kobv.de/opus4-bamberg/files/5599/BIAS12Prophetsopusse1A2.pdf> (last accessed 29 August 2017)

⁴⁹ <https://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2017/05/11/prophet-predicts-new-zim-leader>

Recommendations

Political actors should desist from the use of hate speech, inciting language during and after the run up to elections. Institutions mandated with resolving electoral violence should be fully operational including courts under the Magistrates Court for prosecution of these offences. Dispute resolution mechanisms for inter and intra party violence should be set, with political parties renewing their commitment to resolving disputes amicably. The government of Zimbabwe should also address the economic and structural issues that potentially foments violence.

We call upon;

1. Civil society organizations to coordinate efforts to consolidate and coordinate early warning monitoring, reporting and response.
2. Faith based organizations to embrace and promote peace building and tolerance.
3. Political parties to embrace tolerance and denounce all forms of violence.
4. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to urgently come up with a code of conduct against political violence, against which each political party should renew its commitment.
5. The government to ensure the enabling act of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission is finalised and investigation of past violence cases commences. Further implement measures to manage conflict and resolve disputes amicably.
6. SADC and AU and their member states to strengthen their monitoring processes as we move towards the elections to mitigate against political violence.
7. The international community to strengthen and support local monitoring and observer efforts to prevent violence and atrocities.
8. The international financial institutions to use their leverage to insist on upholding human rights.

About Zimbabwe Peace Project

Zimbabwe Peace Project was established in 2000 by a group of non-governmental and church organisations. The initial members of ZPP were Catholic commission of Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJPZ) Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Zimbabwe Council of Churches, Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZIMRIGHTS) Civic Education Network Trust (CIVNET), Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN), Zimbabwe Liberators Platform (ZLP), Zimbabwe Civic Education Trust, Counselling Services Unit (CSU) and Nonviolent Action and Strategies for Social Change (NOVASC). Over the years, the ZPP member partners portfolio has altered as new organisations have come on board while others have ceased to exist, and yet others taken on new and different focus, among other reasons. Current member organisations are Catholic Commission of Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJPZ), Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZIMRIGHTS), Civic Education Network Trust (CIVNET), Counselling Services Unit (CSU), Habbakuk Trust, Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ) and Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR). Since inception ZPP has produced timely national monthly monitoring reports on violence and human rights violations which have been circulated to over 2000 stakeholders. The demand for ZPP reports has grown with the reports being packaged to meet the requirements of the different audiences and users.

Annexure: Early Warning Indicators

TCOMMUNITY embedded monitors for ZPP monitor and document information against several indicators. The list below is a sample of some of the information collected against defined criteria and attributes. The indicators are designed to track, monitor and record all possible signs of potential electoral violence ahead of the 2018 election, with a view to coming up with appropriate intervention and response measures. The idea is however not just to forecast potential electoral violence. It is also to try and anticipate its potential nature, scope and scale so that appropriate measures may be fashioned.

This exercise is important as it allows civil society organisations to come up with appropriate intervention measures such as private engagement with the parties concerned, the government and the law enforcement agencies, and public and private lobbying with critical actors such as Parliament, other public oversight bodies, and strategic regional and international bodies. The exercise helps stakeholders to plan other necessary response measures such as the strengthening of referral mechanisms like medical response, legal referrals, the preparation of shelters and safe houses for victims, measures for the relocation of victims and potential victims, etc. Lastly, the exercise is also important for

documentation purposes. The process will provide empirical and credible evidence that is usable for various purposes, including the preparation of human rights reports, potential prosecutions etc. The process will also feed into constitutional processes such as those undertaken by the Zimbabwean Human Rights Commission and the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission to promote human rights and seek redress for victims of human rights violations.

Food and grain reserves (rural areas, manipulation)

- A systematic rise in incidents of intimidation and/or political violence across the country as the election draws closer;
- Setting up of torture bases
- Recruitment and training of youth militia/brigade
- Cases of political and legal persecution of senior opposition members or prominent leaders in civil society, usual through arrests and prosecution on trumped up charges, beatings, etc.;
- An increase in hate speech, that is, direct or indirect threats of violence; incitement to violence and; intimidating utterances by senior government or ruling party officials directed at the opposition, civil society, dissenting voices or the electorate in general;
- Negative statements and pronounced political rhetoric against the opposition, civil society and other dissenting voices;
- An increase in political rallies, political meetings, or other activities by the ruling party at local levels and in places perceived to be opposition strongholds and a converse increase of opposition activities in traditional ruling party strongholds;
- Increased movement of external actors in communities, military and party vehicles;
- Incidents or alleged incidents of violence or other criminal conduct by the opposition or civil society activists;
- Politicized or politicisation of past grievances.
- Ideologies based on extremism or rather supremacy of a particular group over another

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Legal Indicators

- Criticism of judicial officers by senior ruling party officials in relation to unfavourable decisions in politically-laden cases;
- Persecution of the judiciary for rendering unfavourable decisions in politically-laden cases through negative publicity in the state media, or through trumped up or spurious charges;
- Arbitrary or unwarranted banning of public assemblies organised by the opposition or civil society by the police;
- Repressive or disproportionate responses by the police to public demonstrations or other acts of social unrest
- Selective application of the law – arrests and prosecutions – in political cases, such as those involving political violence;
- Defiance of court orders.
- Beatings, torture and other acts of ill-treatment of detained opposition party members or activists by the police;
- The enactment of draconian laws; emphasis on the enforcement of repressive laws by the police; or lack of civilian control of security forces
- Unwarranted denials of bail in alleged political cases in the courts.
- Increase in cases of violence against women and children.
- Increase on cases of politically motivated sexual violence
- Increased use of food as a political tool
- Forced displacements in farming and other areas.
- Demolitions and forced evictions

Social Indicators

- Increased presence of unknown persons/faces in local communities, especially in the rural areas, as the election draws closer;
- Increased presence of unexplained government vehicles or unmarked cars in local communities, especially in rural areas, as the election draws closer;
- Increased presence of military and security personnel as the election draws closer;
- Increase in acts/cases of direct or indirect intimidation;
- Increased incidents of political violence blamed on the opposition;
- Increased negative coverage of the opposition, civil society and other dissenting voices in the public media;
- Secret or private political meetings at the local level;
- Pronounced mobilisation of resources by the ruling party, e.g. procurement and allocation of new cars to districts;
- Manipulation of state-sponsored aid in favour of ruling party members;
- Increased distribution of largesse to ruling party supporters.

Administrative Indicators

- The deployment or secondment of senior security personnel to the ruling party;
- Marked deployment of military and/or security personnel to different locals as the election draws closer;
- Pronounced mobilisation of resources by the State or the ruling party ahead of the election