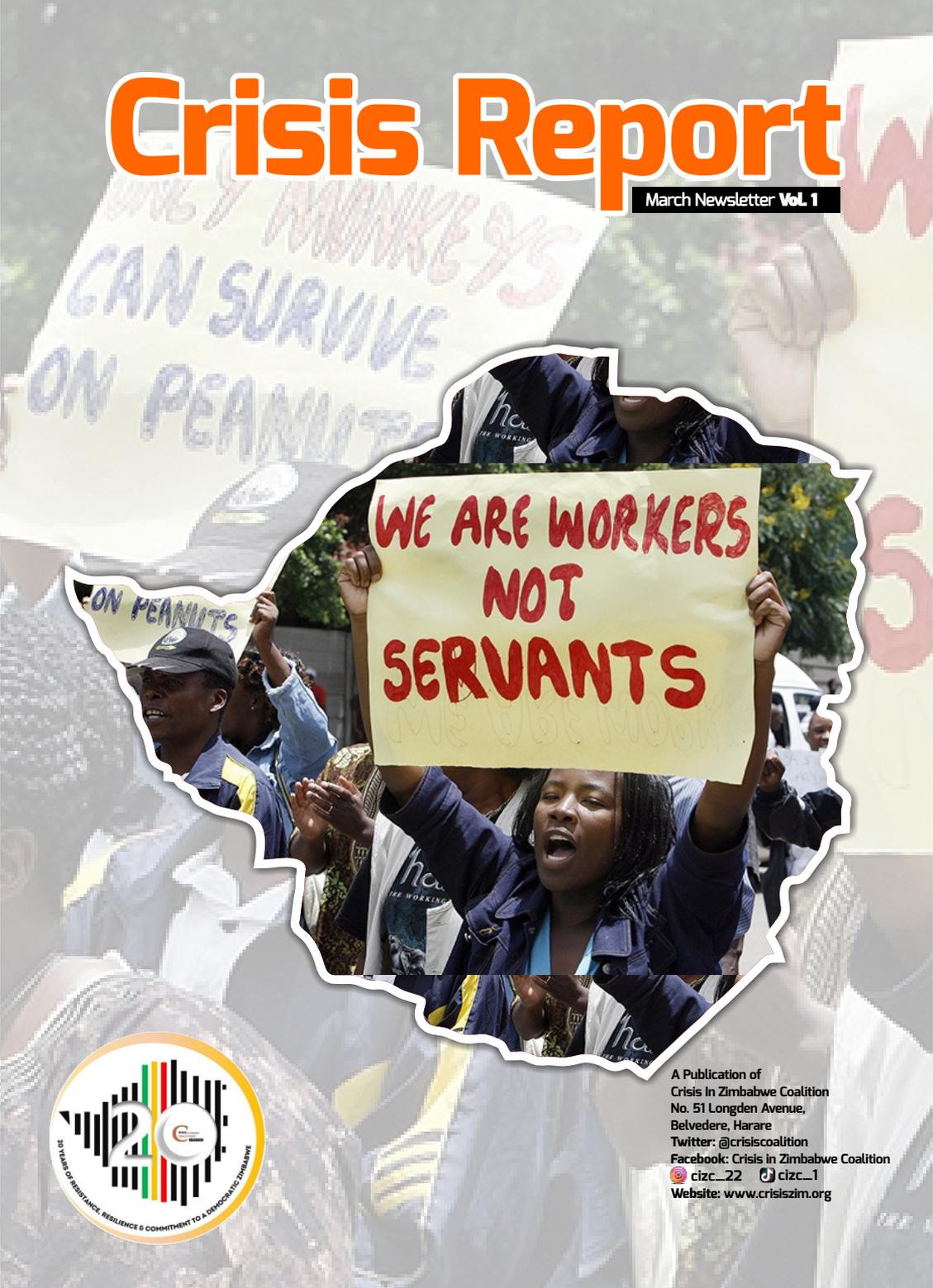


# Crisis Report

March Newsletter Vol. 1



WE ARE WORKERS  
NOT  
SERVANTS



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# Call for workers to unite for the collective good

Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition Chairperson, Peter Mutasa has said that government workers need to resist the divide and rule tactics by the government and fight for the common good.

The majority of Government workers earn meager salaries and continue to live far below the Poverty Datum Line (PDL). On the other hand, government has come under fire for its insincerity in as far as improving the welfare of its workers is concerned.

Trade unionism has been criminalized and the result has been brutality against trade union leaders. Below, we publish Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition Chairperson, Peter Mutasa's call for civil servants to organize and push for better wages;

“We are witnessing unusual occurrences in the labour market. A massive devaluation of labour through repression, state terror tactics and debilitating neoliberalism. The magnitude of state terror towards labour that we have witnessed since the November 2017 coup is only paralleled to the colonial era. We saw the abduction of Peter Magombeyi when doctors dared the military junta and went on strike. The dismissal of striking nurses and now soldiers visiting and threatening incapacitated teachers all points to revival of the colonial or apartheid industrial relations.

In terms of wages, the majority of workers in Zimbabwe have been thrust into modern



slavery. The majority are earning below the Poverty Datum Line and many even below the Food Poverty Line. It now makes financial sense for a doctor, a teacher, a nurse and other public service workers to leave their office jobs and work as domestic or farm workers in South Africa.

Zimbabwean workers must have learnt from the past that it is not possible to fight successfully in individual sectors. The regime will use draconian means to threaten, brutalize and dismiss the few workers. The problem workers face is not emanating from the labour market. It is a result of political decisions such as the brute austerity measures and currency debauchery. These cannot be cured through traditional labour market instruments like collective bargaining.

Trade unions need to mobilize workers for collective political action such as general strikes and other forms of protests. There is no other option for the impoverished workers of Zimbabwe. It is time for a General Strike.”

ENDS//



# WALPE observes PVO Amendment Bill hearings

The Women's Academy for Leadership and Political Excellence (WALPE) observed the public hearings on the Private Voluntary Organizations (PVO) bill in the country's ten provinces from 28 February to 04 March 2022. The public consultations on the PVO Bill were being spearheaded by the Parliamentary portfolio committee on Labour, Public Service and Social Welfare. The Bill in its current form aims to restrict the work of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

The WALPE teams were on the ground monitoring the process in Harare, Guruve, Zhombe, Mutoko, Beitbridge, Kariba, Tsholotsho, Lupane, Gwanda, Masvingo, Rusape, Bulawayo, Gutu and Chinhoyi. Most of the participants made contributions against passing of the bill highlighting the drastic effects this would have on their socio-economic and political life.

It is sad that some of the hearings were marred by violence and disruptions and has to be adjourned prematurely. These include the ones held in Highfields- Harare, Rusape, Gutu and Bulawayo. It looked like there were people coordinated to disrupt the hearings and block people from raising their objections on the content of the bill.

Below are some of the submissions made during the PVO public hearings.

No evidence has been presented to substantiate the allegations that PVOs are responsible for any terrorist activity for which the law seeks to address.

In the bill, political lobbying is not clarified leaving room for the government and its agencies to trivialize non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the course of their operations. This means that NGOs working on enhancing women political participation like WALPE are at risk of closure and attacks from the government and this will overall derail efforts towards advancement of gender equality.

NGOs particularly women's rights organizations have played an instrumental role on issues of sexual reproductive health rights (SRHR), constitutional awareness, ending gender based violence, unpaid care and domestic work, gender equality, climate change, child marriages etc.

NGOs have been supporting communities to improve the welfare, education, health, advocacy for upholding of constitutional rights, which will leave communities vulnerable if their operations are restricted.

The bill is giving the minister too much

power. It is unheard of that the Bill empowers the minister to remove the leadership of NGOs who would have "digressed from their mandate" and appoint committees to the organizations who will not share the same vision and uphold the same values on which an organization is premised.

NGOs have been transparent when distributing aid in communities unlike some government departments who are partisan and politicize the process.

NGOs have assisted communities in times of crisis like natural disasters where the government would have failed to cater for its people's welfare.

Issues of money laundering are already covered in other pieces of legislations such that there no need to bring in a new law to regulate that.

NGOs have already been complying with registration processes with the local authorities and other government departments when getting into communities and there is no need to impose further restrictions.

The Bill contravenes a number of regional and international protocols which Zimbabwe ratified.

ENDS//



# CSOs challenged to engage youths on political violence

By Crisis Report

Manipulation of youths continues to be one of the leading causes of political violence in Zimbabwe amid calls for civil society to create platforms aimed at encouraging peace and tolerance among the youths.

Ahead of the March 26, 2022 by-elections, political tensions have heightened with the ruling party, Zanu PF unleashing a wave of violence against opposition supporters.

This has been worsened by the fact that senior ruling party officials, including its Second Secretary and Vice President, Retired General Constantine Chiwenga continue to publicly incite violence against the opposition.

The Director of Youth Forum, Avoid Masiraha said civil society has a critical role to play in ensuring peace and tolerance before, during and after elections.

"There is a serious need to engage youths across political parties and discuss these issues of violence and manipulation. Such forums will help to build tolerance and thereby encourage peace. It is unfortunate that youths continue to be manipulated to engage in acts of violence.

"This is a call for civil society to act and create platforms aimed at encouraging peace and tolerance. Civil society has a critical role to play in encouraging



peaceful elections that will lead to credible outcomes," said Masiraha.

Youth Alliance for Democracy Director, Tichaona Masiyambiri echoed the same sentiments saying the electoral code of conduct should be adequately enforced to punish perpetrators of violence.

"This is an unfortunate culture that has characterized past successive elections in Zimbabwe and it is unfortunate that the youths are being used by politicians to engage in violence. It is necessary to ensure we make efforts towards discouraging violence and reach out to stakeholders to ensure we deal with political violence and promote tolerance.

"Political leaders must show maturity and refrain from perpetrating violence. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission has a role to play in enforcing the electoral code of conduct to ensure people behind violence are punished for their acts," said Masiyambiri.

ENDS//





# ZEC misconduct creating ground for disputed elections



By Crisis Report

The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) has come under fire for plotting to rig the upcoming March 26, 2022 National Assembly and Local Government by-elections after several discrepancies were observed on the voters' roll.

Concern is high that ZEC officials continue to act in favour of the ruling party, Zanu PF and this continues to create an uneven playing ground ahead of the March 26 by-elections and the 2023 national elections.

Recently, ZEC was exposed for illegally transferring 170 000 voters and despite the Electoral Act mandating the elections body to keep the public updated on electoral processes, including changes to the voters' roll, ZEC

insists they are only accountable to Parliament. On March 9, 2022, ZEC announced that they had contracted Fidelity Printers and Printflow, all government institutions, to print ballot papers for the March 26, 2022 by elections.

According to the Election Resource Centre (ERC), this is a serious anomaly as the printing should have been tendered and stakeholders ought to have been consulted.

Over the years, ZEC has been accused of rigging elections and calls continue to grow for the disbandment of ZEC.

Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition Spokesperson, Obert

Masaraure said ZEC has proved beyond doubt that they can no longer be trusted to preside over credible polls. "The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission has lost credibility and can no longer be trusted to run free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

The Commission has proven to be a loyal lap dog of the ZANU PF regime. ZEC has failed to defend itself from the credible allegations of voters roll manipulation raised by Team Pachedu. The commission must be cleansed if Zimbabwe is to hold credible elections," said Masaraure.

ENDS//



# Persecuted teachers vow to fight on

By Crisis Report

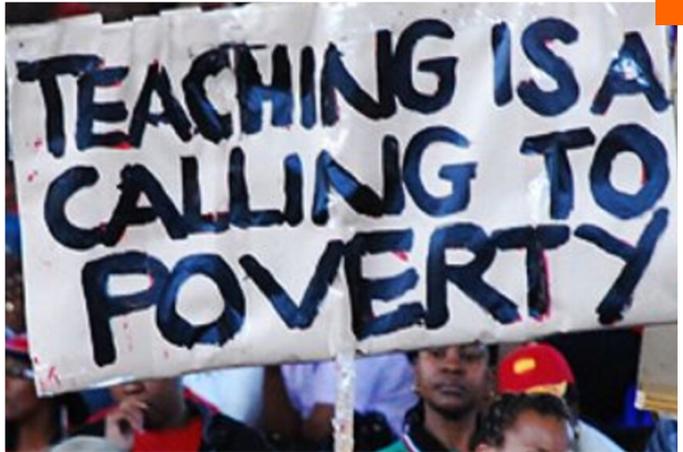
Since schools opened on February 7, 2022 teachers have been on industrial action in protest against poor salaries that have reduced them to paupers.

The government has responded with threats of dismissals and a number of cases of teachers being intimidated by state security agents have also been reported across the country.

However, the Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (ARTUZ) says the intimidations will not stop their fight for better remuneration.

Below, we capture ARTUZ Secretary General, Robson Chere's response to the continued intimidation of teachers by the government.

"The intimidation of teachers to report for duty using a command and military approach is regrettable but not surprising given the nature of the kind of employer we have who for decades has been using the stick approach to silence teachers from airing genuine concerns regarding their welfare.



There is no legal framework that gives the government power to frog march teachers into classrooms and as a Union, we are not moved a single inch by these threatening antics.

Our membership remains resolute and we are taking our case to every platform available; the people of Zimbabwe and all relevant national and International stakeholders such as the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions to which ARTUZ is a member and the International Labour Organization to which ARTUZ is affiliated as well.

"On the ground, we are dispatching our National Executive members to

provinces where they are documenting such cases and assisting the persecuted members. On the issue of suspensions we are very clear that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education acted ultra vires it's mandate and duties and the suspensions are null and void.

The law is very clear on that and we will not waste time trading statements with a cabal that knows that what they have done is not in line with the law. We stand ready to fight this injustice through the courts and massive street protests to register our disgust at such a move."

ENDS//



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