



**PRESS STATEMENT:  
ATTACK OF HARARE RESIDENTS' MEETING ON  
SATURDAY 25 JUNE 2011**

Harare Residents' Trust (HRT) condemns the behavior and action of the hooligans masquerading as ZANU PF youths who wantonly attacked a legally constituted meeting on Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2011. This meeting, sanctioned by the police, intended to gather representatives of the Harare Residents across the political divide, race and beyond class boundaries. The purpose was to have an indaba where Harare residents engaged service providers to discuss ways of improving service provision and charging fare rates for services provided. Present were Senior Government officials from the Ministry of Local Government, representatives of the local authority and two senior officials from the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA).

The HRT 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. It has emphasized on its members and leadership that its business should not be done on partisan lines and does not wish in any way to be dragged into partisan politics as its clientele are Harare residents regardless of their affiliation to any grouping be it religious, race, tribe or political..

It is therefore a serious cause of concern, when a group of thugs descend on honest and unarmed citizens, some who are old enough to be their parents and grandparents attacking them with impunity, using booted feet, clenched fists, sjamboks and baton sticks.

Many delegates including service providers and invited guests were left nursing serious wounds and substantive damage was caused to the hired property, the Public Address system, laptops, phones and other valuables. We understand the ZANU PF Youth leadership in Mbare has dissociated themselves from these hooligans. The big question is who are they, who do they represent and who sponsored them? Who provides them with food and beer at Paget House, and at the Joshua Nkomo office, inside Gwinyai Primary School where they carry out atrocious acts against peace-loving citizens?

We urge Zanu PF, whose image has been tainted by this latest act of thuggery against citizens discussing civic issues, to thoroughly investigate who these malcontents are. If they are not part of Zanu PF they will be exposed, root them out and expose them before issuing hollow statements defending ill-disciplined people acting on behalf of Zanu PF. Who benefits from this chaos. Some of the people beaten up are members of Zanu PF within our ranks who are more concerned with service delivery than pursuing narrow partisan interests.

We hope that this reaches the powers that be in Zanu PF. If no one listens to this advice, more people who belong there will abandon the party and join other progressive forces that have no intention of resorting to violence to gain support. If they are part of your system, they need to be disciplined because they are becoming misguided missiles who may damage your reputation. Remember people who attended this function are from the grassroots and represent the ordinary people and some are even from Mbare and may know these hooligans. To the law enforcement agencies we say a culture of anarchy should be nipped in the bud before it gets out of control. These youths can be easily identified as they acted in broad day light and there are people who have identified some of them and where they stay. You need to professionally deal with them, otherwise you will nurture a culture of non-respect of the law which will be hard to control in future.

To Harare Residents who were injured, or suffered in various ways as a result of this unwarranted act, we sincerely apologize as conveners of the event and hope the law will hastily take its course.

The HRT remains dedicated to a free and prosperous citizenry. No one will intimidate us and we will not back down from our mandate to raise the issues of the residents.

Harare Residents Trust

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