

Zimbabwe Domestic Broadcasting, 16 August , 2010 (9 August-15 August, 2010)

by Marie Lamensch, MIGS reporter for Zimbabwe

State-owned media

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated August 9, 2009, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Remain Vigilant, Army Told”

- Brigadier General Justin Mujaji said the army should remain vigilant and resolute until victory over Western imperialists and cynics is achieved. He also criticized Zimbabweans who are advancing Western interests, therefore failing to help their nation.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated August 9, 2009, in English)

“Zimbabwe: MDC-T Forms Committee to Examine Inclusive Government”

- MDC-T has formed a "technical management committee" to assess Zanu-PF's commitment to the inclusive Government, accusing the party of insincerity. Some members of the committee believe the party should pull out of the GPA because it does not benefit from the coalition.
- The MDC-T has denied the formation of such a committee but other sources said it has been created by Morgan Tsvangirai and his inner circle.
- The members of the committee believe that Zanu-PF is not committed the inclusive government and that the AU should therefore be pressured to act.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated August 10, 2009, in English)

“Zimbabwe: 'Stop Peddling Falsehoods'”

10 August 2010

- Constitutional and Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Eric Matinenga, has urged civil society to stop making allegations of political intimidation and violence during the constitutional outreach programme. He said the programme was progressing well and without incidents.
- He also dismissed allegations that state media were refusing to run Copac publicity materials, arguing that state-run and private media were free to advertise the programme.

(The Chronicle, government-owned daily, article dated August 11, 2009, in English)

“President hails defence forces”

- On Zimbabwe Defence Forces' 30th anniversary, President Mugabe hailed the ZDF for maintaining professionalism despite scarce resources and rewards. He praised the ZDF for promoting a “common military vision and ethos” for the past 30 years, including a policy of national reconciliation. He added that the ZDF had contributed to the country’s socio-

economic development and had worked with the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare in combating malaria and other diseases.

- He added that Zimbabwe's Defence Forces had "co-operated with other security services in maintaining peace, law and order, thereby creating a conducive environment for national economic development" at a local, regional and international level.
- Mugabe also praised the army for taking part in UN peacekeeping missions.
- The president said he was aware that there was a lack of adequate rewards and urged the defence forces to remain loyal and guard the nation's sovereignty and natural resources.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated August 13, 2009, in English)

"Zimbabwe: Political Stability Welcome"

- The Herald welcomes the success of the inclusive government after years of political and economic struggle, often aggravated by Western nations interfering in internal affairs. The three principals to the GPA are said to be "of one mind" on the need to make the inclusive government work.
- The economy is said to be growing, agriculture has recovered and social service delivery is improving as well. There are no outstanding issues which could lead to political instability. These facts must be taken into account during the Sadc summit.

Private Media

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 9 August, 2010, in English)

"Zimbabwe: MDC Wants Current Heroes Status System Scrapped" by Irene Madongo

- The MDC wants to replace the system used to decide national heroes with a fairer method, stating that the Zanu-PF has the only voice in the decisions. The MDC does not have any of its members lying at Harare's National Heroes Acre and would like to see the inclusion of some of its members who have contributed to the democratization process.
- The MDC also added that hero status should also be awarded to legendary musicians and other individuals who have contributed to Zimbabwe. This could include those who fought for democracy and were killed during the 2008 elections.
- The matter is one of the outstanding issues of the GPA.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 9 August, 2010, in English)

"Zimbabwe: War Veterans Holding Constitutional Outreach to Ransom in Masvingo" by

- The constitutional outreach programme was suspended in Masvingo due to a terror campaign led by Zanu-PF war veterans. MDC members refused to continue their work after they received threats and one of their members was attacked and his house torched.
- Outreach workers said local authorities are allowing war veterans to intimidate locals.

- War veteran leader Jabulani Sibanda’s speeches have been particularly threatening. He declared that he would burn down the houses of those believed to be opposed to Zimbabwe.
- David Holman, a Bikita MDC-T district committee member, had his house torched by suspected Zanu-PF activists.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 9 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: MPs Still Barred From Visiting Chiadzwa” by Alex Bell

- The Mines Ministry is facing criticism after it stopped the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee from touring the Chiadzwa diamond fields for the second time in the last few months.
- Chiredzi West MP Moses Mare said the move was a violation of the committee’s constitutional mandate. He said violations would continue if the portfolio committee was not allowed on the site.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 10 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Chiadzwa Diamond Field Clean-Up Intensifies” by Alex Bell

- The “clean up” operation of the Chiadzwa diamond fields by the police and the military has intensified ahead of a visit by an international group of diamond industry experts. Armed soldiers are said to be raiding businesses in an attempt to hide ongoing abuses and corruption on the site. Miners have been chased from areas in order to create a semblance of legality.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 10 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: War Vets Leader Threatens to Squash Tsvangirai Like a 'Fly'” by Lance Guma

- War veteran Jabulani Sibanda, who has a long history of terrorizing and killing MDC supporters, compared Prime Minister Tsvangirai to a fly that could be killed by swatting it against a window: “Tsvangirai is just like a fly in a kombi or a bus. The fly can sit on the driver's seat but that does not make it the one in charge of the bus. He can be eliminated in the political set-up anytime and life will go on.” The Shona version of the speech is said to be more threatening. Videos have been recorded.
- Sibanda has been threatening villagers in Manicaland, Mashonaland Central and West, and Masvingo. He is expected to go other provinces as well.
- MDC-T spokesman Nelson Chamisa said that “under a fair government” Sibanda would have been arrested and believes the threats should be taken seriously.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 12 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Political Row to Intensify Over Diamond Sale Profits” by Alex Bell

- The political row over the country’s diamond revenue is expected to intensify. Wednesday saw the multi-million dollar sale of the controversial Chiadzwa gems but who will profit from the sale is still a concern. Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai said the government was working on “modalities”.
- There have been accusations that Zanu-PF plans to use diamond revenues to finance the party’s election campaign, despite claims made by Tendai Biti stating he wants a Diamond Act in place to ensure that revenues benefit Zimbabweans. He also wants all mining operations to under government control.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 12 August, 2010, in English)

“Southern Africa: Zimbabwe on SADC Summit Agenda, but No Change Expected” by Tererai Karimakwenda

- Zimbabwe’s political crisis will be discussed at the Sadc summit in Namibia and three principals to the GPA will be in attendance. However, observers do not expect any actions to be taken, especially once South African President Zuma has told the Sadc that Zimbabwe is “on the correct path.” Critics believe that Zuma is ineffective and that his country has benefitted from Zimbabwe’s political crisis.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 12 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Two MDC Activists Hospitalized After Zanu-PF Attacks” by Lance Guma

- Villagers in remote areas of the country are facing Zanu-PF sponsored political violence. In Chipinge, two MDC activists are said to be fighting for their lives after an attempt by Zanu-PF to ban activists from attending a constitutional outreach meeting.
- Makoni South MP Pishai Muchauraya said that despite the violence, Zanu-PF was failing in its task.
- The police have also been involved: not only did they allow war veteran leader, Jabulani Sibanda, to intimidate civilians, but they also barred several MDC officials from holding meetings in certain areas, claiming that these would disturb outreach meetings.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 12 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Bill to Repeal Targeted Sanctions Introduced in the U.S.” by Tererai Karimakwenda

- The US Congress and Senate are considering removing or revising the targeted sanctions against Zimbabwe, despite renewed reports of political violence and hate speech. They

believe lifting the sanctions would put an end to Mugabe's human rights abuses, restore prosperity and foster a transition to democracy.

- There are fears that a lifting or relaxing of the sanctions would be interpreted as meaning that Zimbabwe has resolved all its issues.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated 13 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Mugabe's Proposed Amnesty a Form of Further Injustice” by Admore Tshuma

- President Mugabe's call for amnesty on political crimes is described as amounting to denying justice to the victims. The journalist believes that societies emerging from a history of political violence should seek justice, reparation and truth.
- Reference to Principle VII of the Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law is made.
- The deployment of Fifth Brigade led to the death of 20 000 civilians in Mataberland and the Midlands. There have been murders, abductions and torture as well.
- Mugabe should ensure that those responsible are prosecuted and should ensure that restitution, compensation and rehabilitation take place. Reforms must therefore be made in order to address human rights abuses and comply with international law. Amnesty would be “illegal and immoral”.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated 13 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Of Diamonds, Ambiguity and Presidential Insults”

- Villagers from the Chiadzwa area still have not benefitted from the revenue generated by the diamond sale. The Chinese company granted rights in Chiadzwa is currently employing Chinese workers to do menial jobs. More importantly, the army is said to have conducted a “cleanup campaign” in the area, which included rounding up and beating locals.
- There are calls to nationalize Zimbabwe's diamond industry so that revenues can be used to reconstruct Zimbabwe's infrastructure. However, revenues from previous diamond sales have been known to disappear instead of benefitting the nation.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated 13 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Act Seeks to Shield State From Scrutiny”

- Last week, ministers who leaked cabinet deliberations to the media were arrested (under the Official Secrets Act) leading to renewed debates about what constitutes public information. The 1970 Act prohibits the disclosure of any information to an “enemy”. The Zimbabwe Independent decries the fact that the act is being used as “a thick wall against public scrutiny” and a “weapon used to trample the rights of the citizens”.

- The newspaper calls for more transparency as the public is often unaware of the policies being debated. While some of the information may indeed threaten national security, this is certainly not always the case.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated 13 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Chiadzwa's Forcibly Relocated Families” by Wongai Zhangazha

- Families evicted from Marange diamond fields have been placed on abandoned farms and in disused tobacco barns. The families are said to be in dire situation and 136 more families are to be relocated. The land is corrosive, unproductive and the infrastructure dilapidated. The relocated families describe their situation as a “nightmare”.
- Anjin Zimbabwe, a private firm operating in Marange, paid US\$1000 per family to assist them, but the families consider it inadequate.
- Shamiso Mtisi, an environmental lawyer with the Zimbabwe Environmental Lawyers Association, described the situation as unjust and in violation of international standards, particularly as there is no guarantee that the families will ever be given decent accommodation.
- Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Local Government Rural and Urban Development said the houses had been renovated and were better than those found in urban areas. Irrigation is being taken care of and children are being sent to schools.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated 13 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: 'Mugabe Amnesty Rhetoric Mockery to Victims'” by Farai Mutsaka

- President Robert Mugabe said arresting perpetrators of past violence would “upset the coalition government's efforts towards national healing and reconciliation.”
- President Mugabe’s called for amnesty on political crimes, ending hope of justice concerning state-sponsored abuses. The call could also lead to more political tensions and weaken the already fragile coalition government. The perpetrators of violence are still part of Zimbabwe’s political and military life.
- Civil society groups said that Mugabe’s statement was unfortunate, especially as fresh cases of violence have been recorded and perpetrators have not shown any remorse. Mugabe himself would probably be found guilty and it is therefore “unconscionable” that he should call for amnesty.
- War veteran, Jabulani Sibanda, said he would crush Prime Minister Tsvangirai like a fly.
- Reports have shown that Zimbabweans want justice as a pre-condition for national healing and reconciliation.
- A former state media journalist said Mugabe was “subordinating justice to political self-interest” and added that perpetrators should not dictate to “victims how they want to exonerate themselves.”
- Impunity will complicate the country’s reconciliation process as amnesty is a mockery to the victims. President Mugabe should investigate political violence if a tolerant nation is to be built.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated 13 August, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: To Stay or Not to Stay - the Tsvangirai Dilemma” by Leonard Makombe

- A debate has emerged within the MDC-T on whether Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai should remain party leader. He remains a popular leader at the grassroots level and if he leaves, it is questionable whether the MDC could beat President Mugabe at the next election.
- Political analysts believe that Tsvangirai should stay to ensure the party’s stability during this transitional period but leave once new leaders are required. If Tsvangirai is to stay, the goal is to make sure that he does not become a dictator. The danger is that Tsvangirai’s critics could use his prolonged leadership to paint his party as undemocratic.