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**Report of July 9 – 15
2 weeks prior to elections**

Elections Trends Report

Pre-election: 9 – 15 July, 2018 Weekly Report (2 weeks prior to elections)

Report Date: 16 July, 2018

Introduction

We the People of Zimbabwe believe that all citizens of Zimbabwe have the right to choose their political leaders in an atmosphere of peace. Our vision is to unite and mobilise Zimbabweans to ensure a peaceful, free and fair election in 2018, as the foundation for a better future. We the People of Zimbabwe believe a peaceful election will create a Zimbabwe in which a culture of peace replaces a culture of fear and enables community development.

We the People of Zimbabwe project is tracking trends in the pre-election period. This paper reports on trends of organised violence and torture (OVT) and electoral malpractices 2 weeks prior to the 2018 harmonised elections and how these have impacted on people within their communities.

Reports of violations

Reports were made from 206 people who interacted with the We the People call centre, giving an average of 29.4 reports per day. 14 reports were “all is well”, leaving 192 calls with reportable incidents. A total of 281 violations were reported.

This represents a substantial increase from the previous week, with a 56% increase in number of incidents compared from 157 the previous week.

Table 1: Incidents reported 9-15 July		
Incidents	No of reports	Difference from previous week
People being threatened with violence	105	+50
Electoral malpractices	88	+36
People being forced to do what they do not want to do	32	0
There has been violence	19	+10
Other: Unable to report to police (access or fear)	11	n/a
Other: Police refusing to act	6	n/a
Other: Suspicious people/activities	5	n/a
Other: Presence of soldiers	4	+1
Other: loss of job/ role due to party support	3	n/a
Other: Inappropriate use of children in campaigning	2	+1
Other (varied)	6	0
TOTAL	281	



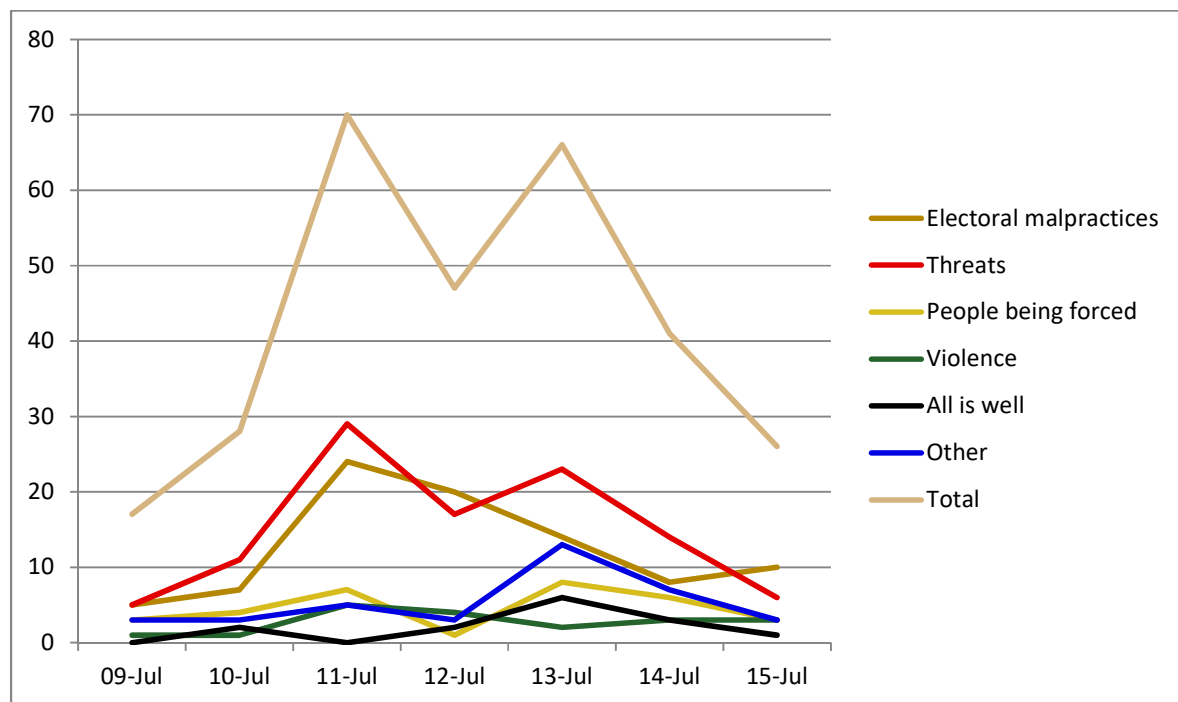
Reports of threats of violence almost doubled while electoral malpractice reports increased by over a third during the week. Threats of violence were similar in nature to previous weeks, with perpetrators threatening extreme violence should ZANU-PF lose, or should the presidential election proceed to run-off. Perpetrators frequently noted that violence would be the same as, or worse than that experienced in 2008.

The reports of people being forced to attend rallies or to hand over personal information (including voter registration slips) remained the same as the previous week.

Reported acts of violence increased to 19, from 9 witnessed the previous week. Acts of violence were for supporting political parties and included people being beaten, acts of arson, and attempted assaults. Whilst almost all cases were against MDC supporters, it is noteworthy that 2 cases were assaults against people wearing ZANU-PF regalia. In both cases the victims stated they knew the perpetrator, but not their political affiliation.

In response to the increased number of calls, the call centre team increased tracking the action taking by police on reported cases. All callers who reported an illegal act were strongly encouraged to report to police. Along with this, it was also tracked as to how many callers noted they were unable to report to police either due to fear of previous actions of police, or due to people failing to access police stations from their geographic location. The number of callers who reported to police but the police failed to act were also recorded. There were 17 such cases reported for the week, representing 9% of all the calls.

Figure 1: Incidents by date 9 - 15 July





Box 1: Illustrative narratives of violations

A ZANU-PF rally was held in Gokwe Kana Ward 1 and ZANU-PF officials stated that "whoever is not a ZANU-PF supporter should be severely beaten or killed and no charge will be pressed upon that." ZANU-PF people began to remove MDC-Alliance posters and one of the MDC-Alliance supporters who had put the posters up was warned that he was "in for it". Today early in the morning his house was set on fire and burned down. The case has been reported to the police and people are gathered at his homestead. (Gokwe, Midlands)

Villagers are being forced to attend ZANU-PF meetings and to bring their voter registration slips. They are being told that if their vote is not on ZANU-PF there shall be violence and people will not sleep in their homes as they will be bloodshed. Elderly people in the village are frightened and are walking long distances to attend ZANU-PF meetings. (Gutu, Masvingo)

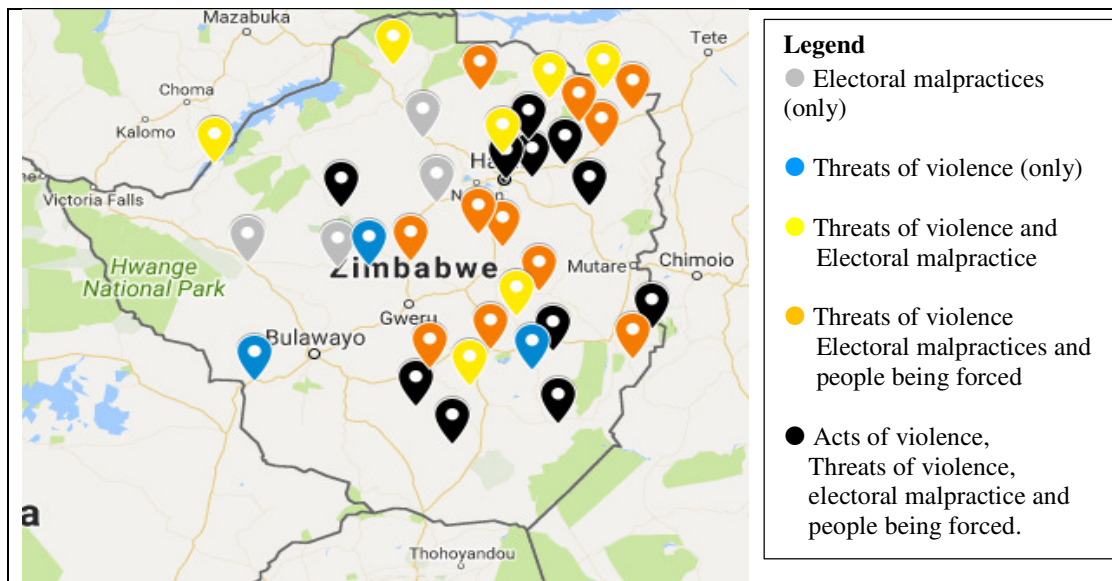
A ZANU-PF supporter of Ward 2 Mudzi North is going door to door campaigning for ZANU-PF forcing other people and even school children to join the door to door campaigns. Caller is going to report the issue to the police and give feedback. (Mudzi North, Mashonaland East)

The (female) caller and her daughter were physically assaulted by a man whose name she know, but she does not know his political party. She says when he was beating them up he was asking why they support ZANU-PF as they were wearing ZANU-PF t-shirts. He demanded that they give him the money they had made from selling at their market that day and he left. They made a report to the police and received treatment at Masase Hospital. (Mberengwa West, Midlands)

A man was hit by a catapult by war veteran on the 12th of July. He reported the matter at Ruwange police station and was told to seek treatment before he can get the RRB number for the case. He reported at Ruwange Police station. He has not yet received medical attention due to the unavailability of funds. (Nyanga, Manicaland)

Yesterday police officials were casting their votes without the ZEC officials. Violence broke out as people retaliated over the suspicious rigging process. (Bikita East Masvingo)

Figure 2: Violation by location





The mapping of incidents demonstrates the wide spread of incidents across the country, as well as highlighting areas where violence has occurred. As compared to previous weeks, the spread of violence is evident, with acts of violence recorded from 6 different provinces.

The recording of incidents also shows 15 ‘hotspot’ districts across the country, where 5 or more calls with incidents have been recorded. These hotspot areas have reported over 60% of all calls with incidents for the week, with one in three of these hotspots also reporting at least one incident of violence.

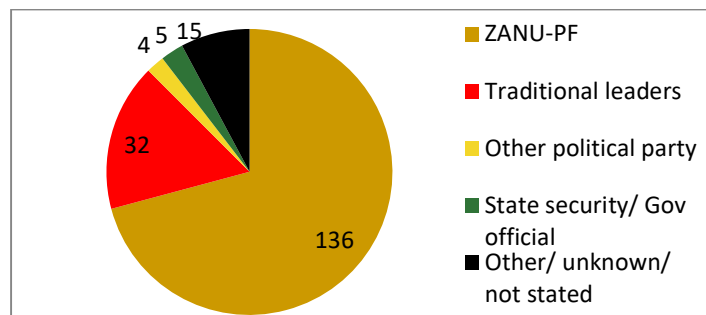
Table 2: Districts with 5 or more incidents July 9-15

District	Total incidents
Buhera	9
Chikomba	8
Chiredzi*	6
Gokwe North	22
Gokwe South*	6
Goromonzi	10
Guruve	7
Gutu*	5
Mberengwa*	7
Mbire	5
Mhondoro	6
Mt Darwin	12
Murewa*	6
Mutare	5
Zhombe	5

*these districts also reported at least one act of violence in the reporting week

The key perpetrators of violence continue to be supporters of ZANU-PF, as well as people within the party structures, particularly political candidates and current councilors. Traditional leaders also continue to be a significant perpetrator group, particularly village heads.

Figure 3: Perpetrator by number of reports 9-15 July





MDC-Alliance continues to feature in only a small number of reports, although there have consistently been reports each week of violations from parties other than ZANU-PF.

State actors continue to be reported as key perpetrators in only a small number of cases, though a number of reports were received where police were complicit or refused to act in cases of violations.

Table 3: Perpetrators reported 9-15 July	
Key Perpetrator	No of reports
ZANU-PF supporter	66
Village head	28
Candidate (ZANU-PF)	22
Councillor (ZANU-PF)	20
Chairperson (ZANU-PF)	11
War veteran	8
ZANU-PF official/leader	4
Member of Parliament (ZANU-PF)	4
Headman	4
Soldiers	4
MDC Alliance	2
Independent candidate	2
Gold panners	2
District Administration	1
Police	1
Other/ unknown/ not specified	13
TOTAL	192

The table above shows the key perpetrators identified by the caller, but as with previous weeks, many of the narratives describe several perpetrators working together, often with political and village structures working in tandem.

Box 2: Illustrative narratives of range of perpetrators

The Village Head for Chetura Village was assigned to gather people of the village for a meeting by ZANU-PF campaigning team. The Campaigning team addressed the people and threatened them with violence including beheading and torture if at Mapazuli Polling Station ZANU-PF doesn't get resounding votes over MDC Alliance. (Zvishavane Ngezi, Midlands)

The contesting candidate for ZANU-PF Member of Parliament is holding rallies and meetings where he is threatening to beat up people, burn houses and remove them from the village if ZANU-PF does not win the elections on 30 July 2018. The case was reported to police but nothing was done. Caller will make a follow up from the police. (Mt. Darwin, Mashonaland Central)

On the 7th of July 2018 a group of Gold panners with Mnangangwa posters pounced on Maninja Night Club in Ascot Gweru. This is the same crew that assaulted people at the same club on the 30th of June. The panners hit one of the revelers at the club with a machete on the forehead and later own assaulted a soldier who was in the company of a sex worker. The following day Soldiers came to investigate the details of the assault and took the club owner for questioning. No police report was made and no one knows these panners. (Gweru Urban, Midlands)



The caller was installing MDC Alliance pictures when an army officer told him he will beat him for supporting the wrong person. The victim was heavily assaulted and went to hospital. The issue was also reported to the police and we are currently waiting updates from police and the hospital. The perpetrator has not been arrested. (Murehwa, Mashonaland East)

A ZANU-PF war veteran has been sending threats to people telling them that if they do not vote for ZANU-PF there is going to be violence. She has emphasized that the camera that was used during biometric voter registration has everyone's image in the system and it is going to be very easy for the party to see who voted for ZANU-PF or not. People have also been forced to paste their voter registration slips at the back of their national IDs and whoever has not done so is being labelled an MDC supporter. (Bindura, Mashonaland Central)

As with previous weeks, soldiers have been implicated in very few incidents overall. However, the presence of soldiers continues to be reported as a major concern in communities. Regardless of whether soldiers are placed in communities with the intention to intimidate, this is certainly the outcome. Soldiers were reported in 5 provinces, and in all cases the caller felt that soldiers were engaging in intimidation.

Box 3: Narratives on soldiers presence/ Suspicion over soldiers activity (even when there are on Daily routines)

Soldier army tanks were seen going round the area from 8pm to 10pm on the 11th of July. They were not singing or saying anything but just going round the area. People are seeing this as a sign of intimidation as this has not happened before in the area. Some of the soldiers were dropped off at Chivhu location shops and were seen patrolling the shops. The next morning however they were gone no one knows what time they left the shops. (Chivhu, Manicaland)

Soldiers were seen jogging around the streets around 4am singing Chimurenga songs. They were dressed in war regalia with tree branches on their heads and faces painted. They have done their training before but have never been seen looking like the way they looked today. People feel it is a way of intimidating them. (Masvingo Urban, Masvingo)

ZANU-PF leaders are mobilising all village heads in Mashumbi pools area ward 9 for a meeting. The leaders refuse to disclose what the meeting is about and people are getting suspicious. Also soldiers have been deployed in the area and some are in schools such as Makuvatsine Primary School. They are seen daily just moving around in uniforms and they are everywhere. (Mbire, Mashonaland Central)

There has been gunshots that have been heard coming from the soldiers camp. They usually train in the area but they are rarely heard using guns. Of late they have been using guns a lot and people are getting intimidated by the gunshots. (Hurungwe, Mashonaland West)

Concerning trends to follow:

This week has seen a substantial increase in incidents, including acts of violence. Whilst some of this can be accounted to a continued spread of the We the People project and use of SMS reminders to peace champions, there is also evidence of increasing violence. 73% of the violations were reported within 48 hours of their occurrences, and 37% were reported on the same day, demonstrating that this was a week of heightened violations.

There has been a marked change in the nature of violations taking place. Acts of violence have been noted in areas where previously only threats of violence had been reported. As elections draw closer, threats of



violence are increasingly being paired with electoral malpractices and acts of violence. Although violations were more widespread than in any other week, 'hotspots' are also emerging, which require careful monitoring.

Within the week, many of the callers expressed a willingness to approach the police; however there are cases of police being inaccessible or unwilling to assist. The actions of police, as well as soldiers, are significant in increasing fear within the country.

Ends//