

Zimbabwe Domestic Broadcasting, 27 September, 2010 (18 September-26 September, 2010)

by Marie Lamensch, MIGS reporter for Zimbabwe

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated September 18, 2009, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Govt Files Formal Complaint to UN”

- The Zimbabweans government filed a formal complaint to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon against the “violation of international law by the US following “over the country’s decision to deny visas to two members of President Mugabe's delegation to the 65th Ordinary Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.
- The American Embassy in Harare said it would not issue visa to Zimbabweans who “formulate, implement, or benefit from institutions or impede the transition to a multi-party democracy; persons who through their business dealings with Zimbabwe Government officials derive significant financial benefit from policies that undermine or injure Zimbabwe's democratic institutions or impede the transition to a multi-party democracy; and the spouses of persons described above.”
- The refusal to issue visa has been described as “a slap in the face” considering the Zimbabwean government is trying to re-engage with the West.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated September 21, 2009, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Copac Suspends Meetings”

- The thirteen constitutional outreach meetings in Harare have been suspended after disturbances erupted. The political leadership has called for peace, tolerance and condemned reports of violence. The teams involved have been asked to go back to their provinces.
- Cde Nkomo said it was important for all stakeholders to have a say in the process. He added that peace and national healing could only be achieved by Zimbabweans themselves.
- Prime Minister Tsvangirai said the constitution-making process was not a political contest. He added that he would not support a flawed process. Since the three principals to the Global political Agreement will have the final say on the outcome of the constitution-making process, the process would have to be redone if they felt it was legitimate. He therefore stated that element of violence needed to be removed.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated September 21, 2009, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Stop Fresh Farm Invasions – Chombo”

- Zanu-PF’s secretary for lands and rural resettlement Cde Ignatius Chombo said the party would not tolerate farm invasions and those involved will have to go to court. Following farm invasions by some youths, he said they could not be empowered by farm invasions.

- He also commented on the fact that some white commercial farmers were hiring out young people and fake war veterans to protect them against the acquisition of land for resettlement purposes. Chombo said the land reform program was irreversible and urged farmers to get in touch with the authorities if they are not satisfied. He criticized white former farmers for disrupting farm operations and stealing from new farmers.
- Concerning the forthcoming elections, Chombo said the party was in a campaign mode and added that those who benefited from the land reform exercise were Zanu-PF members and that the land reform program was “solely a Zanu-PF initiative.”

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated September 23, 2009, in English)

Zimbabwe: No Election Dates Yet, Says PM

- MDC-T leader Morgan Tsvangirai said specific dates for the Presidential and general elections have not been decided yet. Completion of the constitution-making process and a referendum are required first.
- Tsvangirai also condemned of violence taking place during constitutional meetings.
- The police have dismissed claims by the MDC-T that the death of one of their members was a result of political violence. The case is being investigated.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated September 23, 2009, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Treat Us Equally, President Tells West” by Mabasa Sasa in New York

- President Mugabe urged the West to treat Zimbabwe equally. This comes after revelations by Tony Blair that he would have “loved” to attack Zimbabwe militarily.” The president said it was ridiculous to think that if he were not in power, Zimbabwe would be pro-British.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated September 24, 2009, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Be Fearless, Churches Urged”

- Acting President John Nkomo urged the Church to play a crucial role in the national healing and reconciliation process. He explained that the spirit of revenge and antagonism needed to be removed.
- He also urged business leaders to be involved in the process since instability was a risk to business and investment.

(The Herald, government-owned daily, article dated September 24, 2009, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Copac - MDC-T Activist in Court”

- An MDC-T activist arrested for allegedly assaulting a policeman and disruption a public meeting is facing charges of assault and public violence.
- Prosecutor Mr Machaya is opposed to a bail arguing that he would endanger the safety of the public and undermine peace and security in the country.

Private Media

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 15 September, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Gukurahundi Finally Classified As Genocide By Leading Experts” by Tererai Karimakwenda

- The Gukurahundi massacres have been classified as “genocide” by Genocide watch. The massacres saw the death of tens of thousands of Zimbabweans at the hands of soldiers loyal to Mugabe. The group's chairperson, Professor Gregory Stanton, said President Mugabe has been trying to hide the killings but that perpetrators can now be prosecuted.
- Zimbabwe is not party to the ICC treaty and thus the court cannot directly indict Mugabe and those involved in the massacres. However, the Security Council can refer the case to the ICC, as done with Darfur and Sudanese President Bashir.
- Zimbabwean writer and journalist Geoff Hill said the killings can be considered as genocide since it committed against people based on their identity, such as color, race or religion. Mugabe specifically targeted the Ndebele people in Matabeleland and the Midlands.

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

“Zimbabwe: Didymus Mutasa Vows Tsvangirai Will Never Be President” by Tichaona Sibanda

- Presidential Affairs Minister Didymus Mutasa said Zanu-PF would never hand over power to Morgan Tsvangirai even if he is elected: “Who is Tsvangirai? He will never rule this country. Never ever. How can we let the country be ruled by sell-outs? He will only do so over our dead bodies. If we go to the polls and he defeats Mugabe, ZANU PF and the people of Zimbabwe will not allow that.”
- MDC-T spokesman Nelson Chamisa such statements were nothing new though treasonable. He added that Zimbabwe does not belong to Zanu-PF and people will not resist someone who they voted into power.
- Tsvangirai said negotiations over the role of security forces in Zimbabwe were currently taking place as it is believed that they are undermining the will of the people. Tsvangirai said he hoped security forces would respect the GPA and the Constitution of Zimbabwe.

(The Financial Gazette, private daily, Harare, article dated 17 September, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: 30-day Ultimatum - What SADC deadline?” by Levi Mukarati

- South African President Jacob Zuma imposed a 30-day deadline for the GPA to find a solution to the deadlock. The ultimatum expired last week but nothing has been solved yet. Issues raised by Zuma have apparently not been discussed by the principals to the GPA. Indeed, the parties have been concentrating on possible national elections rather than issues that would make elections possible.

- The MDC-T has not been able to push Zanu-PF to agree on political reforms and the ultimatum is therefore being ignored by Mugabe's party. But now some are also criticizing the MDC for failing to take Zimbabweans into consideration.

(The Standard, private weekly, Harare, article dated 18 September, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Govt Admits Role in Maguwu Arrest” by Dumisani Sibanda

- Thankful Musukutwa, the permanent secretary for the Ministry of Mines and Mineral, declared he was not prepared to work with Farai Maguwu as a representative of civil society under the KPCS partnership. Instead Zanu-PF is trying to appoint someone close to the party.
- He admitted he was the one who reported Maguwu to the minister and added that Maguwu's behavior would be punished by death in certain countries. He said his behavior was treasonous.

(The Standard, private weekly, Harare, article dated 18 September, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Man Draws Gun At Outreach Meeting”

- A constitutional outreach programme was called off in Chitungwiza after someone pulled out a gun in an attempt to settle disagreements. The dispute arose over who should lead the opening prayer.
- Police refused to cooperate and give details of the incident
- Violence also broke out at other meetings. Young people threw stones and suspected Zanu PF youths expressed anger over the fact that they were allegedly not being accorded the same time to speak as their MDC-T counterparts.
- Zanu-PF members have been accused of trying to sabotage the process by inciting Copac drivers and technicians to strike. A senior Zanu-PF politburo member, dismissed accusations.

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

“Zimbabwe: Home Affairs Min Makone Says Zanu PF Holding Police Captive” by Tichaona Sibanda

- Co-Home Affairs Minister Theresa Makone accused ZANU PF of 'virtually holding the Zimbabwe Republic Police captive. He said he was “disgusted” by Zanu-PF's brutality during the constitutional outreach meetings. Makone believes the police are just as paralyzed as the victims of violence, leading them to fail to intervene. He believes the police do not dare to arrest perpetrators of violence for fear of repercussions.
- She also accused Zanu-PF of being a party based on violence.

(Radio France International, International French radio broadcast, dated 20 September, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Harare Police Protesters Arrested” by Michel Arseneault

- Police have reportedly arrested 83 members of Men and Women of Zimbabwe Arise who were taking part in a march outside parliament in Harare. The aim of the protest was to denounce violence during the constitutional outreach programme.
- WOZA also accused police of beating up suspects and criticized the jail conditions, saying that the cells were unsanitary and food was lacking.

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

“Zimbabwe: Constitution Program in Turmoil as Zanu PF Unleashes Violence” by Tichaona Sibanda

- Forty-five constitutional outreach meetings were disrupted by Zanu-PF supporters. Coordinated attacks on MDC supporters and COPAC officials have been reported, leading co-chairperson of COPAC Douglas Mwonzora to suspend meetings in the capital. Investigations should be launched.
- Observers say attacks were clearly premeditated as perpetrators were bused from rural areas to the capital to carry out their deed. MDC supporters were assaulted with logs, iron bars and sticks. The police did not dare to intervene which leads MDC officials to say that Zanu-PF enjoy immunity from the authorities.
- There also seemed to be a racial dimension to the attacks as several white people were chased from the meetings and some seemed to bear the brunt of the violence. Zanu-PF supporters are said to have shouted racial slurs.
- Zanu-PF officials are believed to be behind the violence. For example, ZANU PF Senator Charles Tawengwa allegedly paid and encouraged youths to cause chaos.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 21 September, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Woza Condemns Police as 83 Activists Denied Food in Jail”

- Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) criticized the police for barring 83 of their members from receiving food and for holding them in unsanitary cells. They are also concerned over the condition of one of their members who was violently beaten with baton sticks.
- WOZA activists were arrested after they started a peace march in front of the Parliament buildings. Police proceeded to round up people. They are now being charged with obstructing traffic.
- The arrests are said to highlight police violence.

(SW Radio Africa, independent Zimbabwean radio, London, UK, dated 22 September, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Mugabe Says Poverty Remains High Because of Targeted Sanctions” by Tichaona Sibanda

- In a speech at the United Nations plenary meeting on Millennium Development Goals, President Mugabe has blamed high poverty in Zimbabwe on the 'illegal and debilitating sanctions' imposed on Zimbabwe.
- Anglican Reverend Lameck Mutete told Radio SW Africa that poverty has mainly been caused by political instability and farm seizures.
- The president travelled with a delegation of 80 people at the expense of taxpayers.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated 24 September, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Govt in Catch 22 Situation Over Mulled Elections” by Bernard Mpfu

- The Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe (Emcoz) is the business organizations to call on the three principals to the GPA to wait five years before holding elections. They argue that economic recovery and national healing should take precedence. Business people and civil society organizations also fear political violence, which could reverse economic gains made during the last year.
- Analysts say this is a difficult situation as elections could bring an end to the coalition deadlock. Yet the economy could also be on a standstill after the polls.
- Analysts and trade unionists also believe that while stability was needed in the country and the GPA had not restored confidence in investors, the current situation is not conducive for free and fair elections.
- Lovemore Matombo, president of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, believes Emcoz demand to wait five years before holding elections is exploitative as most government ministers and employers are benefiting from the current economic environment. He also called on the Sadc to monitor the next elections.

(Zimbabwe Independent, private weekly, Harare, article dated 24 September, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe: Tsvangirai Blasts 'Lying' SADC Chief” by Faith Zaba

- Following the expiry of the 30-day deadline imposed on the regional leader for Zimbabwe's coalition government to implement the outstanding issues, Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai heavily criticized the Sadc chief, Tomaz Salomao, for his attitude towards Zimbabwe. Top MDC officials accused Salomao of being a "liar and pushing a Zanu PF agenda" and a "Zanu PF card-carrying member".
- The MDC-T had already criticized the Sadc's secretary for refusing to acknowledge a report by President Jacob Zuma, which outlined the outstanding issues and plan for free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. The MDC therefore accused the body of blocking a debate on Zimbabwe.
- The MDC-T said it has sent an official complain to Salomao but the latter insists he did not and added that the MDC should learn how to do business with the Sadc.
- In the letter, MDC-T demanded highlighted three areas of concern: the alleged watering down of the communiqué on Zimbabwe, the blocking of debate on Zimbabwe in the full summit, and the implementation of a roadmap to free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

(Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State, Washington D.C., dated 24 September, 2010, in English)

“Zimbabwe Transition Government Urged to Respect Human Rights” by Charles W. Corey

- At a UN meeting, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson and other senior U.S. government officials urged representatives of Zimbabwe’s inclusive government to speak out against human rights abuses, continue to make political progress and respect human rights standards. Among the issues mentioned were land seizures, human rights abuses, and the arrest of peaceful protestors.
- The US delegation also reiterated his intention to keep targeted sanctions in place. The US delegation rejected claims that the sanctions had a broad effect on Zimbabwe’s economy or everyday livelihood. The targeted sanctions include travel bans and asset freezes. The delegation also said the US and Zimbabwe relations were one of continued dialogue, assistance and engagement.