



**PRESS STATEMENT:
Mayor Muchadeyi Masunda has acted in the Best Interests of
Harare: 14 July 2011**

Harare- The Harare Residents' Trust (HRT) has followed the debate by councillors on the rotation of councillors that has been initiated by the Mayor of Harare Muchadeyi Masunda, with reported resistance by some councillors.

For a long time the HRT has raised concerns over the performance of some council committees.

This action by the Mayor has come at an opportune time and we trust his judgment on this matter. He has worked with the majority of these councillors for the last three years. He understands their strengths, their weaknesses and fears in handling council business.

What has become of interest to the HRT is the intensity of the lobbying among councillors over this rotation of councillors. It somehow confirms what the majority of the people have been saying- that the councillors are in it for the monetary benefits that accrue to them through foreign trips, workshops, tenders, procurement of materials and equipment for the City of Harare,

The resistance by councillors to be reshuffled to other committees exposes their desire to capitalize on the identified loopholes for siphoning and looting council resources. It demonstrates beyond doubt that the most vocal councillors have in a big way benefited from the status quo where they made binding resolutions in favour of their chosen companies which won tenders and handled certain business dealings on behalf of the City of Harare. This is clear evidence that some of the councillors are eager to hold on to their positions as they fear to lose their hold on the business deals they have allegedly struck with some service providers.

Their fears are that once another chairperson takes over from them, their previous dealings might be exposed and investigated, which will lead to subsequent suspensions and dismissals if it has been established that there were corrupt practices.

If they are genuinely concerned with improving service provision and representing the interests of residents, the councillors should be glad that the Mayor has afforded them the opportunity to learn more about council's operations in other portfolios than to serve in one committee for the duration of their term which is set to expire in 2013. Further it must be noted that none of the councillors have qualifications that relate to the committees they are currently serving.

In light of the above, the HRT urges the Mayor to undertake a thorough evaluation of each committee and some of its key decisions that it made during its tenure to see what benefits accrued to the City of Harare and the residents.

The HRT acts in the best interests of residents and is a non-partisan institution whose main objective is to empower Harare citizens to lobby and advocate for accountability, offering of quality and affordable services through engaging the council and city fathers in continuous dialogue.

Harare Residents Trust

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