

Zimbabwe Domestic Broadcasting, 23 August, 2010 (11 August-22 August, 2010)

by Marie Lamensch, MIGS reporter for Zimbabwe.

Government-owned newspaper

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated August 13, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: 'Diamond Proceeds Must Boost Agriculture’” by Caesar Zvayi

- During a meeting with President Mugabe, a senior Communist Party of Chiba official said agriculture and mining in Zimbabwe could foster an economic turnaround. He also reaffirmed his support for Zimbabwe and stated that the two countries should have “more practical and efficient cooperation.”
- President Mugabe praised China for helping free Zimbabwe “from the tentacles of colonial oppression” and for respecting his country’s sovereignty by thwarting Anglo-American efforts to get the Security Council to impose sanctions on Zimbabwe.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated August 13, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Civil Servants Want Diamond Money”

- Civil servants hope that their salaries could soon improve following the successful diamond auction.
- Finance Minister Tendai Biti described the Kimberley Process certification as a milestone in Zimbabwe's sovereign control of its resources and added that the sale of diamonds would allow the government to pay civil servants. Apex Council, a State workers' union, said it hoped the government would honour its commitment.
- Minister Biti also said the diamond sale was an issue of sovereign control of resources rather than about monetary gains.
- Vice-President John Nkomo said the diamond sale would prove to the world that Zimbabwe’s diamonds are clean, despite allegations of the gems being “blood diamonds.”

(The Chronicle, government-owned daily, article dated August 19, 2010, in English)

“Leaders suspend Sadc Tribunal” by Caesar Zvayi

- Sadc Head of State decided to suspend the Sadc Tribunal and asked justice ministers and AGs to investigate the tribunal’s operations. The decision follows concerns by Zimbabwe about the legitimacy of the body’s rulings.
- Justice and Legal Affairs Minister Patrick Chinamasa said the tribunal’s treaty should only come into operation if ratified by at least 10 members of the 15 states within the organisation. However, only five member states have signed the treaty.
- The tribunal’s relation to domestic courts and law should be reviewed, and its mandate reconstituted.
- White commercial farmers recently took their cases to the tribunal in an attempt to reverse the land reform programme. The tribunal is said to have taken controversial decisions by

passing judgments that contravened Zimbabwe's constitutional position on land reform. Zimbabwe's government said it was not bound by the ruling since the tribunal's treaty had not been ratified by enough member states, including Zimbabwe.

- Minister Chinamasa explained that his country was not opposed to the idea of a tribunal but wanted a properly constituted body. He said the current tribunal "was rushed and put into operation in order to reverse the land reform programme." He added that he was happy it had not succeeded and would not succeed in the future. He emphasized the legality and constitutionality the land reform programme.

(The Chronicle, government-owned daily, article dated August 19, 2010, in English)

"Suspension of Sadc Tribunal vindicates Zim Govt"

- The *Voice of America* reports that Southern African leaders decided to give the Tribunal six months to review the ruling on Zimbabwe's land reform. In 2008, the court ruled that white farmers could keep their land since it was taken away from them on the basis on race. President Mugabe has always refused to abide by this. The court has no power to enforce its rulings except through summit decisions. Farmers now say that this is a matter of politics versus law and that politics have now taken the upper hand

(Voice of America, article dated 18 August, 2010, in English).

"White Zimbabwe farmer say politics trumps justice at SADC Summit"

- The *Chronicle* insists the SADC Tribunal has been suspended, as claimed by Zimbabwe Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa. The tribunal's role will be reviewed and recommendations will be made. While no new cases will be admitted, the Tribunal is allowed to deal with those at hand.
- The decision by Heads of States and Government to suspend the Sadc Tribunal is described as a vindication of the Zimbabwean government, especially as the decision nullifies any ruling made by the court concerning Zimbabwe.
- Zimbabwe Lawyers for Justice and head of Pan-African lawyers' organization, Martin Dinha, said he welcomed the decision. His organization seeks to protect land rights and has been lobbying for the non-recognition of the Sadc Tribunal. He believes the organ has become "an instrument of whites in their struggle to reverse our land reform programme." He explained that the judges were paid by those who imposed illegal sanctions on Zimbabwe. He said the powers bestowed by the tribunal were "mischievous and unreasonable" and described the body as "bogus."

(The Sunday Mail, government-owned weekly, article dated August 22 2010, in English)

"Professor Ncube blasts MDC-T for stalling GPA." by Kuda Bwititi.

- MDC secretary-general Professor Welshman Ncube has castigated the MDC-T for being "a major impediment to the full implementation of GPA" and for using the inclusive government to pursue partisan interests.

- Other outstanding issues have been added to the list, including the desire to see oversight on constitutional commissions (the Zimbabwe Media Commission, the Human Rights Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission) to be transferred from the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs to the Ministry of Constitutional and Parliamentary Affairs.
- Professor Ncube said the new demands made no sense and added that the party had “lost its way” since Human Rights Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission should always fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs. He explained that the MDC-T only wanted those powers to be held by their own ministers. Finally, he added that all the MDC-T was concerned about was power.

Privately-owned newspapers

(The Standard, privately-owned weekly, article dated August 11, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: More Zanu PF Jingles Coming” by Nqaba Matshazi

- Zanu-PF is set to launch new partisan jingles on all Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) radio and television stations.
- A 10-track album is also currently being recorded and Zanu PF commissar, Webster Shamu, who also acts as Media, Information and Publicity minister, is reportedly coordinating the projects. Shamu said he was the one making decisions about which songs should be played and added that he wanted to promote musicians.
- The new jingles reportedly ridicule the GPA, saying Zanu PF leader President Robert Mugabe should rule till "donkeys grow horns".
- MDC-T spokesman, Nelson Chamisa, said the MDC-T had brought their own jingles to the station, which then refused to play them.

(The Standard, privately-owned weekly, article dated August 11, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Outreach Suspended Over War Vets' Terror in Masvingo” by Jennifer Dube

- In Bikita, war veteran leader, Jabulani Sibanda, stalled the constitution outreach process by inciting violence and using inflammatory language including threats that the country can go back to June 27, 2008. Sibanda apparently told villagers that the MDC-T should be punished for calling for sanctions.
- MDC-T spokesperson, Nelson Chamisa, said yesterday Sibanda should be arrested. Sibanda replied his activities were not criminal since he was not intimidating anyone.

(The Standard, privately-owned weekly, article dated August 11, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Zanu PF Invaders Leave a Trail of Destruction” by Caiphas Chimhete

- Zanu-PF land invaders, activists and war veterans, are said to be destroyed and looted areas in Mataberland South, particularly conservancy areas.
- White commercial farmers in central and south-west Zimbabwe were dragged out of their farms, humiliated and arrested. In early June, conservancy owner Ian Ferguson urged Co-Minister of Home Affairs, Giles Mutsekwa, to intervene: “This whole barbaric and uncivilized exercise that has been going on for 10 years now is no more or less than ethnic

cleansing of white Zimbabweans and any other white nationals.” Mutsekwa left the post before he could look into the matter.

- Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) president Deon Theron said what is happening at the conservancy was a good example of ongoing looting on commercial farms. He added that the issue had been reported to the authorities but had failed to get their attention.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 16 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Villagers Devise Whistling Scheme to Combat War Vets” by Irene Madonga

- Villagers in Chipinge and Nyanga have devised a whistle strategy to combat unlawful attacks from ZANU PF activists and war veterans. Once the alarm is given, local villagers hold down the attackers and hand them to the police in the hope that they will do something.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 16 August, 2010, in English)

“Gives Principals One Month to Implement Outstanding Issues” by Tichaona Sibanda

- The SADC Troika on Defence, Security and Politics decided that all outstanding issues in the Global Political Agreement (GPA) should be fully implemented within a month.
- The SADC is also said to have offered assistance to ensure free and fair elections.
- MDC-T spokesperson Nelson Chamisa said some issues, such as the swearing in of governors, were still in dispute.
- Two weeks ago, the US introduced a bill, Zimbabwe Sanctions Repeal Act of 2010, to repeal the sanctions imposed on Mugabe. The issue is now largely dependant on whether the gaps between Mugabe and Tsvangirai can be bridged.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 17 August, 2010, in English)

“Southern Africa: Violence Photos Move SADC Civil Society to Tears” by Alex Bell

- Although President Mugabe escaped criticism at the SADC summit, an exhibition on the violence spearheaded by the President shocked the audience gathered at a “People’s Summit” in Windhoek, Namibia. The ZIMRIGHT exhibition chronicles violence that took place during the 2008 election. A film on the plight of Zimbabwean farm workers also “left delegates in tears” as abuses at the hands of land invaders were detailed.
- SW Radio Africa decries the SADC’s failure to act against Mugabe, a move that demonstrates the organ’s allegiance to the dictator.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 17 August, 2010, in English)

Southern Africa: SADC Puts Off Confronting Mugabe over Tribunal Contempt by Alex Bell

- Leaders in the Sadc decided against confronting President Mugabe over his refusal to abide by the regional human rights courts' ruling on the land grab.
- The Tribunal has been snubbed by the government and Justice Bharat Patel recently ruled that the tribunal's orders on land reform have no authority in Zimbabwe.
- South African farmers with farms in Zimbabwe appealed to their government, yet failed to receive any attention. President Zuma's failure to mention the situation at the Sadc is criticized: "He instead gave a "glowing" report on the unity government's progress."
- South Africa's main political opposition party said Zuma's silence further undermined the Sadc and the tribunal's legitimacy.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 17 August, 2010, in English)

"Zimbabwe: Wave of New Violence Erupts in Chimanimani District" by Tichaona Sibanda

- A new wave of violence erupted in Chimanimani district as Zanu-PF militias attacked MDC activists. They were armed with sticks, machetes and stones, and gunshots were also heard. Property was destroyed and several activists arrested.
- It is believed that the seven activists were targeted for voicing their opinions at meetings, although it is not clear exactly what they were arrested for.
- Politburo member and Minister, Didymus Mutasa, is reportedly spearheading the violence campaign in Makoni district, while Central Committee member, Enock Porusingazi, is causing trouble in Chipinge south.
- Hubert Nyanhongo, ZANU PF MP for Harare south, who is reportedly eyeing the Nyanga seat, is leading a team of war vets on a path of destruction in the eastern highlands district.
- Buhare and Mutare has been the scene of violence as well.
- Some MDC MPs were surprised to see arms in the hands of war veterans and militias, the same weapons that were used during the 2008 election violence. They fear the weapons will be used for similar purposes.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 18 August, 2010, in English)

"Zimbabwe: SADC Tribunal Suspended Over Govt Refusal to Honour Rulings" by Alex Bell

- Government leaders have decided to suspend and review the Sadc's human rights court, therefore refusing to confront President Mugabe for ignoring rulings made by the organ: "The summit decided that a review of the role functions and terms of reference of the SADC Tribunal should be undertaken and concluded within six months."
- The decision comes as a blow to commercial farmers. In 2008, the Tribunal ruled that Zimbabwe land grab was unlawful and discriminatory. The government, particularly President Mugabe and Justice Minister Chinamasa, has always refused to honour the ruling.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 18 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: 7 Abducted MDC Still Detained in Jail” by Tererai Karimakwenda

- A group of 7 MDC activists were abducted by Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) operatives in Manicaland and are being detained at the police station. It is feared that the activists are not in good physical health due to shortages of food and lack of clean water in the area’s jails.
- The perpetrators are believed to be CIO agents, in addition to the Zanu-PF provincial official, Janet Knight, whose house is apparently being used a torture base.
- The Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP), a civic group monitoring the outreach process, said human rights violations were on the rise in Mashonaland and Manicaland.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 19 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: MDC Copac Teams Resolve to Cancel Meetings in Violent Areas” by Tererai Karimakwenda

- MDC officials have resolved not to hold meetings in some areas of Manicaland after increased violence. Several MDC members have been hospitalized after attacks. Some were also abducted by Central Intelligence Organisation operatives and later released. They were charged with “disturbing peace” after speaking out at a Copac meeting.
- MDC Senator Patrick Chitaka said he had received reports that soldiers have been mobilized to attend outreach meetings in Nyanga, leading him the cancel these meetings.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 19 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Another MDC MP Arrested As Masvingo Police Hunt More” by Tererai Karimakwenda

- The MDC is facing more harassment as police in Masvingo central arrested an MDC MO after he reported violent attacks by Jabulani Sibanda, a war veteran, in the area. MDC-T organizing secretary for Masvingo, Tongai Matutu, said the police were “hunting down MDC activists, members, supporters and officials left, right and centre.”
- Other MDC MPs and officials were arrested during the week as well and accused of disrupting a Zanu-PF meeting related to the constitutional outreach programme. The MPs said these constituted attempts by Zanu-PF supporters to block them from mobilizing and educating their supporters.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 20 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Civil Society Remains Skeptical About Implementation of GPA” by Tichaona Sibanda

- Civil Society organizations said they were skeptical about the one-month timeframe given to three GPA principals to implement 24 of the 27 outstanding issues. Among these are the establishment of an Anti-Corruption Commission and the hurrying of legislation for the Human Rights Commission. Two new and neutral boards for the Broadcasting Authority and the Mass Media Trust must also be established.
- The appointment of Roy Bennett as Deputy Minister of Agriculture and the unilateral appointments of Gideon Gono and Johannes Tomana as Reserve Bank Governor and Attorney-General are also still to be resolved.
- However, civil society groups doubt that the issues will be dealt with in one month due to the government's track record.

(The Zimbabwe Independent, privately-owned daily, article dated August 20, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Issue Suspiciously Blocked From SADC Debate” by Dumisani Muleya/Faith Zaba

- The failure of the regional leaders to fully discuss issues concerning Zimbabwe led to accusations of political chicanery. Although Zimbabwe was discussed at the SADC troika; the organ on politics, defense and security, the matter was then "blocked" from a full discussion. Some claim that President Mugabe used his influence to block further discussions.
- A senior politician from the MDC-T said there was "mafia" in the SADC secretariat which seeks to protect Mugabe. However, Tendai Biti said he was “reasonably happy” with discussions on Zimbabwe at the summit.
- Before the summit, Mugabe's spokesman, George Charamba, said Zimbabwe would not be an issue at the summit. He explained that President Zuma would inform the troika about the situation but Zimbabwe would not be a point of discussion.

(The Zimbabwe Independent, privately-owned daily, article dated August 20, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Principals Clash Over Elections” by Faith Zaba

Tensions are likely to continue as the principals now clash over the timing of the elections. A new electoral roll and constitution are unlikely to be in place by 2011/2012. There are concerns of Zanu-PF's electoral strategy as Mugabe is pushing for elections.

- The three principals to the GPA have been clashing over the timing of the next elections and the level of SADC's involvement in the polls.
- President Mugabe has already made it clear that elections would take place with or without a new constitution.
- Prime Minister Tsvangirai wants the SADC to come up with a framework for the next elections while Mugabe is resisting the organ's involvement. The Prime Minister believes elections should be held once conditions for free and fair polls have been created.

- South African President Zuma agreed that the inclusive government should "draw up guidelines for free and fair elections where intimidation and violence would not play any part and where the result of such elections would be credible".
- Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara said the issue of elections was not an important matter as far as Sadc was concerned. Indeed, the body did not decide anything on elections.
- Sources said most senior Zanu PF officials and MPs are against Mugabe's desire to hold early elections as they fear he might lose again.