

ZIMBABWE BRIEFING

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Rugare Gumbo is a bitter man

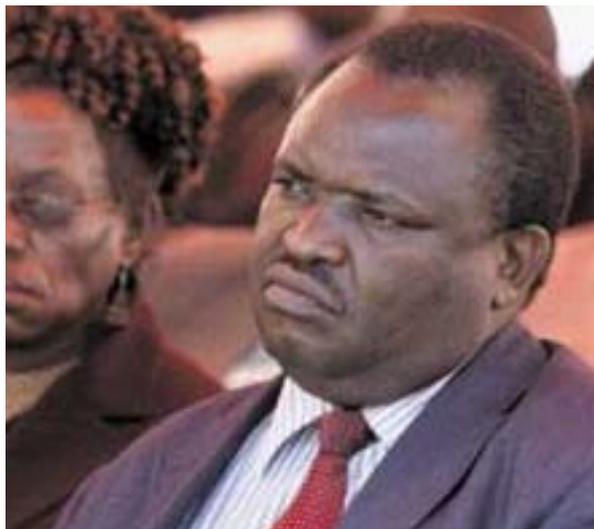
On the eve of Zimbabwe's first democratic election in 1980, the state-controlled daily, The Herald carried the following interesting article based on an interview with Rugare Gumbo, now ZANU-PF Spokesperson, in which he shared his views on Robert Mugabe and his attitude to democracy, elections, among other issues. We reproduce it in full below. Marion Duncan reported:

He is a bitter man. His eyes blaze at the mention of Robert Mugabe. A man he says, "stole two years of my life." He is Rugare Gumbo, the passionate mouthpiece of the recently released ZANU-PF detainees, who is currently the centre of one of the most intense political struggles the country has yet seen. All major parties contesting the general election [1980 election] are desperate to capture the candidacy of these rebels. Their representatives plague the still bewildered men; large women in party dress hound them. The dissidents are wooed and courted like beautiful women by hungry men. And in the middle, Rugare Gumbo remains calm and placid and with his objectives clearly etched in his mind. "My preoccupation is with unity, to discover a common base for all ethnic and racial groups in this country so that they can work together for the future," he said.

He was born in Belingwe [renamed Mberengwa after independence] district of Rhodesia in 1940, educated first at a mission school and later at a government secondary school. From his early teens he was involved in nationalist politics, and at the age of 22 was a branch chairman of the Fort Victoria [now Masvingo] ZAPU party.

He was arrested in 1962 for his part in the attempted organization of a general strike, but was released two years later. He then went to America, to Boston University where he worked

BITTER MAN: Rugare Gumbo is captured in this file photo. - timeslive



for and obtained a BA. An MA followed from Carlton University in Canada and ME [Masters in Education] from Toronto University. "All this time I retained my interest in politics and in 1973 when I obtained my final degree, I returned to the armed struggle. I was immediately made secretary for information on the DARE [the Zimbabwe Revolutionary Council – a ZANU external wing] under the chairmanship of Herbert Chitepo.

"It was at the time of the power struggle and finally the Rev Ndabaningi Sithole made it clear he no longer supported DARE members. After the assassination of Chitepo in August 1975, there was confusion in the party as to who should succeed to the chairmanship. The next man in the chain was the secretary general of the party – Robert Mugabe. We agreed that he was the obvious successor. Senior members of the party came to see me and other DARE members to ask us what to tell their people. They were Dzinashé Machingura, James Nyikadzinashé, Parker Chipowera and Soul Sadza. We told them the new leader would be Robert Mugabe. We chose him. At this time he was detained by Frelimo in Mozambique, and it was because of letters written by us that President Samora Machel released

Mugabe. Then came the Geneva Conference in 1976 and I as publicity secretary built up Mugabe's image for the conference. There was already trouble in the party, but we did not have time to sort it out before the conference.

"Everything Mugabe is, he owes it to us – the very people he detained. After Geneva there was a meeting then it all happened. Mugabe asked me a point blank question. He said, "Gumbo, do you want us to dissolve ZANU in order to join the PF [Patriotic Front]?" I said yes, if that is the only way we can unite the people of Zimbabwe because as far as I am concerned the issue of unity is above party politics.

"Mugabe said, "I will never leave ZANU. I will do everything that I can to make sure that we do not unite with ZAPU." Shortly after, we were arrested and detained. When we were detained, Mugabe would come to see us in the pits where we were kept like animals. He would laugh at us, taunt us, we were tortured. He laughed. He enjoyed seeing us suffering. He is ruthless. He uses people – the Presidents of the Frontline States, people like Joshua Nkomo to build himself up and then he tries to destroy them. He cares nothing for the masses

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ZANU-PF Escalates Attacks on Facilitation Team, Seeks to Divide SADC

Coordinator's Note



dewaMAVHINGA

The 20 May special SADC summit in Windhoek that ended up not discussing Zimbabwe was characterized by a flurry of activity by ZANU-PF supporters and officials who sought to have the full SADC Summit do the unprecedented – refuse to endorse SADC Troika resolutions on Zimbabwe taken on 31 March in Livingstone, Zambia. ZANU-PF's lobby to have Zimbabwe discussed at the SADC failed, with SADC leaders deferring the matter to 11 June in South Africa when SADC leaders will meet on the sidelines of the COMESA summit to deliberate of Zimbabwe.

On the other hand, a large number of Zimbabwe civil society leaders converged on Windhoek to lobby SADC leaders - these included representatives from National Association of NGOS, Women's Coalition, Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition, Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Zimbabwe Election Support Network, the Institute for Democratic Alternatives, Zimbabwe and the National Constitutional Assembly. We held two press conferences on Zimbabwe on 19 May, one coordinated by SADC CNGO with a broader focus but also touching on Zimbabwe and the other coordinated by Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition exclusively looking at Zimbabwe and outlining key demands to SADC regarding pre-conditions for Zimbabwe elections.

The ZANU-PF lobby in Windhoek was anchored on two threats: (1) That SADC is under attack from the West whose Trojan Horse was the SADC Troika hence the need to reverse Livingstone Troika Resolutions in order to keep SADC united, and (2) If SADC insisted on opposing ZANU-PF views, then Zimbabwe would be withdrawn from SADC in the same manner that Zimbabwe withdrew from the Commonwealth.

But particu-

larly ZANU-PF supporters and allies have trained their arsenal on president Zuma's Facilitation Team, particularly on Ambassador Lindiwe Zulu. A ZANU-PF position paper that was circulated at the Namibia summit strongly criticized Ambassador Zulu and called for her removal from the Facilitation Team. The 22 May edition of the state-owned but ZANU-PF aligned Sunday Mail weekly newspaper carried a vicious and malicious opinion piece stating that ZANU-PF had formally lodged a complaint with the ANC over "the behavior of Lindiwe Zulu following 'reckless and inflammatory' statements she allegedly made regarding succession law in Zimbabwe." The article quotes a ZANU-PF official as having said Ambassador Zulu is, "playing a very cheap and dangerous game which can be played by any fool. What she says about our leaders we can say about hers with more credibility. She is forgetting that she is a mere assistant to the facilitator. She is just an aide."

Such a display of fury and vitriol by ZANU-PF supporters is testimony that South Africa's attitude towards Zimbabwe is no longer quiet diplomacy and acquiescence – under Zuma there is now robust engagement

and firm commitment to democracy, particularly to the ideals of free and fair elections – a development that has so much stung ZANU-PF.

South Africa's opinion on Zimbabwe matters, and we are counting on Zuma to remain steadfast and to strengthen the resolve of other SADC leaders who may be prevaricating under a barrage of propaganda from ZANU-PF officials who are actively seeking to break the emerging consensus within SADC and force SADC to reverse Livingstone Troika resolutions. South Africa must be frank with ZANU-PF that the Mbeki era is long gone, and that it will not be business as usual. If ZANU-PF chooses to go for broke then it must be told in no uncertain terms that South Africa will not support any anti-democracy tendencies.

South Africa and SADC must respond officially to these incessant attacks on the Facilitation Team and its members. SADC must not allow political parties to be in the habit of insulting its officials and institutions. SADC must demonstrate that there are consequences that come with holding its institutions in contempt.

As preparations get underway for the SADC special summit to discuss Zimbabwe on 11 June

in South Africa, our key demands as Zimbabwe civics remain unchanged:

SADC must urgently lay out in clear terms, firm pre-conditions to ensure democratic elections in Zimbabwe that are without violence and intimidation and that fully comply with SADC principles and guidelines governing democratic elections. We reiterate that, despite talk to the contrary, Zimbabwe is not ready for elections in 2011 and that on her own, without direct assistance from SADC and the AU, Zimbabwe lacks capacity and political will to deliver a free and fair election.

We state unequivocally that the conditions obtaining in Zimbabwe such as widespread state-sponsored violence, partisan application of the law, increased deployment of soldiers across the country openly intimidating citizens and campaigning for ZANU-PF and increased arrests and harassment of rights activists and MDC leaders all confirm that key state institutions remain unreformed and extremely partisan and politicized.

These are the matters that SADC must address directly when they meet over Zimbabwe in South Africa in June.

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Personal Reflections on the meaning of Africa Day for Zimbabweans

Over two years down the line, Zimbabwe has not yet gotten on the path transition and almost everyone in the country is pinning her/his hopes on SADC to come up with a realistic arrangement for all this madness to end. I call it madness because, it is a fact that on the 29th of March 2008, Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirayi won the elections and defeated ZANU-PF by a large margin, but of course the latter would not hear of transferring power to the opposition. But of course, not many knew what was coming, the 27th of June 2008 presidential runoff elections, the birth of Global Political Agreement (GPA) in September 2008 and the inclusive government in February 2009. Then people thought that maybe, just maybe, the inclusive government will provide a channel for its people to heal and rise from the ashes. The current environment goes to show that on the contrary, we are back to square one.

That a few more newspapers are now in business again does not constitute real media freedom. The public media still is partisan, we still have key government institutions, such as the judiciary, that need to be transformed and supported, both technically and financially. Cases of violence against women are not getting a fair deal in the courts, as in most cases the perpetrators get lighter sentences or get scot free. Then we have the 'booming' diamond mining industry which is supposed to be part of the lifeline for the economic recovery that

ONE PEOPLE:

This iconic image preaches unity amongst Africans. - youtube



Zimbabwe needs, but the reality of it is that no one really knows for sure where revenue from diamond sales is going to. Some say, it is the lifeline for ZANU-PF and finance minister Hon Tendai Biti should not have any say in how the funds from the diamond sales should be utilised. What a country indeed! The socio-economic development of any country determines whether its government is in control of the situation or not. Despite the fact that a number of economic policies have been put in place to revive the economy, we still face the same problem- high unemployment, a crumbling health system, unsustainable parastatals that need to be removed from a 'life support'- Air Zimbabwe as a classical example, high charges for service delivery, high rate of electricity cuts in most urban areas despite the exorbitant charges that ZESA charges its customers, high school fees in public and private institutions, lack of adequate housing for the low and middle income groups, crippled local industries, the unending constitutional reform process, unfinished business in addressing past violations of people's rights (politically motivated violence, forced

evictions, land reform, among others), the list is endless.

All I can say is that, there is very little that Zimbabweans can celebrate during this year's Africa Day, which is held every year on the 25th of May. It just goes to show that when you have one leader ruling a nation for 31 years without any space for other players to take the lead and offer alternatives, then things indeed fall apart- North Africa has given us what happens to such rulers. Of course, we must be very cautious of what we ask for, as only Zimbabweans know what they want at the end of the day. Sometimes, removing a leader from power does not solve the structural challenges that Zimbabwe still needs to grapple with. I think people have seen that even though our PM Tsvangirayi is still in power, he sometimes has no say to fundamental national priorities, which makes me sooo mad! At the same time, I also think that we have something to celebrate this year on Africa Day.

President Jacob Zuma of South Africa, who has been tasked by SADC to mediate the Zimbabwean crisis, has managed to pressurise Presi-

dent Mugabe and his team to agree with the other principals (Prime Minister Tsvangirayi and Deputy Prime Minister Mutambara and or Professor Welshman Ncube) on a roadmap to elections which will determine who will lead Zimbabwe to the right path again. The Zimbabwe elections roadmap is set to be discussed at the upcoming SADC Extraordinary Summit due to take place in Johannesburg, South Africa on 11 June on the sidelines of the COMESA Summit in order to create a stepping stone towards achieving the ultimate goal- a concrete framework for peace, stability and real development.

Hence, one can say that SADC is truly trying its best to ensure that the region enjoys stability, peace and prosperity and the Zimbabwean situation becomes a litmus test, on whether it is really committed to its democracy and human rights ideals. Only time will tell.

By Ms. Tafadzwa Muropa, a gender activist and political economist. working with the She writes this article in her personal capacity.

ZANU-PF abuses renders its Politburo impotent

The once almighty former ruling party, ZANU-PF's highest decision making organ outside of Congress, the Politburo, whose decisions and policies dominated and determined the national political, economic and social spheres in the past thirty years of President Robert Mugabe's dictatorship has become impotent because of the organization's human rights abuses which have called other national and supra national bodies to have a critical say in the affairs of the State.

In this article, I posit that the defeat of ZANU PF in the 2008 general elections, the formation of the inclusive government in February 2009 after the signing of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in September 2008, the involvement of SADC and the AU in Zimbabwe's domestic affairs meant the erosion of Mugabe's dictatorship and consequently the ubiquitous roles of his party's Central Committee and the Politburo.

The role currently being played by SADC and South African President, Jacob Zuma, the facilitator to the Zimbabwean political dispute between the two formations of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and ZANU-PF clearly indicates the impotence of the ZANU-PF politburo. A close look at the outcomes of the Livingstone and Windhoek SADC meetings to address the Zimbabwean crisis will assist to confirm my hypothesis.

The difficulties facing ZANU-PF and its leadership to impose elections on Zimbabweans because of a chorus of domestic and regional outcries that conditions for holding elections are absent is a case that indicates that the communist-style Politburo has been rendered useless by the winds of democratic transparency and accountability that have been an anathema to Mugabe's political governance for the past thirty years.

Firstly, the outcome of the 29 March 2008 general elections in which ZANU-PF lost the Parliamentary elections in virtually all urban municipalities and the mildly free and fair Presidential elections where Mugabe lost to Prime Minister, Morgan Tsvangirai before the violent June 2008 presidential run-off election meant that it will not be business as usual in the administration of national affairs. The era of Politburo unilateralism is long gone. Any attempts to revive

IMPOSING OR IMPO- TENT? The ZANU PF HQ is where the Politburo meets. - flickr.



past dictatorship will result in increased domestic, regional and international isolation of the Mugabe regime.

It is important to note that ZANU-PF has lost control of all urban councils in Zimbabwe. It does not have a single Mayor in all the towns and cities across the country. This is historical and it marked the harbinger of the erosion of the powers of the politburo. It tells us that the bravado claims of being a party of the people are nothing but delusional.

All these political misfortunes that befell ZANU-PF were predictable after years of human rights abuses from the party's "dinner" of human abuses during the Matabeleland and Midlands massacres to its "dessert" that marked all elections from 1990 to the June 2008 presidential run-off in terms of the menu of human rights violations in post independent Zimbabwe.

The consummation of the Inclusive Government in February 2009 after the signing of the GPA meant that there were several power centers in the country. Firstly, Mugabe's executive powers, although they remained largely intact had some little checks and oversight. The cabinet, which was virtually an implementing body of the ZANU-PF politburo in the days of Mugabe's one-party rule, became a forum of democratic and autocratic power struggles between the two formations of the MDC and ZANU-PF respectively.

The Cabinet, as it stands, is no longer a rubber-stamping institution for decisions of Mugabe's Central Committee and Politburo because of its composition. There is also the Council of Min-

isters that is chaired by Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai. By virtue of Tsvangirai chairing this body, it cannot be a medium to implement the decisions of the ZANU-PF politburo.

What this means is that government ministries and departments, unlike in the past, now have to implement national programs and not the decisions of ZANU-PF. That is the beauty of democracy and a clearer indication of the impotence of ZANU-PF party organs in the administration of national affairs.

It is at the cabinet level that the call for elections in 2011 by ZANU-PF irrespective of the need to democratize both the administrative and political environment attendant to the holding of free and fair elections hit a snag. Any unilateral decision by ZANU-PF will invite regional intervention which in most cases won't support dictatorial measures in the context of inclusivity.

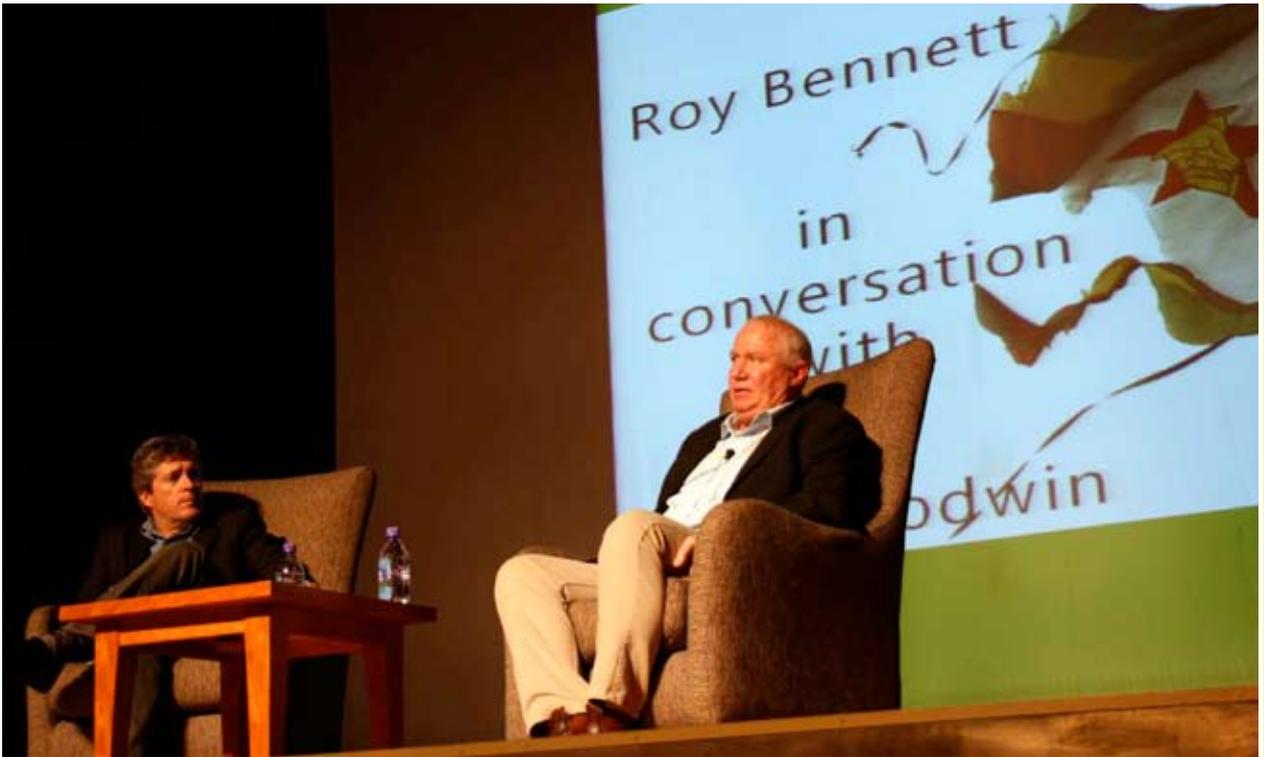
The position of the ZANU-PF politburo is now treated in the same manner as the positions of the National Executives of the two formations of the MDC. It is merely a position of a political party. The only difference between the position of ZANU-PF and those of the MDC could be the malign and ego-centric nature of the ZANU-PF's call for elections without attendant democratic reforms.

In the case of national security reforms, the decisions of the politburo still stand because of the control invested in the President's Office by the current Constitution as well as the failure by the negotiators to the GPA to clearly address the ubiquitous nature of the securocrats

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Where dissidents are the prey and horror is a weapon

Author, Peter Godwin (left) is pictured here in conversation with exiled Member of Parliament, Roy Bennett (right) at Wits University on 18 November, 2010. - zimbabwepictures.com



An authoritarian government willing to use the most brutal means to hold on to power; a dictator whose thugs have murdered, tortured, imprisoned or intimidated tens of thousands of civilians; and individuals who have risked their lives simply to exercise their most fundamental rights — this is the state of affairs not only in Libya today, but also in Zimbabwe, which has suffered the ravages of more than 30 years under the autocratic rule of President Robert Mugabe.

In his chilling new book, “The Fear,” the journalist Peter Godwin gives readers an unsparing account of the horrors that Mr. Mugabe’s regime has inflicted on the people of Zimbabwe. During his three decades in office the country’s economy has tanked: agricultural production has plummeted, unemployment and food shortages have multiplied, inflation has soared, and much of the country’s middle class has fled. AIDS cases have exploded, and medicine and medical help are in increasingly short supply.

Hopes that Mr. Mugabe’s days as president might actually be numbered were dashed in the weeks leading up to a runoff election in June 2008, when supporters of the opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai of the Movement for Democratic Change came under violent attack, and Mr. Tsvangirai announced his withdrawal as a presi-

dential candidate, saying he could not ask people to come out to vote for him “when that vote would cost them their lives.”

A so-called power-sharing government has been in place since 2008, but Mr. Mugabe has remained firmly in control; more than a quarter of his opponents in Parliament have been arrested, according to the Movement for Democratic Change and human-rights lawyers. Despite rumours about his health, Mr. Mugabe declared last week that he intended to run for president this year at the age of 87, and political violence is reportedly already increasing.

In “The Fear” Mr. Godwin chronicles the savagery of Mr. Mugabe’s regime in harrowing detail. Some observers, he notes, call what has happened in Zimbabwe “politicide”: “As genocide is an attempt to wipe out an ethnic group, so politicide is the practice of wiping out an entire political movement.”

The murders carried out by the president’s supporters and riot police around the time of the 2008 election, Mr. Godwin says, were “accompanied by torture and rape on an industrial scale, committed on a catch-and-release basis”: “When those who survive, terribly injured, limp home, or are carried or pushed in wheelbarrows, or on the backs of pickup trucks, they act like human billboards, advertising the appalling consequences of opposition to the tyranny, bearing

their gruesome political stigmata. And in their home communities, their return causes ripples of anxiety to spread.” The people have given this time of violence and suffering its own name, *chidudu* — meaning “the fear.”

In reporting this book Mr. Godwin travelled back to the country where he grew up, despite the dangers: “not only from Mugabe’s banning of Western journalists, but also because I was once declared an enemy of the state, accused of spying.” He uses his intimate knowledge of Zimbabwe to introduce readers to opposition leaders, church authorities, foreign diplomats and ordinary people who have ended up in hospitals or as refugees — beaten, mutilated, raped and terrorized, their houses burned to the ground.

This volume lacks the intimacy of the author’s two affecting memoirs about Zimbabwe (“Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa” and “When a Crocodile Eats the Sun”), and it sometimes assumes a little too much familiarity on the part of the lay reader with that country’s tragic history. But it remains a document that should be read by anyone interested in the sacrifices that people are willing to make for the sake of democracy — a timely document, indeed, given the democratic uprisings taking place this spring in northern Africa and the Middle East. Not only is

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in Zimbabwean politics especially their partisan behavior.

Where the GPA sought to create a National Security Council, the securocrats working in cahoots with ZANU-PF have blatantly refused to reform and the partisan and violent-ridden Joint Operations Command (JOC) remains intact and continues with its poisonous political activities. This explains why democratic forces in Zimbabwe have identified the security sector as the critical and last bastion of ZANU-PF's abusive arm that needs to be democratized before the holding of any election in order to facilitate a free electoral environment where the security of citizens is protected and guaranteed.

ZANU-PF's politburo and party processes are not only subjected to national oversight. ZANU-PF because of its failure to embrace democratic governance and its track record of human rights abuses and electoral malpractices has also invited supra-national bodies such as SADC and the AU to determine national processes.

Both SADC and the AU are guarantors of the GPA. Where there are disputes among the political players SADC has to mediate under the leadership of President Zuma. The decision of the SADC Troika on Defence and Security in Livingstone, Zambia calling

upon the Zimbabwean Inclusive government to lay out a clear democratic road map to future elections clearly shows that the calls by ZANU-PF to have elections on its own terms could be hallucinatory and suicidal.

Despite spirited campaigns in Namibia by the regime and its surrogates such as Goodison Nguni heading a bogus group called the All Africa Associations of Non-Governmental Organizations as well as ZANU-PF's youth wing lead by Tongai Kasukuwere and Joshua Sacco, the SADC extra-ordinary Summit refused to address the Zimbabwean crisis in the absence of President Zuma and the two formations of the MDC. Sacco held a lecture at Namibia Polytechnic where he ranted about the tired sanctions debate and the land issue aided by Nguni's appearance on Namibian State television attacking President Zuma's facilitation team that there should be non-interference in Zimbabwe's domestic affairs.

On the doctrine of non-interference in Zimbabwe's political affairs and the imposition of sanctions, it is important to remind Mugabe and his surrogates what he said in 1994 when the three Frontline States of Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana intervened in Lesotho after King Lesie III dissolved the government following a dispute between the Monarch and the govern-

ment of Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhele.

Mugabe made it clear that the King had no option but to reinstate the government. He also outlined the consequences of not implementing the order.

"I wish on behalf of my colleagues and myself, to draw your Majesty's attention to the need for the restoration of constitutionality in Lesotho within a seven-day period following the Pretoria meeting...Your Majesty, we would be pleased if your response to our appeal could include a forward movement towards the establishment of a constitutional and legal order. The absence of such as forward movement would leave the region with no other alternative but to join the rest of the world in imposing sanctions. In the event of no progress being made we would have no alternative but to consider the imposition of such specific measures as members of the region would agree upon," Mugabe said representing the Frontline States.

ZANU-PF should therefore know that the intervention in Zimbabwe by SADC has precedence and if its politburo and securocrats violate constitutional order through the holding of violent elections that do not meet the requirements of the SADC principles and guidelines governing the conduct of elections then what happened in Lesotho is not far

away from visiting Harare. It is naïve for anyone to argue that ZANU-PF agreed with the decision to postpone the Zimbabwean issue to June. If that was their reasoning why did they go to Namibia with the negotiating team of Nicholas Goche, Patrick Chinamasa and Emmerson Mnangagwa who has been moving around the region trying to coerce regional leaders to endorse the Politburo decision to hold elections this year at any cost?

It is important to note that the life of undemocratic political structures such as the Politburo cannot live in a world that is increasingly fighting against evil and dictatorial political structures and values. It is like attempting to solve 21st century problems using a 20th century bureaucracy.

It won't work as US President Barrack Obama noted during his election campaign in 2008. ZANU-PF should embrace democratic reforms or it risks being buried by the reform winds blowing across Africa. There is no longer space for Communist-style structures in this century.

By Pedzisai Ruhanya, Senior Programmes Manager at the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition. He is based in Harare.

Rugare Gumbo is a bitter man

From Front Page

or for the country. All he cares about is Mugabe.

"When he joined the party he had only a dirty shirt and trousers. Now he has money – a lot of money. He is wealthy. He built a fortune on the backs and the sweat of people like us. He takes

his wife all over Europe and spends thousands. This is the man who wants to make this country Marxist. He must be stopped." Rugare Gumbo stops talking. Then he says quietly: "Yes, I am bitter. I am also afraid – for my people and for my country. Those who vote for Mugabe will do so out of fear, and it is wrong.

They must be told not to do it. Mugabe's intimidation must be stopped. The people must be united. I will do everything to accomplish this."

This article was first published in the Herald on 21 February 1980.

Where dissidents are the prey and horror is a weapon

CALL TO ACTION:

The pro-longed Zimbabwe crisis has made it inevitable for both SADC and AU to treat it as an urgent matter. -zimbabwepictures



From Page 5

“The Fear” a valuable work of testimony — filled with first-hand accounts of witnesses to the most horrific crimes — but it is also a haunting testament to those survivors’ courage and determination.

Among the ordinary citizens depicted in these pages is Tichanzii Gandanga, who worked for the Movement for Democratic Change. Mr. Godwin reports that Mr. Gandanga was kidnapped by thugs he believes were members of President Mugabe’s spying agency, lashed with whips made from tire rubber and kicked in the face. His tormentors then dragged him naked into the road and ran over his legs twice with their car.

Denias Dombo, a farmer who also worked as a district organizing secretary for the movement, Mr. Godwin writes, watched as Mugabe supporters burned down his house, and he was then assaulted with rocks, iron bars and heavy sticks. According to Mr. Godwin, one leg was broken, an arm was shattered and several ribs fractured. His means of making a living, his plough and cultivator, were stolen; his cattle killed. He was unable to find his wife and children.

Dadirai Chipiro, a former nursery school teacher and the wife of an electoral organizer for the Movement for Democratic Change, did not survive an attack by government agents. They hacked off her right hand and both her feet, Mr. Godwin says, dragged her back into her house and set it on fire with a gasoline bomb.

The litany of suffering in this

book is devastating, and the accounts that Mr. Godwin has collected, as the saying goes in Zimbabwe, are “just the ears of the hippo.” There are many more stories and much more pain right below the surface. Thousands of people, he says, have simply gone missing: “Bodies are being found bobbing at the spillway of dams; other are discovered in the bush, dumped by their murderers, miles and miles from where they were abducted. In some particularly gruesome cases, the victims have been castrated, their testicles stuffed in their mouths, or their eyes gouged out. Many will never be found. Some 10,000 people have been tortured. Twenty thousand have had their houses burned down — up to 200,000 are now displaced.”

As for prison conditions in the country, Mr. Godwin contends, they are miserable — another index “by which to measure the depths of depravity of Robert Mugabe’s Zimbabwe.” A freelance saw miller named Shane Kidd, who was thrown in prison after renting a room to the Movement for Democratic Change to use as an office, recounts in these pages how policemen would spray freezing water and sometimes throw buckets of urine through the prison bars, dousing the prisoners and their thin blankets and leaving the cell floors ankle-deep in water.

The opposition leader Roy Bennett reports that in Mutare Remand Prison rations had been cut to one meal from three, and that many inmates suffer from pellagra, a severe vitamin deficiency that was common in Soviet labour camps.

Without outside food or medicine, Mr. Godwin writes, “the average inmate is dead within a year.”

One of the most haunting stories in this volume is that of Chenjerai Mangezo, who was nearly beaten to death after winning as a movement candidate for a rural district council. Though his body was completely immobilized in plaster, Mr. Godwin says, Mr. Mangezo insisted on attending the swearing-in ceremony, and he was driven there lying on foam mattresses heaped in the back of a pickup truck. He has continued to attend council meetings, sitting alongside some of the very Mugabe supporters who oversaw his beating.

What, besides courage, has enabled Mr. Mangezo to sit there with his persecutors? “Is it fatalism, a quality that Westerners see in Africans?” Mr. Godwin asks. “Westerners often mistake African endurance, and the lack of self-pity, for fatalism. No, I think the other quality in Chenjerai Mangezo is patience, a dogged tenacity. He hasn’t given up on getting justice. But he will wait for it.”

“People like Chenjerai,” he goes on, “are the real asine mabvi — the men without knees. Not only were his legs covered by plaster casts for months, but he has refused to kneel, refused to prostrate himself before the dictatorship, whatever the consequences.”

This article originally appeared in The New York Times.

Zimbabwe Police show contempt for Livingstone SADC Troika resolutions



READY TO POUNCE: Members of the Zimbabwe Republic Police. -allvoices.com

Yesterday, 24 May, for over two hours police detained three civil society activists – Villem Nyama and Tsungai Vere of Centre for Community Development in Zimbabwe (CCDZ) and Glanis Changachirere of the Institute for Young Women.

The three were detained at a roadblock near Nzvimbo in Mashonaland central province. The police confiscated fliers and posters before releasing the three without

laying any charges against them.

Recently police in Tsholotsho defied a court order granting Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZIMRIGHTS) permission to hold an anti-torture workshop at Tshino business centre and disrupted the workshop.

Police arrested two ZIMRIGHTS employees – Ms Florence Ndlovu and Walter Dube accusing them of convening an unsanctioned meeting. Police action amounts to harassment and persecution of civil society activists as there is no law in Zimbabwe that grants

the police power to sanction meetings.

The two ZIMRIGHTS employees remain in custody at Nyamandlovu police station. Police have denied lawyers access the two detained activists.

The unlawful conduct by the police is a display of utter disrespect of basic rights and an affront to the letter and spirit of the Livingstone SADC Troika resolutions which called for an immediate end to violence, harassment, intimidation and any other actions that violate the letter and spirit of the GPA.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

>Africa Day Zimbabwe Public Seminar: University of Kwazulu Natal (Howard College) Durban, 25 May

> Human Rights and Democracy Training on Social & Economic Rights, Buhera, 25 May



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