

Zimbabwe Domestic Broadcasting, 26 July, 2010 (15 July– 25 July, 2009)

by Marie Lamensch, MIGS Reporter for Zimbabwe

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated July 16, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Breakthrough for Chiadzwa Diamonds”

- The World Diamond Council has authorized Zimbabwe to export its diamonds. KP Monitor Abbey Chikane will visit the country twice before the end of the year to certify the diamond sales.
- Mines and Mining Development Minister Obert Mpofu declared that the sale of diamonds would start after a proper audit has been carried out. He also welcomed the World Diamond Council’s decision and reiterated that Zimbabwe had met the KP’s minimum standards.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated July 19, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: MDC-T Members' Public Violence Trial Postponed”

- The trial of 60 MDC-T activists charged with public violence was postponed to mid-September. The activists are accused of starting a fistfight after a district meeting in Beitridge. Property was destroyed and several people were injured. The accused also threw stones at motorists.

(The Chronicle, government-owned daily, article dated July 20, 2010, in English)

“Commercial farmers in court” by Paul Nkala

SW radio Africa reported that the Zimbabwean government had yet again snubbed a ruling by the human rights courts of the SADC. Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa argued that the ruling was of “no consequence” to Zimbabwe as the government would never change its position concerning the land reform programme. The tribunal declared that Zimbabwe was in contempt for ignoring rulings concerning farm invasions. Chinamasa also stated that he didn’t recognize the SADC tribunal adding that the farmers were therefore wasting their time. South African President Zuma and other African leaders are blamed by a South African opposition party for failing to enforce the ruling, therefore failing to honour their commitment to the SADC (SW Radio Africa, “Govt Snubs Regional Court Ruling, Again” by Alex Bell, July 19, 2010)

- Three commercial farmers from Matabeleland North appeared in court for refusing to vacate designated land. The three farmers had been in hiding since May when they were arrested and are said to have posed a threat to the State as they refused to hand over the key to a gun cabinet on one of the farms.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated July 1, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: ZANU-Pf Denies Chivi Outreach Programmes' Disruption Reports” by George Maponga

Along with Zimbabwean independent media, SW Radio Africa has widely covered the violence accompanying the constitutional outreach programme currently taking place. Witnesses say participants are being forced to go along Zanu-PF's party lines. Thugs and security agents are also initiating violence, including abductions (SW Radio Africa, “Zimbabwe: More Reports of Zanu PF Intimidation at Constitutional Meetings” by Tererai Karimakwenda, July 21, 2010)

Party spokesman Nelson Chamisa declared in an interview that the MDC-T would have to meet and debate whether to continue participating in the programme. He argued that the violence was discouraging since people were not allowed to express themselves freely. He compared the current state of affairs to the 2008 election violence (SW Radio Africa, “MDC-T Spokesman Says Party Should Debate Participation in Outreach” by Lance Guma, July 23, 2010)

A senior MDC official was also severely assaulted by Zanu-PF supporters in front of the police and COPAC members, who failed to act (SW Radio Africa, “Senior MDC Official Assaulted During Copac Meeting” by Tichaona Sibanda, July 20, 2010)

Constitutional outreach members have also been threatening to give up their work due to poor working conditions.

- Zanu-PF denied reports by independent media that party members and activists have been disrupting constitutional outreach programme meetings, particularly in Chivi. Chivi-Mwenezi Senator (Zanu-PF) Cde Josaya Hungwe said the reports were “an act of mischief” and there had never been any forms of disturbances. He also added that those responsible for the reports wanted to cause “unnecessary panic” because they were unhappy with the programme.
- Regarding allegations that Zanu-PF has been influencing people's opinions, Cde Hungwe said the DCC chair was only “conscientising people” on Zanu-PF's position and said it was allowed to do so as long as violence was not used.
- Copac co-provincial coordinator Chief Fortune Charumbira as well said no violence had taken place.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated July 23, 2010, in English)

“Africa: Understanding Power - Africa's Only Hope” by Reason Wafawarova

- Power relations between races are seen as the source of the West's power to influence the conduct of Africans and perpetuate white supremacy. In order to put an end to this current state of affairs it is essential to equalize or reverse these power relations through black empowerment, a decolonization of African consciousness, and an African-centered counterattack.
- Africans are thought to be unable to control companies as can be seen with Finance Minister Tendai Biti's preference for white-owned ACR instead of black owned Mbada and Canadile.
- African economic institutions and resources are primarily owned or exploited by foreigners. Zimbabwe's Land Reform Programme and indigenization policies are a reflection of the need for Zimbabwe to fight for its property rights.

- The international relations system is driven by injustices, oppression, dependency, and institutionalized racism. This must be reversed through economic-cultural barriers that will advance the interest of black people.
- Zimbabwean independent media and several Zimbabweans are criticized for voicing white supremacist opinions.
- African countries must learn to define and categorize their own human rights, property rights and their own vision of democracy.
- Africa must also acquire total control of resources and means of production through liberation.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated July 22, 2010, in English)

“Chiadzwa diamonds audit starts” by Arnold Mutemi

- Mines and Mining Development Minister Obert Mpofu, who regards himself as the only true spokesman on mining issues, said the diamond audit in Chiadzwa had started. He said all diamonds would be accounted despite the fact 30 million carats are missing.
- He added those opposed to Zimbabwe’s diamond trade are those benefitting from illegal mining in Marange.
- He said NGOs claiming that mass graves had been found on the ground had failed to prove their cases.
- Mpofu added that stakeholders should ensure that Zimbabwe benefits from the diamond sale.

(The Sunday Mail, government-owned weekly, article dated July 23, 2010, in English)

“Liberation war should inspire new constitution”

- Zimbabwean Youth have been urged to ensure that the constitution reflects the gains of the liberation struggle from “colonial bondage.” A government representative explained that foreigners should not be allowed to determine the terms of the constitution and the country’s future. He also asked for Zimbabweans to rally behind President Robert Mugabe.

Privately owned media

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated July 15, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: How the West Was Lost” by Eric Bloch

- President Mugabe is criticized for declaring last week that Zimbabwe does not need western help. Zimbabwe is in need for international aid and the West has shown its readiness to provide humanitarian and developmental aid.
- Zimbabwe’s dire socio-economic problems are also exacerbated by HIV/Aids and other harmful diseases, and by shortage of food as a result of disastrous government policies.
- Zimbabwe’s repudiation of Western support will intensify an already gloomy situation.

- While non-Western aid is also welcomed, Western countries have more resources and countries such as Iran and China involve trade-offs. Aid from Western powers necessitate an adherence to international norms of property and human rights, democracy and law and order. It is therefore seen as in Zimbabwe's interest to develop a beneficial relationship with the West.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated July 15, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: MDC-T Slams Alleged Harassment” by Wongai Zhangazha

- MDC-T MPs condemned the alleged harassment of people participating in the constitution-making process. Legislators complained about intimidation and interference of soldiers and Zanu-PF activists with the process.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated July 22, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Zanu PF Retraces Steps to Failure”

- Zanu-PF is said to be distorting news to suit the party's position, therefore prohibiting the public to get the true picture, in an attempt to win the next elections. Zimbabweans have now turned to external radio stations. State newspapers gone as far as inventing columnists and officials speaking for institutions such as embassies.
- Zanu-PF is criticized for calling Tendai Biti “a white man in a black body” therefore propagating hate speech.
- Zanu-PF is also criticized for failing to mention the intimidation and harassment of MDC supporters in the countryside and for forcing people to adopt Zanu-PF party lines on the news constitution.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated July 22, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Zanu Pf Ministers Named in Company Seizure” by Brian Chitemba

- Three Zanu PF cabinet ministers, Ministers Mutasa, Mada and Chipanga, have been named as trustees of an organization, Makoni Wildlife Farming Trust, that reportedly forced a farmer to cede a 50% shareholding in his business under the guise of the 2008 land reform programme. Ministers Mutasa and Chipanga denied any links to the affair.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated July 22, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Hopes That Farm Looters Will Be Prosecuted Fade” by Faith Zaba

In early July, several South African farmers were arrested and later evicted from their farms. At least 18 farmers have been evicted from their land in recent weeks and both the courts and the police are believed to be compromised. An agreement between South Africa and Zimbabwe is meant to protect South African owned land and South African civil rights organizations have therefore threatened legal actions against South Africa for failing to protect its citizens in

Zimbabwe and for refusing to take action against Mugabe and his land reform programme (SW Radio Africa, "South Africa Farmer Arrested and Evicted From Chipinge Farm" by Alex Bell, July 2, 2010)

- Hopes that those responsible for farm looting under the guise of the land reform programme will be prosecuted are fading. Last week, Co-Home Affairs Ministers Kembo Mohadi and Theresa Makone's urged the police to investigate the cases but no attempts have been to prosecute anyone. Commercial farmers were told by the police there were not going to be any arrests related to farm invasions.
- Farmers are now thinking of filing cases against those the police who failed to protect them and against those who were issued offer letters and stole personal property, such as furniture, clothing, farm equipment and firearms.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated July 22, 2010, in English)

"Zimbabwe: Diamond Sale Unlawful - Resources Company" by Farai Mutsaka and Chris Muronzi

- The London-based African Consolidated Resources (ACR) declared Zimbabwe's diamond sale is unlawful, even though both Zanu-PF and the MDC formations agreed to export the Marange gems under strict regulations. The company warned international buyers not by stones from Canadile and Mbada. ACR has been arguing that all the diamonds mined by ZMDC, Mbada and Canadile were extracted from its claims.
- The MDC-T apparently agreed to start selling diamonds because PM Tsvangirai backed down after winning concessions on new regulations and after realizing that the diamond sale could inject money into Zimbabwe's economy.

(The Zimbabwe Telegraph, aggregated independent internet newspaper, article dated July 22, 2010, in English)

"Zimbabwe: a nation divided against itself" by Psychology Maziwisa

- The Zimbabwe Telegraph criticizes those who believe that politicians should not be involved in a people-driven constitution. The writer argues that the constitution must involve both politicians and civil society. People's opinions must be sought and nobody should intervene in their ability to express their views. The constitution-making process must be used as an opportunity to speak with one voice and as one nation. Failure to act together would only promote the current dictatorship.
- Morgan Tsvangirai and the MDC are criticized for failing to mobilize Zimbabwean will power and encourage unity among the many groups committed to restoring democracy and end tyranny in the country. Disunity and self-interest will only allow for a system of "divide and rule" to continue.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated July 22, 2010, in English)

"Zimbabwe: Lack of Will Delays Political Reconciliation"

SW Radio Africa reports all parties committed themselves to finding a permanent solution violence and human rights violations. The participants also agreed to work out a system that would protect all Zimbabweans, therefore insuring that nobody will get harmed or killed on the basis of their political, religious or ethnic affiliation. However, critics believe that a stable democracy will never be achieved as long as the legacy of violence is not fully addressed and the rule of law not acknowledged by everybody. Critics also said that reconciliation would never be achieved as long as the perpetrators were not prosecuted (SW Radio Africa, “MDC and Zanu PF Delegates Meet Over Reconciliation Efforts” by Tichaona Sibanda, July 21, 2010)

Finance Minister Tendai Biti argued that Zanu-PF officials, and particularly Robert Mugabe, are hanging on to power for fear of being prosecuted for human rights abuses once they step down. He then suggested that they be offered immunity (SW Radio Africa, “Biti Says Immunity Offer Will Encourage Mugabe to Step Down” by Lance Guma, July 19, 2010). Meanwhile, an advocacy group, AIDS-Free World, urged the UN to confront Robert Mugabe in order to prevent mass scale violence during the next elections. Last year, the organization was responsible for publishing a damning report on the use of rape under Mugabe’s rule and it now hopes to prevent further violence as signs of renewed brutality are emerging. The group believes it has enough evidence to prosecute the president for crimes against humanity (SW Radio Africa, “International Court Urged to Prosecute Mugabe” by Alex Bell, July 22, 2010).

- Zanu-PF and the two MDC formations’ meeting on political violence and national reconciliation is described as a “farce” and a confirmation that the inter-party Organ on National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration is a failure. Commitments to end all forms of political violence, including state-sponsored killings, remain to be seen.
- Zimbabwe’s process of transitional justice is tainted by a lack of will regarding justice and truth. Violence, hate language and intimidation are still rampant, while selective application of law and order has not ceased. Some of the perpetrators were even at the meeting.
- President Mugabe has refused to apologize for political violence and massacres.
- National healing will not be achieved without will, justice and if perpetrators remain in power.

(Voice of America Zimbabwe, independent radio and television broadcast, Washington, dated July 23, 2010, in English)

“Political Tension Rises in Zimbabwe Over Pro-Mugabe Songs on State Radio & TV” by Sandra Nyaira

- Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation has been playing songs hailing President Mugabe.
- Zanu-PF spokesman Rugare Gumbo told The Herald that the songs had nothing to do with possible forthcoming elections but only intended to encourage Zanu-PF members to participate in the constitutional outreach programme.
- Zimbabwe’s cabinet agreed that the ZBC should stop playing political songs since they did not reflect the unity government but the decision was not communicated to the ZBC as Information Minister Webster Shamu is away. ZBC Chief Executive Hapison Mucchetere said the songs would no longer be played.

The lyrics inform listeners that Mugabe and his two vice presidents are in charge, instead of the inclusive government.

- Former information minister Jonathan Moyo weighed in threatening legal action if the Cabinet forced the state broadcaster to stop playing the revolutionary songs as those who were against them do not share the legacy of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle.
- The songs are clear signs that Zanu-PF propaganda has fully returned and the ZBC should clearly be seen as propaganda tool.

(Zim Online, daily independent online newspaper, Harare, article dated July 23, 2010, in English)

“Govt urged to end land reforms”

- Zimbabwe business leaders (CZI) urged President Mugabe to put an end to the land reform programme as the focus should now be to revive the agricultural sector in order to rebuild Zimbabwe's crumbling economy. The land reform programme is seen as being responsible for food shortages and farm invasions are still taking place.

(The Standard, private weekly, Harare, article dated July 24, 2010, in English)

“Comment: Politicians ill-suited for national healing”

- Zanu-PF and the two MDC formations met in Harare in an attempt to lay out plans for a stable and peaceful Zimbabwe. The parties tasked secretary-generals and the Organ on National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration to come up with a report detailing how the healing process should be taken to grassroots communities.
- The Standard argues that a healing process involving politicians only is flawed and little has been done yet as people are still waiting for justice to be carried out. The fact that elections are coming up and parties are suddenly interested in national healing should be seen as self-interested. Victims of violence should be more included in the process in order to properly address the legacy of mass human rights violations and transitional justice to succeed.
- The Standard proposes the establishment of truth and reconciliations commissions, institutional reforms, reparations and tribunals. Zimbabwe's case is seen as particularly difficult since those responsible for human rights violations are still in power.