

Zimbabwe Domestic Broadcasting, 12 July, 2010 (24 June– 10 July, 2009)

by Marie Lamensch, MIGS Reporter for Zimbabwe

Government-owned newspapers

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated July 3, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Constitution Must Preserve Tradition, Says First Lady”

- First Lady Amai Grace Mugabe said Zimbabweans should take advantage of the constitutional outreach programme to preserve the country’s traditions, particularly rejection of gay rights, and urged parents to instill patriotism in their children.
- She added that the country had wealth and would find other ways to export its diamonds.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated July 4, 2010, in English)

Kimberley Process: The new colonial project by *Tendai Midzi*

- The debate of Zimbabwe’s diamonds is said to have discredited civil society groups within the KP and the media in Zimbabwe. Democracy is not represented when four members can prevent one country to get certification and so it must asked whose interests the KP represents.
- Mines and Mining Development Minister Obert Mpofu revealed that the two NGOs who condemned the human rights abuses taking place on the diamond fields demanded to get 1% from the proceeds of diamond exports.
- The Independent, The Standard, SW Radio Africa and Western newspapers are criticized for their take on the diamond smuggling debate. So-called independent newspapers in Zimbabwe only represent Western policy and propaganda.
- Issues of human rights violations are said to have nothing to do with diamond certification as the KP’s “blood diamond” definition makes no mention of them. Newspapers are criticized for not speaking about human rights violations committed by Britain and the US in the Middle East.
- Western powers fear Zimbabwe as an end to 21st century enslavement and a champion of black empowerment. President Mugabe is criticized by the West because he is liberating, empowering and enlightening own people.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated July 7, 2010, in English)

Zimbabwe: Biti Appeals to the KPCS

- Finance Minister Tendai Biti appealed to the KPCS asking them to allow Zimbabwe to start selling diamonds from Chiadzwa. He dismissed claims that the stones were “blood diamonds.”

- Zanu-PF heavily criticized those who are retrying to criminalize Zimbabwe's diamonds saying that they are only doing so because the diamonds are not in the hands of the Anglo-Saxons.
- Cde Gumbo said Zimbabwe should start trading its diamonds. The Herald also reports that the Cabinet approved the immediate sale of diamonds from Chiadzwa.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated July 10, 2010, in English)

Political tolerance promotes development: VP Mujuru

- Vice President Joice Mujuru called for tolerance and said political leaders accept divergence of ideas. She said these values would enhance development.

Privately-owned newspapers

The Zimbabwe Gazette is a weekly newspaper that focuses on business and politics. It is owned by independent Zimbabwean investors but there have been rumors that it is now owned by the Zimbabwean government.

(Financial Gazette, private weekly, dated June 24, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Bid to Bloc Mugabe Re-Election” by Clemence Manyukwe

- As the country is trying to write a new constitution, the MDC-T is trying to have President Mugabe barred from seeking yet another term in office while Zanu-PF is trying to abolish the post of Prime Minister. The MDC is trying to have a system where executive powers rest in the hands of a president, a prime minister and a cabinet.
- The MDC is trying to pass a new law which would provide for the disqualification of anyone who has previously held office for two terms. The party is also pushing for an impeachment provision.
- Concerning the land issue, the MDC-T admitted the irreversibility of Zanu-PF's agricultural reforms yet wants to set up an independent land commission and where land would be owned by people and not by the state.

(The Standard, private weekly, article dated July 3, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: War Vets Probed Over Anti-Mugabe Sentiments” by Caiphaz Chimhete

- Zanu-PF launched a probe against a war veterans group that has started criticizing President Mugabe in the media accusing his party of betraying the liberation struggle and driving the country into chaos.
- The group has been publishing adverts accusing the government of neglecting war veterans. While the group led by retired colonel Basten Beta still supported Mugabe in 2008, it now believes Mugabe's leadership has promoted corruption, tribalism, nepotism and racism. The Beta faction also argued that the crippling economy was a result of failed economic policies and corruption, not economic sanctions imposed by the West.

- War veterans have always been crucial to Mugabe's power and election victories.

(The Standard, private weekly, article dated July 3, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Changes to Electoral Laws Ring Hollow”

- Changes have been made to Zimbabwe electoral process but do not address the issues that have caused problems during the country's past elections. The new rules do not address unwillingness by parties to renounce to power and Zanu-PF has shown that it wants to new constitution to perpetuate the party's grip on power. Indeed, the party only wants individuals who participated in the liberation struggle or with a liberation war history to be candidates.
- The party not only wants to stay in power by establishing a biased constitution but also by controlling the country's strategic resources, such as the Chiadzwa diamond fields, and by the use of force. A new clause could allow for the intimidation of voters. Indeed, there will now be individual voters' roll for each polling station so that parties will know who votes where.
- Youth militia and war veterans are still being used as well, including during the constitution-making process.
- Because Zimbabwe is still very much polarize, elections could only make the situation worse.

(The Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated July 8, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: To Hell With Western Aid, Says Mugabe” by Faith Zaba

- President Mugabe said his country does not need Western financial assistance in order to turn around the crippled economy. He said the economy would be revived through agriculture and mineral resources. He explained that Zimbabwe would sell diamonds, with or without the KCPS's certification.
- On the subject of the constitution-making process, Mugabe said his party would accept or reject the draft depending on whether their position has been taken account. He said his party would not compromise on any of its fundamental ideals and added that the country would not go back to the whites.

(The Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated July 8, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Villagers Want Former Presidents Liable for Crimes” by Wongai Zhangazha

SW Radio Africa reports that yet more independent monitors of the constitutional outreach programme are facing arrest. Two co-chairpersons of the process gave permission for the police to take measures against those trying to interfere in the process. Recently, three monitors were abducted and beaten by Zanu-PF supporters. The presence of monitors in the process is crucial since reports of violence committed by Zanu-PF supporters have been widely reported as the party is trying to regain some support (SW Radio Africa, “Zimbabwe: Outreach Process Monitors Face More Arrests and Threats” by Irene Madongo, dated July 5, 2010)

Zanu-PF intimidation of the general public continues as the constitution-making process is underway. In rural areas, many have failed to participate to the process for fear of reprisal by Zanu-PF activists, war veterans and state security agents. The public has given pamphlets containing Zanu-PF approved answers about the constitution (“Zimbabwe: Zanu PF Intimidation Over New Constitution Continues” by Alex Bell, dated July 5, 2010)

- During the constitution outreach programme, villagers in Molife called for presidential term limits and believe outgoing presidents could be prosecuted for crimes committed while in office.
- They also said the new constitution should protect people in areas where precious resources have been found so they don't get harassed. People said they were not happy with what was happening in Chiadzwa where the community does not benefit from local resources.

(Financial Gazette, private weekly, dated July 9, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Constitutional Outreach Points to Bloody Elections” by Levi Mukarati

- The upsurge in violence, political tensions and harassment in the on-going constitution-making process could be an indication that proposed fresh elections could end in a “bloodpath reminiscent of the controversial 2008 polls.”
- Zimbabwe has already experienced violent elections in 2000, 2002, 2006 and 2008. The upsurge of violence and intimidation in the countryside is an indication that the nation is still fractured.
- University of Zimbabwe academic and political scientist, Joseph Kurebwa, described cases of violence as “a cancer waiting to become full blown as we enter the election campaign period.” The constitutional outreach programme should be seen as a test to the security and the maintenance of law and order.
- However, the police have denied allegations of violence and three civil society members monitoring the constitution-making process have reportedly been assaulted by Zanu-PF agents. Two monitors were also arrested.
- Political commentator Alois Masepe said Mugabe's statement that elections would be held with or without a new constitution showed that he was not committed to violence-free elections. He added that the constitution was being manipulated to protect the interest of the elite, therefore creating tensions and violence as the future of the elite is threatened. Masepe also believes it was a mistake to leave politicians drive the whole process.
- Amnesty International's Africa director, Erwin van der Borgh said violence threatened the process of coming up with what should be a people-driven constitution and said this was a worrying reminder of the violence that took place in 2008. He called on the parties to allow for freedom of association and expression.

(Financial Gazette, private weekly, dated July 9, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Bootlicking Creeps Into MDC-T” by Njabulo Ncube

- MDC-T party insiders reported that Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai was trying to crush dissent within his party. Four top MDC-T officials were dismissed and other were redeployed two weeks ago. The party is apparently ravaged by factionalism, leading senior officials to try gaining the favors of the Prime minister and party leader.
- A political analyst said Tsvangirai behavior was typical of a patronage system and said it was regrettable that the MDC-T was being caught in these destructive practices.
- The MDC-T should be careful not to transform itself into a Zanu-PF like structure where those with divergent voices are seen as enemies.

(The Standard, private weekly, article dated July 8, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Anti-NGO Comments Expose Copac Naivety”

- In one of their article, the Sunday Mail claimed that a plot by NGOs to advance external interest had been unearthed. NGOs have apparently been running their own outreach programme and deployed teams to influence public views and represent foreign interest. Copac co-chair Paul Mangwana said these individuals would be arrested. Another co-chair person also declared that people who discredit the programme will be arrested.
- The Independent criticizes Mangwana for not allowing people to exercise their democratic rights.
- Co-chair Douglas Mwonzora meanwhile said NGOs were spreading lies about the outreach programme and added that only the three parties to the GPA were allowed to monitor the process.
- Zanu-PF has been running its parallel outreach programme by trying to influence public views and forcing them to support the Kariba Draft.
- A group of war veterans has been criticizing the Zanu-PG leadership arguing that Mugabe has been betraying the values of the liberation struggle, promoting racism, nepotism, corruption and greed.