

Zimbabwe Domestic Broadcasting (8 February - 14 February, 2011)

By Zuzia Danielski, MIGS media monitor for Zimbabwe

State-owned Media

“MDC-T’s hand in violence exposed”

(Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned broadcasting, 8 February 2011, in English)

- Police said they have evidence indicating that the MDC-T party was an active participant in directing all cases of violence that occurred this year.
- There have been numerous reports of lootings and bombings of shops in Harare.
- ‘Police records show that 11 cases of violence have this year been recorded, with the MDC-T being implicated while ZANU-PF sympathizers were the targets’, said the police spokesperson.
- The MDC has been vocal in the international community declaring it has been targeted and is a victim of recent violence.

“ZANU-PF condemns western machinations”

(Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned broadcasting, 8 February 2011, in English)

- ZANU-PF says the recent disturbances rocking Harare are ‘dramatized events’ meant to show Zimbabwe in crisis ahead of the European Union Summit, which will include discussions on sanctions imposed on the country.
- With the EU meeting next week, the ZANU-PF National Chairman said that violence in recent days was a part of the dirty tricks employed by the West who ‘hire thugs to cause mayhem in a bid to maintain an octopus sanctions grip on the country’.

“Professor Ncube fired”

(Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned broadcasting, 9 February 2011, in English)

- MDC President, Arthur Mutambara, has fired Welshman Ncube from the party, on the grounds that he remains the leader of the party since the congress, which elected Ncube to MDC President, is being contested at the High Court.

“MDC-M fires Prof Mutambara”

(Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned broadcasting, 11 February 2011, in English)

- The MDC faction led by Welshman Ncube announced that it fired Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara from the party. This is following Mutambara’s announcement days before that he fired Ncube.

- The statement said that Mutambara was fired because he was detrimental to the well being of the MDC formation.

“COPAC broke”

(Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned broadcasting, 11 February 2011, in English)

- The Constitution Select Committee has failed to meet the deadline of 1st of the month to move to the 3rd stage of the constitution-process (thematic committees) after it ran out of money.
- COPAC is to meet with donors next week to discuss releasing more funds. However observers feel the September target will not be met.
- A few weeks ago a technical error saw data on land, environment and citizenship disappear from the server, but officials said the problem has been rectified.

“Chiefs to engage Queen Elizabeth over sanctions” by Tinashe Farawo

(The Herald, government-owned daily, 13 February 2011, in English)

- The Chiefs Council is sending a high-level delegation to the United Kingdom to persuade Queen Elizabeth to help end illegal economic sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe. The President of the Chiefs said the delegation would meet the Queen and ‘craft ways to end the economic sanctions’.
- The decision to send the delegations was made after the chiefs realized the sanctions were hurting ordinary citizens in rural areas and high-density suburbs.
- The delegation would be dispatched as soon as possible.
- The chiefs also called on the three principals not to extend the Global Political Agreement and to start preparing for elections. They stated that the current government was dysfunctional and it was in the best interest of the population to hold elections.

“Fight ‘liberation struggle’” by Kuda Bwititi

(The Sunday Mail, government-owned daily, 13 February 2011, in English)

- The Media, Information and Publicity Minister put his support behind the establishment of the Memories of Zimbabwe Armed Struggle Trust (MOZAST), saying it would help preserve the legacy of the liberation struggle.
- MOZAST seeks to promote the essence of the struggle in line with Mugabe’s call for preservation of the country’s history through innovative methods. As part of its objectives, it would establish a film school in Mazowe.
- The Minister, Webster Shamu, said that MOZAST would help fight the ‘new liberation struggle’ which involves countering Western propaganda, ‘Today, we are fighting a new wave of liberation which does not involve the use of firearms but the biased information from the West...Recording facts is important as history tends to be distorted with time. We need records such as film and books that reflect reality’.

“African beauties hail Zim”

(The Herald, government-owned daily, 14 February 2011, in English)

- Beauty queens from African countries heaped praise on Zimbabwe, saying the country they visited contrasted sharply with Western media statements. The girls are in the country courtesy of the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority to watch Miss Zimbabwe pageant finals.
- Miss Tourism Ghana said that Harare was beautiful and encouraged others to visit. Miss Zambia, a marketing student, found Zimbabwe to have a lot of business potential, and added ‘Zimbabwe is different from the perspectives you are given on CNN or BBC’. Miss Botswana First Princess said that she never believed Western media claims about Zimbabwe.

“Mutambara likely to change MDC’s Cabinet line-up”

(The Herald, government-owned daily, 14 February 2011, in English)

- Deputy PM Arthur Mutambara could make changes to his MDC’s cabinet line-up, with three ministers possibly being recalled from the inclusive Government. Those likely to be affected are Welshman Ncube, David Coltart and Priscilla Mishairabwi-Mushonga.
- Last week both Mutambara and Ncube announced they had expelled each other from the party. A party congress in January elected Ncube as MDC president but this has been challenged in High Court.
- Ncube, speaking with ZBC, said that Mutambara had no legal mandate to reshuffle cabinet posts, as he was no longer an MDC party member.

“Sanctions must go: Mumbengegwi”

(Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned broadcasting, 14 February 2011, in English)

- In an interview with ZBC, Foreign Affairs Minister Simbarashe Mumbengegwi said there was never any justification for the imposition of sanctions by the EU and therefore they must be lifted.
- The EU imposed illegal sanctions on 20 Feb. 2002, in reprisal after Zimbabwe undertook a land reform program to correct colonial imbalance that saw a black majority living in poverty while the white minority owned large farms.
- According to Zimbabweans and political observers, the sanctions breach the Cotonou Agreement governing EU relations with Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Countries. Cotonou states that disagreements between countries from two sides should be resolved through dialogue lasting up to 60 days. Another dialogue should take place after this period before the EU takes measures. In the case of Zimbabwe, the two phases of dialogue were never followed, with dialogue only beginning in 2009.
- The EU meeting to review the illegal sanctions against Zimbabwe is due to take place on Feb. 16.

Private-owned Media

“Kasukuwere fingered as being behind Harare violence”, by Tichaona Sibanda
(SW Radio Africa News, independent Zimbabwean radio, London UK, 8 February 2011,
in English)

- ZANU-PF’s Minister of Youth, Indigenization and Empowerment, Saviour Kasukuwere, was accused of being behind the mob that engulfed the capital, nearly brining Harare to a standstill on Monday.
- A Harare-based source told the radio station that a meeting was hosted at Kasukuwere’s residence where the agreed to send party youths to demand total empowerment. The mob became greedy and, with police escort, went on a rampage, destroying central Harare.
- SW Radio African received reports from multiple sources showing that the month long string of violence in the capital is state-sponsored.
- All security related ministries fall under the ZANU-PF (apart from Home Affairs which is shared between the two parties), and the MDC are questioning why the government has failed to promptly respond to the violence.

“Furious Tsvangirai hits back at Herald ‘outright lies’”, by Lance Guma
(SW Radio Africa News, independent Zimbabwean radio, London UK, 9 February 2011,
in English)

- Prime Minister Tsvangirai has criticized the ‘continued publication of malicious and defamatory stories’ by the state-owned Herald newspaper, saying some of the articles were ‘outright lies’.
- On Wednesday, The Herald published an article claiming that EU sanctions on Zimbabwe would be renewed following recommendations by Tsvangirai, who addressed Western diplomats on the issue in Harare on Monday. The PM’s spokesman said that the PM never made such an address and was out of the country at the time. The Herald reporter was at the press conference and could not have missed the fact that Tsvangirai was not there, and only MDC Secretary-General and Home Affairs Minister addressed diplomats on the recent violence. Therefore the reporter used a fictitious quote from Tsvangirai.
- A Herald story published Tuesday blamed the PM for violence in Harare, despite evidence (including photos) that it was in fact ZANU-PF member who rampaged the city.

“Report showing decline in AIDS rate ‘too simplistic’”, by Tererai Karimakwenda
(SW Radio Africa News, independent Zimbabwean radio, London UK, 9 February 2011,
in English)

- A new study that found Zimbabwe has experienced a drastic decline in the rate of HIV infection over the last decade is being criticized by as ‘too simplistic’.
- The study, conducted by the Public Library of Science Medicine with researchers based at London’s Imperial College, concluded that Zimbabwe’s HIV infection

- rate dropped from 29 percent to 16 percent between 1997 and 2007. The researchers praised educational programs for increased awareness of AIDS-related deaths, and concluded the decrease was due to a change in sexual behaviour.
- Observers said it did not take into account the political and economic situation engulfing the country since 2000. Emmanuel Gasa, director of The AIDS and Arts Foundations said the research method was inaccurate because many Zimbabweans could not afford to travel to clinics and therefore not everyone would be tested. Furthermore, promiscuity is high because of the 90 percent unemployment rate. This contradicted researchers who said men were less promiscuous because they could not afford multiple partners.
 - Critics also say the report fails to take into consideration those who have fled the country and live in exile.

“MDC-N says they have ‘donated’ Mutambara to ZANU-PF”, by Lance Guma (SW Radio Africa News, independent Zimbabwean radio, London UK, 11 February 2011, in English)

- The MDC faction led by Welshman Ncube has given up its attempt to have its new party leader sworn in as the Deputy Prime Minister, to replace Arthur Mutambara who lost the position of party leader in a congress last month.
- Mutambara issued a statement earlier in the week saying he would remain as DPM until the High Court ruled on the validity of the congress. Mutambara also ‘fired’ Ncube from the MDC. Ncube retaliated by ‘firing’ Mutambara from the party.
- Ncube met with President Mugabe who made it clear that he would not fire Mutambara from his role as DPM. MDC-N Secretary General stated after the meeting, ‘We are now saying, given Mugabe’s stance they (ZANU PF) can have that position that was allocated to us, so that Mutambara becomes their Deputy Prime Minister. We have effectively donated the DPM post and Mutambara to ZANU PF’.
- There are now four factions of the MDC: MDC-T led by Tsvangirai, MDC-N led by Ncube, MDC-M led by Mutambara, and the MDC 99 led by Job Sikhala.
- Some observers say that the common factor for each split was Welshman Ncube who was Secretary-General before each split.

“Amnesty calls for security and media reforms to end abuses”, by Tererai Karimakwenda (SW Radio Africa News, independent Zimbabwean radio, London UK, 11 February 2011, in English)

- Amnesty International urged Zimbabwe’s unity government to take immediate action to end the ongoing human rights abuses and to reform the security and media institutions in the country.
- The global human rights group condemned ZANU-PF sponsored violence and police refusal to arrest perpetrators. The groups also criticized SADC and the AU for ‘missing opportunities’ to end human rights violations in the country.

- The statement was released on the second anniversary of the government of national unity, but Amnesty stated there was a significant lack of progress in implementing key reforms.

“Violence victims hounded out of refuge” by Jennifer Dube and Indiana Chirara
(The Standard, independent weekly, Harare, 13 February 2011, in English)

- MDC-T supporters who were ‘hounded out of their homes’ by ZANU-PF militia, are running out of places to hide in Harare, as police target areas where they seek refuge.
- This past week, over 1,000 victims of the political violence took refuge at the Silveira House in Chishawasha, but were forced to flee during the night by police.

“Villagers told to sign ZANU PF petition or face death” Caiphaz Chimhete
(The Standard, independent weekly, Harare, 13 February 2011, in English)

- ZANU-PF officials and traditional leaders are forcing villagers to attend rallies in support of President Mugabe and sign a petition calling for the removal of sanctions against Mugabe and his inner circle.
- The villagers are being ordered to pay US \$3-5 for ZANU-PF membership cards and some suspect part of the money is being channelled to pay for Mugabe’s birthday party later this month.
- Those who refuse to sign the petition are threatened with violence and death during the forthcoming referendum and election.