

Sokwanele - Enough is Enough - Zimbabwe

PROMOTING NON-VIOLENT PRINCIPLES TO ACHIEVE DEMOCRACY

Constitution Outreach: News Round-Up, 22 July - 28 July

Sokwanele : 28 July 2010

These are media extracts relating to the constitution outreach process, appearing between 22 July – 28 July. To review previous news items, or follow updates daily, please visit the [Constitution Resource](#) page on the Sokwanele website. Please note that links to sources and full articles are also available on the resource page. Email info@sokwanele.com with the word "Subscribe" in the subject line to subscribe to our newsletter.

22 July 2010 - cont

CIO teams up with Zanu PF youth to intimidate villagers

In Mazowe South, Mashonaland Central province, a Central Intelligence Organisation operative, Alexander Kanengoni has teamed up with Zanu PF youths in the area to intimidate villagers against attending the Constitution Parliamentary Select Committee (Copac) meetings. The threats saw a very low turnout of people on Wednesday at Chaona business centre in the area. In Zhombe East, Midlands North province, an army officer Duncan Mahofa, well known as Major Mpofu, has been intimidating villagers threatening to beat up suspected MDC members if they continue contributing in the constitution making outreach meetings [*Via MDC Today - 22 July 2010*]

Zimbabwe Constitutional Committee Probes Reported Intimidation in Public Meetings

Reports continue to emerge from Zimbabwe's constitutional revision outreach process that alleged state security agents are intimidating members of the public and monopolizing meetings intended to solicit comment from Zimbabweans as to what they would like to see in the country's new basic document, especially in Mashonaland West province. Sources in the provincial capital of Chinhoyi said state agents on motorbikes and in cars without number plates are going from meeting to meeting, dominating discussions and taking notes of comments by members of the public. Co-Chairman Douglas Mwonzora of the parliamentary select committee in charge of constitutional revision says his panel has noted the complaints and has been investigating. He declined to report findings to date [*Via VOA News*].

Copac officials booted out of Orange Grove Motel

Members of the constitutional outreach programme in Chinhoyi were on Tuesday ejected from a hotel they were staying in for non-payment amid reports that other hotels in the province have threatened to do the same. Twenty-one members of Copac housed at Chinhoyi Caves Motel were thrown out and relocated to a nearby Roman Catholic Church. Orange Groove Motel in Chinhoyi has also threatened to evict Copac officials living there. The Copac officials told NewsDay the embarrassing incident could force them to abandon the project [...] Contacted for comment yesterday, Copac co-chairperson Douglas Mwonzora, said he was aware of the cases of evicted outreach teams but it was true that the hotels had not been paid. He said there were some outstanding payments because the respective hotels only submitted bills for 25 days instead of the entire 65 days of the outreach programme [*Via NewsDay*]

23 July 2010

Harare, Bulawayo Copac outreach set for August

The outreach programme in Bulawayo and Harare will now begin in August after all the other provinces have been completed. The two provinces have not held any meetings regarding the crafting of the new supreme law after the Constitution Parliamentary Select Committee (Copac) moved the deliberations to accommodate the Fifa World Cup that ended in South Africa on July 11. Constitutional and Parliamentary Affairs minister Eric Matinenga said yesterday that Bulawayo and Harare needed attention and would be covered in August to enable most people's views to be incorporated. "Harare and Bulawayo will be done around August to have as many teams as possible in Harare and Bulawayo on a weekend to accommodate workers who will be off from work," said Matinenga. "It is anticipated that the outreach will be concluded by September and thereafter, thematic teams will take over the analysis of data in preparation for drafting of the new constitution. Matinenga said in areas where disruptions had occurred, teams were instructed to revisit the places to allow everyone a voice. "Where participation has been disrupted for whatever reason, teams have been instructed to revisit those places," he said. [*Via NewsDay*]

MDC-T spokesman says party should debate participation in outreach

Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's MDC party will have to meet and decide whether to continue participating in the current constitutional outreach exercise which has been marred by incidents of violence and intimidation. In a hard hitting interview, party spokesman Nelson Chamisa said it was now necessary for the leadership to meet and 'say under the circumstances what is our continued participation in this process. What is the end and what is the product?' He told Newsreel they were receiving reports from their structures, and even from ZANU PF supporters, complaining that they were being frog marched into torture bases, and indoctrinated on what to say before being taken to outreach meetings. 'This is very ugly a picture, very disturbing a trend and very discouraging a pattern. When one looks at what has been happening across the whole country it's not as if people are being allowed to express themselves.' [*Via SW Radio Africa*]

Chief orders villagers to boycott outreach meetings

Chief Ndondo of Mbembesi in Matabeleland North has instructed his subjects not to contribute during the constitution outreach programme, saying he will speak on their behalf [...] The chief also allegedly told the villagers that they should not entertain the outreach teams if they do not have a Xhosa-speaking person among them. In separate interviews yesterday, some villagers expressed disappointment at the chief's stance of talking on their behalf, saying it was a violation of their constitutional right. "In as much as we share collective views in some areas of the constitution, we do differ in quite a number of things. The chief cannot capture everything that each of us wants considered in the new constitution," said a villager who spoke on condition of anonymity. "We feel that we should be allowed to say what we want in the new constitution as individuals. However, no one has appealed against this stance in fear of heavy fines charged by the traditional leadership for going against them." [*Via The Chronicle - state-controlled-media*]

COPAC program exposes deep polarisation between parties

The constitutional outreach program, meant to gather people's views on the new constitution, has exposed the deep political polarization and intolerance that still exists between ZANU PF and MDC supporters. Since the program resumed this week, after a week long break, tension, friction and shouting matches have characterized most of the meetings. Even signaling your intention to contribute a view by raising a hand, has now been politicized by the participants. When MDC supporters want to contribute to debate, they raise their hands as any other person would do. And here lies the problem. An open palm is a gesture linked to the MDC party symbol. In retaliation, ZANU PF supporters have resorted to raising their hands— fists clenched— a style made popular by Mugabe when sloganeering. Our correspondent Simon Muchemwa said it was clear there is still much animosity between supporters of ZANU PF and the MDC. He said these incidents, and many others being observed at the meetings, are clear indicators of the dark cloud of political polarization and intolerance characterizing the political terrain in the country [*Via SW Radio Africa*].

Political Tension Rises in Zimbabwe Over Pro-Mugabe Songs on State Radio & TV

Zimbabwe's Cabinet agreed on Tuesday that ZBC should stop playing the extended political songs because they do not reflect the spirit of the unity government established in February 2009 following a traumatic election cycle in 2008. Ministers said the spots asserting Mr. Mugabe remains in charge re-open wounds from that bloody period. ZANU-PF spokesman Rugare Gumbo told the state-run Herald newspaper the jingles have nothing to do with elections but are merely intended to encourage ZANU-PF members to participate in the constitutional revision

public outreach process now unfolding around the country - in some areas with political intimidation and sporadic violence. Gumbo said the spots are not jingles but rather songs by the Mbare Chimurenga choir from an album entitled "Nyatsoterera," Shona for "listen carefully." The lyrics of the title song inform listeners that Mr Mugabe and his two vice presidents, Joice Mujuru and John Nkomo, are in charge, not the inclusive government [Via VOA News].

Operation Vhara Muromo scuttles outreach

Jairos Mukotosi (50) is avoiding a team of consultants, sent as part of a parliamentary outreach programme to the Rushinga area of rural Mashonaland Central Province, to solicit people's views on what they would like included in a proposed new constitution. But for the past two months, members of Zanu PF youth militia have been warning villagers to either shut up or parrot Zanu PF's views on the new constitution, which includes no limit on the number of presidential terms that can be served [...] "I am a victim of the June 2008 elections and still live in fear," Mukotosi said. "Although we were living in peace following the formation of the inclusive government (in February 2009, when Zanu PF and the two factions of the MDC formed a coalition government), the ghost of violence and fear is returning. [...] "I am not taking any chances. These militias stole and killed my cattle because they thought I was a member of the MDC, since my son works in Harare (the capital, an MDC stronghold). Now I will not participate in the constitution-making process because they might kill me and my family this time," he said. [Via NewsDay]

Marked improvement for Copac programme

Attendance at constitution-making outreach programmes has increased significantly since the process resumed this week, with centres averaging 1 500 to 2 000 participants per session. Earlier, Parliament's Select Committee had said attendance in the Matabeleland provinces was low. However, since the programme resumed following a break to allow legislators to attend the official opening of the Third Session of the Seventh Parliament and the Mid-Term Fiscal Policy Review last week, attendance has risen. Copac co-chairperson Cde Munyaradzi Paul Mangwana yesterday acknowledged the increases in attendances attributing it to a new awareness strategy. "We now send an advance team to a centre a day before the meeting. The advance teams, made up of the district administrator and political parties' liaison teams mobilise communities for the meetings," he said. Cde Mangwana said the advance teams would be incorporated in Copac's budget. "The advance team meets political and traditional leaders in a particular area," he said. [Via The Herald - state-controlled media]

Zanu PF COPAC members bar police from arresting Zanu PF youths

Notorious Zanu PF apologist, Lawrence Katsiru and Mudzi West MP, Aqualinah Katsande on Monday barred the police from arresting Zanu PF youths who had assaulted a participant during a Constitution-making outreach meeting in Chikomba West, Mashonaland East meeting. Katsiru and Katsande are members of the Constitution Parliamentary Select Committee (Copac) in Mashonaland East. Zanu PF youths turned rowdy during a public meeting at Chiwashira business centre on Monday and attacked Anthony Matodza who had just made a contribution. A report was made at Featherstone police station. However, when the police came to arrest the culprits, Katsiru and Katsande stopped them claiming Zanu PF supporters are immune to arrest. Katsiru even threatened Matodza who is also an MDC member with death. Katsiru told Matodza that he was lucky to escape death in 2008 and that he, Katsiru, would come after him if he continued with pursuing the arrests of the Zanu PF youths. Matodza lost his property and his vehicle was stolen by Zanu PF militia in 2008. He is still to recover the vehicle [Via MDC Today - 23 July 2010]

NCA Press Release: All set for NCA Indaba

The NCA announce an Indaba to be held on 24 July: "The indaba is part of the NCA's Take Charge Campaign, whose objective is to re-emphasize the need to have a genuine people driven, as opposed to politicians driven constitution making process. On this ground the TAKE CHARGE Campaign will continue to expose the fraudulent process currently underway and led by politicians from ZANU PF and MDC. The NCA has consistently and unapologetically reiterated its position that any draft constitution which is a product of a flawed process, as the current COPAC/Kariba process (which is worse than the rejected Chidyausiku make-believe of 1999/2000), will be rejected by the people of Zimbabwe. Since the signing of the Global Political Agreement, the NCA made it very clear that it was opposed to some provisions of Article 6 which clearly spelt out that the role of civic society was "to assist the select committee as may be necessary [Section 6.1(a)(1)]". [Via NCA Press Release]

Rival Zimbabwe Constitution Group To Gear Up Campaign Against Govt Led Process

Members of Zimbabwe's National Constitutional Assembly were to meet for three days beginning Saturday to develop a strategy in opposition to the parliamentary-led constitutional revision process currently unfolding. NCA

spokesman Maddock Chivasa said the group's leaders and members plan to review the many problems that have beset the revision process, especially during the public outreach phase launched in mid-June [*Via VOA News*].

Mugabe faces 'excommunication'

President Robert Mugabe faces possible ex-communication from the Roman Catholic Church for allegedly violating a standing doctrine governing the conduct of its members when he wore a Vapostori robe at a gathering of a Johanne Marange Apostolic Sect in Manicaland last weekend, church leaders have said. Rod in hand, President Mugabe preached polygamy to the congregation of more than 200 000 worshipers who had gathered for their annual Passover at Mafirarikwa in Marange communal lands, further compounding his "transgressions". "Our Constitution allows for polygamy. We will not force people into monogamous marriages. Inga muBhaibheri chaimo zvirimo. Solomon haana kungopihwa upfumi chete asi nevakadzi vakawanda"(It is written in the Bible that King Solomon was not only blessed with riches but with many wives as well) President Mugabe said. Father Oskar Wermter, the social communications secretary of Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference, said through this gospel of polygamy and his involvement in Vapostori spiritual rites, President Mugabe reduced himself to a "schismatic" knowingly. The 86-year-old leader was baptised and confirmed as a full member of the Catholic Church when he accepted Holy Communion. Wermter said Catholic rules would not bend because of President Mugabe's political status and profile [*Via NewsDay*].

Nothing sinister in calling for devolution

It must be crystal clear that devolution is not about Harare and Bulawayo and that it is neither about tribalism. "When we talk about this, people must not think that we are talking about tribalism," Deputy Prime Minister Thokozani Khupe was once quoted saying in the UK. The debate about devolution of power should be seen in its proper context. It should be seen as an argument about governance and a plea for some form of decentralisation that will allow local communities, in our case regions and local governments, to take charge of development of their areas. In simple terms it is about empowerment and popular participation. If we understand it from that angle then perhaps the tension, mistrust and uncertainty that jump onto the surface whenever this discussion crops up will evaporate [*Via NewsDay*]

24 July 2010

Chance in a lifetime turns into a shambles

Comment by Cathy Buckle: Sadly, however, all is not beautiful as spring arrives and our chance in a lifetime constitution making process has turned into a shambles. Every day the reports just get worse and worse. The words used by one senior official to describe the outreach programme, expose the truth of the story: tension, friction, hostile, ugly. We hear of public meetings turning into shouting matches, of people being abducted, assaulted, kidnapped and of villagers being frog marched, intimidated and commandeered. Then there are reports of COPAC (constitutional outreach) drivers and technicians threatening to stop work as they say they aren't getting the pay they were promised. Other reports tell of hotels evicting COPAC personnel or refusing to give them meals due to massive unpaid bills. In a country where over 90% of the population is unemployed and civil servants only earn 160 US dollars a month, its hard to find perspective in this whole mess. One report tells of COPAC technicians being very disgruntled at only receiving 55 US dollars a day for their services and another 15 a day for their meals. For teachers with degrees surviving on less than 5 US dollars a day, it doesn't really make sense - does it? [*Via African Tears*]

'I'm not a Western puppet'

The Herald features an interview with Lovemore Madhuku, National Constitutional Assembly chairperson: IG: For a long time, you have been campaigning for a new constitution for Zimbabwe and here is an opportunity for your organisation to participate in the inclusive process. What is your contribution to the new process. LM: NCA is not participating in this process. It is chaotic and a waste of resources... a waste of time and other things... You can actually add on your own adjectives. IG: So NCA is not participating? LM: Don't tell me you don't know that. As NCA we are totally opposed to the current process. We totally reject it. Everyone in Government knows that we are not participating. IG: Why? LM: No constitution-making process is left to politicians. A constitution is about the people. It is people-driven. You have a scenario where each political party is telling people what to say and you call that a constitution? We are totally opposed to that process. A constitution needs an independent commission or body comprising stakeholders from all over. The current arrangement is that the ruling parties are running the affairs of the committee. They are telling people what to say [*Via The Herald - state-controlled media*].

Christianity and constitutional reform in Zimbabwe

Opinion: Is Christianity the most practised religion in Zimbabwe? If so, does that make Zimbabwe a Christian nation? Should Zimbabwe be declared a Christian nation in the new constitution or should any other religion be adopted as a state religion? The impetus to contribute on this topic came when I was going through the Kariba draft constitution. So far it is the only constitutional document that has a clause asserting a religious belief. Both the NCA and the Chidyausiku draft constitutions have no clauses linking the state to a particular religion directly or indirectly. The preamble to the Kariba draft opens by stating, "We acknowledge the supremacy of the Lord". Inevitably such a constitutional provision is bound to raise controversy and is subject to different legal and theological interpretations and implications. In this discussion the word Lord is applied as referring to the Christian God. The current Zimbabwean constitution does not proclaim 'the supremacy of the lord' anywhere; neither does it attempt to link a particular religion to the state of Zimbabwe [Via *The Standard*].

No Respite As Police Arrest Monitor Again

Police on Friday arrested John Ziyera, one of the monitors shadowing the chaotic constitution making exercise despite assurance by Constitution Select Committee (OPAC) leaders to spare them from harassment and arrest. Ziyera, who is a Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Zimbabwe Election Support Network and Zimbabwe Peace Project Independent Constitutional Monitoring Project (ZZZICOMP) monitor was arrested and detained at Dumba Business Center, Mutasa North Constituency where he had been monitoring a constitution making outreach meeting. In a statement Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights whose lawyers reacted to Ziyera's arrest said the monitor was allegedly apprehended after the participants in a meeting at Dumba Business Centre tried to physically attack him as he was regarded as a foreigner in their area. Although Ziyera identified himself as a ZZZICOMP monitor to David Chimhini, one of the COPAC team leaders, the legislator allegedly proceeded to hand him over to the police under unclear circumstances [Via *RadioVop*]

25 July 2010

Film to show secret footage of constitutional debate

A secret footage of the constitutional outreach programme violence and intimidation against Movement for Democratic (MDC) supporters in Manicaland and some parts of Zimbabwe will be shown in a film next month, according to the film producers. There has been a wave of violence perpetrated by some secret agents and Zanu (PF) militia in the country during the on-going outreach exercise. In most parts of the country members from the notorious CIO and armed soldiers are masterminding the intimidations and violence with the help of overzealous Zanu (PF) militia and war veterans. In an interview with *The Zimbabwean*, the director of the film who requested anonymity for fear of victimisation said: "We have been shooting footages of the harassment, intimidation and violence against the MDC supporters in some parts of the country and we want to show the whole world the true picture of what is happening in this constitution making process. It is horrible." "We will show all the evidence of how the Mugabe's regime has been harassing the people perceived to be MDC supporters who have the right to exercise their views in writing of the new constitution. We will also show how the police and judiciary system has been inept. We have harrowing images of how some MDC supporters were beaten. I cannot divulge more information on the film, but it will be out very soon," he said [Via *The Zimbabwean*].

Why the fuss over title deeds?

Finance Minister Mr Tendai Biti caused a stir during his recent Mid-Term Fiscal Policy Review presentation after he stated that the 99-year leases issued to newly resettled farmers could not be used as collateral and instead advocated the recognition of title deeds. The minister faced vociferous objections from most of the parliamentarians in attendance. Their point of contestation was undoubtedly based on a strong desire to safeguard the interests of the new farmer who has faced an onslaught since the inception of the land reform programme. Just like the legislators, other embittered stakeholders are questioning the minister's statement, arguing that the leases should be recognised as collateral. [...] The issue of collateral, which has been haunting new farmers for several years, seemed to have been resolved with the issuance of the 99-year leases. However, the banking sector continues to reject the leases and has on many occasions forced the already hard-pressed Government to dig deep into its coffers to finance agriculture. What boggles the mind is that these financial institutions used to accept title deeds that were issued by the government at the time. Now, the Government has replaced the title deeds with the 99-year leases, but still the banks won't accept the leases, leaving the new farmer in a quandary. Is the Government that is in power now, lesser than the government that was in power before independence? [...] The time has come for the banking sector to begin viewing 99-year leases as Government-approved documents that can be used as collateral. [Via *The Sunday Mail - state-controlled media*]

'Liberation war should inspire new constitution'

Zimbabwean youths have been urged to ensure that their contributions to the current constitution-making process consolidates the gains of the liberation struggle. Addressing university students during a tour of the liberation war shrine at Chikumbi Freedom Camp in Zambia last week, a Government representative stationed at Zimbabwe's embassy in Lusaka, Mr Ernest Munemo, said the new constitution should be totally home-grown. "At this shrine are the remains of dedicated sons and daughters of Zimbabwe who were massacred in the process of liberating their beloved country from colonial bondage. "We have gone past the physical fighting stage and our detractors are now using other means to subvert our views and national values for their selfish gains. "In this constitution-making process lies your history and future and you should not let foreigners determine these for you," he said [*Via The Sunday Mail - state-controlled media*].

26 July 2010

Zanu PF Youths on rampage in Chivi

A District Administrator in Masvingo has gone into hiding fearing for his life after he was threatened by Zanu PF militias for his contributions at a constitutional outreach meeting at Chivi Centre. Bernard Hadzirabwi, the District Administrator for Chivi District, is in trouble after suggesting in his contribution that the country's Prime Minister should have executive powers. This did not go down well with the Zanu PF supporters and CIO agents present at the meeting two weeks ago. According to the ZZZICOMP observers on the ground, the Zanu PF youths on Monday, July 26, 2010, were busy organising a demonstration against Hadzirabwi at the centre and threatened the security guards at his offices accusing them of protecting a Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) supporter. After receiving the threats on several occasions, Hadzirabwi has not been reporting for duty since last week fearing for his life. Following on the contributions from the same outreach meeting, Zanu PF District Coordinating Committee (DCC) Chairperson Sanders Magwizi has summoned the head of the District Development Fund (DDF) in the area Ernest Temba to his office. It is alleged that Temba made contributions that are against Zanu PF's views and the Kariba Draft during a COPAC outreach meeting in the area [*Via ZZZICOMP Press Release*]

ZANU PF youths harass UN mission-journalists

ZANU-PF activists one of them claiming to be a son of a local chief in Bikita's Maregere village on Thursday harassed a group of journalists who had gone on a United Nations mission-field visit to investigate children's issues in the area. The middle aged man, approached journalists who were interviewing local people and demanded that they should present themselves to him first before talking to the community. He said no issues concerning rights of the children were supposed to be discussed with local people who are not members of the parliament led constitution making process. "Where are you coming from and who gave you the permission to talk to my people without my knowledge?; which media organizations do you work for?," he asked, before journalists said they were coming from the state controlled newspaper Herald and Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation. Are you sure that you are all from the Herald and ZBC?, he reiterated before a senior official from the ministry of Information and Publicity, Regis Chikowore intervened and told him that he was a government official accompanying the journalists [*Via ZimEye*]

27 July 2010

Give prisoners right to speak on constitution

Zimbabwean prisoners face the possibility of being sidelined during the constitution-making process as there are no outreach programmes lined up for inmates in the country's penitentiaries. Last week, inmates at Harare Prison pleaded with deputy Justice minister Obert Gutu for their voices to be heard in the crafting of a new constitution. "We ask the honourable minister to ensure that the Copac outreach teams also visit us so that we can make contributions towards the crafting of the new constitution," said Jonathan Mutsinze, a prisoner. Mutsinze said prisoners were unhappy with delays in trying cases. Although Copac co-chairperson, Munyaradzi Mangwana said the national policy on Zimbabwe's prisoners implied that they could not take part during the constitution-making process, constitutional experts have said inmates had the right to participate [*Via NewsDay*]

Plight of the disabled needs attention in Zimbabwe

In a country once referred to as "one of the most disability-accessible countries in Africa", with supposedly greater availability of friendly disability legislation, free public transport and eligibility for government disability allowance – one tends to wonder what hope exists for a family such as Grace's as systems continue to deteriorate in

Zimbabwe. The country's social welfare department is probably at its most impoverished and demoralised at this stage as it can hardly afford to offer any assistance to disabled and disadvantaged children. In the not so long ago past, the ministry has paid out monthly pittance per disabled child. Now, even that has not been forthcoming, and in the face of this – local minibus services are unwilling to take the time and trouble to load up children in wheelchairs. While the constitutional outreach programme is underway, these are some of the issues that need serious attention. Children in these circumstances are scattered all over the country; a number of them hidden from society while many will never have a shot at normal life because of prohibitive socio – economic and policy factors [Via *Kubatana*].

Support the Kariba Draft or die

In Mwenezi East, Masvingo province, one Colonel J Hungwe of Ngundu Halt, Major Neshuro and Justice Sithole, the Zanu PF chairperson of Mwenezi District Coordinating Committee, last week Friday forced villagers of Chingamhi Ward 5 and threatened them with death if they did not support the discredited Kariba draft in the Constitution-making process. Hungwe was armed with an AK47 rifle when he addressed the meeting [Via *MDC Today - 27 July 2010*]

Rich pickings for Copac teams

The constitutional outreach programme will provide rich pickings for some participants, with those involved standing to pocket between US\$2 000 and US\$9 000 by the time the programme ends. Even then, some of the people involved in the programme are demanding an increase in their allowances. At current rates, Copac will fork out US\$2,5 million in allowances for drivers, rapporteurs and legislators. This amount excludes accommodation, meals, fuel and other incidentals. Legislators are getting US\$25 per day and for the 88 days of the outreach, they stand to collect US\$2 200 apiece. That puts the allowances bill for the 170 legislators taking part at US\$374 000. However, indications from informed sources yesterday were that the MPs could soon be paid US\$75 a day, which they have been demanding. This means each MP will get US\$6 600, bringing their total bill to US\$580 800. Rapporteurs will smile even more broadly to the bank as they are getting US\$100 per day. Each rapporteur is in line for US\$8 800, with the total outlay coming to more than US\$1,8 million. Drivers of the outreach teams have been getting the "loose change", with each one being paid US\$15 a day. With 265 cars having been hired for the programme, this amounts to about US\$350 000 [Via *The Herald - state-controlled media*]

More intimidation reported at constitutional outreach meetings

The independent constitutional outreach monitoring organization, ZZZICOMP, has reported that a District Administrator in Masvingo has gone into hiding after being threatened by ZANU PF militias for his contributions at a meeting at Chivi Centre. At the meeting Bernard Hadzirabwi suggested that the Prime Minister should have executive powers. A contribution that did not go down well with the ZANU PF supporters and CIO's present at the meeting two weeks ago. ZZZICOMP observers on the ground said that on Monday ZANU PF youths were organising a demonstration against Hadzirabwi at the centre. They also threatened security guards at his offices. Further intimidation of other individuals has also been reported by the independent monitoring organisation. The ZANU PF District Coordinating Committee Chairperson, Sanders Magwizi, summoned the head of the District Development Fund in the area, Ernest Temba, to his office. He alleged that Temba made contributions that were against ZANU PF's views and the Kariba Draft during a COPAC outreach meeting [...] Meanwhile, the MDC'S national Women's Assembly secretary, Evelyn Masaiti, has said the greatest weapon for a new Zimbabwe is for the people to participate in the Constitution-making outreach programme [...] An observer queried how Evelyn Masaiti would feel about attending a constitutional outreach meeting and speaking freely, if she was threatened with death by an army colonel wielding an AK 47 [Via *Sw Radio Africa*]

Resolutions of the National Constitutional Assembly NCA Strategic Indaba

The National Constitutional Assembly held its strategic planning meeting at the Rainbow Towers Harare to refine its roadmap in the struggle for a new genuinely people driven constitution for Zimbabwe, from the 24 to the 26th of July 2010. 300 delegates from all the ten provinces including the National Taskforce, Constituency leaders, provincial chairpersons attended. [...] The Indaba, made the following resolutions: 1. That the NCA reiterates its total rejection of the Copac process 2. In view of the obvious fact that the COPAC process cannot produce a democratic and people driven constitution, the NCA is intensifying its campaign for a NO VOTE should a referendum be called. This campaign cannot wait for the content of the COPAC draft as it is clear that the politicians in the GPA are not interested in producing a democratic constitution for Zimbabwe. 3. The campaign will be under the Take Charge banner and will include extensive grassroots civic education, public meetings, road shows and demonstrations 4. The main purpose for this campaign is to subject the constitution making process in Zimbabwe to public scrutiny with a view to entrenching the principle that constitutions are made by and for the people. 5. that the NCA will continue to be bound by the resolutions of historical positions and processes that the

organisation has participated in, these include resolutions of the National Working People's Convention, 1st and 2nd People's Constitutional Convention, the Zimbabwe People's Charter [*Via NCA Press Release*]

28 July 2010

Zimbabwe Xhosas to boycott constitutional process if not in their language

Zimbabwe's Xhosa community in Matabeleland North's Mbembesi have threatened to boycott the constitutional outreach programme if it was not conducted in their language. Members of the Xhosa community said although there were similarities between Ndebele and their language, certain nuances in theirs gave different shades of meanings to some words and expressions. Copac co-chairperson Mr Edward Mkhosi said this was an attempt to cause unnecessary problems [...] "It is a complication in itself. We can not split ourselves that far at this point because it is not of help to anyone," said Mr Mkhosi. "In those areas the Ndebele language is done at primary and secondary school and quite a number of Xhosa speaking people are doing well in the subjects hence their argument is very weak. I have spoken with the chief-designate, Dr Neville Ndondo, over the matter. He seems to be trying to create a problem that he cannot solve himself because the constitution is not about language but how people want to be governed." Asked what Copac would do in the event that the Xhosa community lives up to its threat, Mr Mkhosi said they would deal with that if it happened [*Via ZimDiaspora*].

'Practise what is law' — lawyer

A constitutional law expert yesterday blasted Zimbabwean authorities for crafting laws that they never adhere to. Greg Linnington, a constitutional law writer and political science lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe, said even if Copac were to come up with very good content in the new constitutional draft, as long as politicians chose not to follow the rules enshrined in it, the whole efforts of making a new constitution would be useless. "As a country, we need to develop a culture of constitutionalism so that people respect the constitution," said Linnington. "The whole process of developing a culture of constitutionalism is where people practise what is in their constitution." Linnington said Zimbabwe had several instances where the legislation enshrined in the constitution were ignored for political expediency. "We were supposed to have a set number of Cabinet ministers and there was actually a ceiling to that number. However, that issue was ignored and now the number of ministers has increased," Linnington said. He said the text of the constitution was supposed to be respected, otherwise all the money and time being put into the whole exercise of constitution-making would go to waste if people were to continue breaking the laws that they craft [*Via NewsDay*].

People driven constitution remains a pipe dream

Zanu (PF) is using war veterans to throw spanners into the works of the Constitutional Parliamentary Select Committee (Copac) in its public consultations on the proposed new constitution in order to frustrate the committee's progress, it has emerged. A high placed source in the provincial party structures informed this paper that chances of having a people driven constitution remained a pie in the sky since the Zanu (PF) party leaders were busy holding meetings with war veterans and militia at provincial level to frustrate the committee's work. The source said the plan was to convince war veterans and militia to mobilise people in their respective districts to refuse any constitutional changes by threatening them that any form of cooperation will jeopardise their ownership of farms they obtained through the infamous Robert Mugabe land grab. "The party leadership is meeting with war veterans to mobilise Zanu (PF) supporters at district level throughout the country against a drafting a new people driven constitution. Villagers are also being forced to support the Zanu (PF) policies and are told to reject the new constitution. "People are warned that doing so will only help them preserve their pieces of land they were given during the land reform programme. "Soldiers have been incorporated in the plan as well," said the source. [*Via The Zimbabwean*].

Devolution 'global best practice': Mutambara

Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara says that devolution of power is "global best practice", but warns against fundamentalists advocating total cessation from Zimbabwe. Speaking in London on Saturday night, Mutambara backed calls for the devolution of power to the regions – saying opponents of the idea were using scare-tactics and unhelpful labelling. "Zimbabweans must be open-minded and not shoot down a good idea. When an idea comes out, it should never be labelled as a Matabeleland, Mashonaland or Masvingo issue. Devolution is global best practice, and America is a perfect example of successful devolution," Mutambara told a public meeting at the Lumen Reform Church in central London. Devolution of power is one of the central themes in debates taking place around the country as Zimbabwe embarks on a process to write a new constitution. Devolution's most fervent advocates are in the south-western parts of the country which perennially complain of neglect from central go

vernment, and with some justification, Mutambara said [*Via New Zimbabwe*].

Copac outreach teams threaten to strike over allowances

Technicians attached to Constitution Select Committee (Copac) outreach teams in Matabeleland South and Bulawayo provinces have threatened to go on strike because of non-payment of their allowances and other unresolved technical and welfare matters. The seven technicians yesterday wrote a letter addressed to both provincial offices and copied to the three Copac chairpersons detailing the challenges they were facing. They complained that they work hungry, have not been given enough batteries or equipment to store data. All of them have not been accredited, a situation they said put their personal security at risk [*Via The Chronicle - state-controlled media*].

We have a fundamental right to freedom of expression!
