

Zimbabwe Domestic Broadcasting, 8 November 2010 (18 October-29 October, 2010)

By Ilia Sorokin, MIGS media monitor for Zimbabwe

London-based *Zimbabwe Independent* SW Radio Africa website, in English, dated 18 October 2010. Privately-Owned.

1) Rights group warns of "final push" to seize commercial farms in Zimbabwe

- A farming rights group, Justice for Agriculture (JAG), has warned that there is a "final push" to seize Zimbabwe's handful of remaining commercial properties, ahead of fresh elections.
- Over the last few weeks, a number of families had their farms seized and were left destitute by ZANU PF party members.
- JAG's John Worsley-Worswick said the situation is deteriorating rapidly, explaining that ZANU PF governors are running scared, after the MDC contested their unilateral appointment by Robert Mugabe. "This is the last crack of the whip, because they know time could be running out to grab what they can."

Dated 19 October 2010

2) Zimbabwean civil society groups meet Zuma's facilitation team in Pretoria

- The top leadership of Zimbabwe's civil society organizations (CSO) will meet with South African President Jacob Zuma's facilitation team at the Union Buildings in Pretoria on Wednesday to explore ways of how the Southern African Development Community (SADC) can help Zimbabwe come up with guidelines for violence-free elections, which are expected mid next year after the drafting of the new constitution.
- There are growing calls for the regional bloc to assemble a permanent monitoring force of SADC, aided by the AU and other international observers, to come and do the monitoring work. The CSO leadership will ask SADC to send a team three months before elections and for it to remain there for three months after the poll, to ensure pre and post election peace.
- While many CSOs were arguing that the country is not ready for free and fair elections they have now resigned themselves to the reality that Mugabe will simply not work with Morgan Tsvangirai, who boycotted a cabinet meeting after having criticized Mugabe for his unilateral appointment of governors, in contravention of the GPA.

3) Broadcasting rules block community radio in Zimbabwe

- On Monday, the Media Institute of Southern Africa Zimbabwe (MISA) announced that it had set up the country's first rural community radio in Ntepe, 40kms South-West of Gwanda town. It had done so illegally and the broadcast was shut down since the state-controlled Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation that has maintained a monopoly in the broadcasting industry which is tightly controlled by ZANU PF, does not allow independent broadcasters.
- The next day, MISA's Koliwe Nyoni said the organisation had started a campaign demanding the government free the airwaves. "The campaign is to say we want more independent broadcasters but key to the issue of independent broadcasting is to have an independent broadcasting authority that will

look into applicants and potential broadcasters within the country. The campaign is for more players and independence within the system."

Dated 21 October 2010

4) I won't return – Bennett by Wongai Zhangazha

- MDC-T treasurer Roy Bennett said he will not return to Zimbabwe from South Africa until the political situation stabilises and rule of law is restored, basing his decision on advice from his colleagues in the MDC. He is currently being chased by Zimbabwean police.
- Bennett denies the allegations raised by Justice Chinembiri Bhunu that he defamed the judge, stating that the charges are political, adding that he never made those comments in the media. Since September, Bhunu's lawyers said efforts to serve Bennett with the summons have proved fruitless.
- Bennett knew that the police were instructed to arrest him and thinks that this was designed by ZANU PF to scuttle his appointment as deputy Agriculture minister.

5) Mugabe mobilises ZANU PF for polls

- Mugabe is now convinced that he should lead his party to early elections because this is an opportune moment to dislodge Tsvangirai and the MDC-T and recover lost ground.
- The top brass of the army, police and intelligence structures are behind Mugabe and Zanu PF, despite their constitutional obligations to remain neutral in executing their professional duties.
- Mugabe has already started the campaign to ensure he is declared the ZANU PF candidate for the mid-2011 elections

Dated 26 October 2010

6) European Bank insists it is not 'boycotting' Zim diamonds by Alex Bell

- A European banking group headed by ABN Amro that has previously stated its refusal to finance diamond transactions with Zimbabwe has now insisted it is not boycotting the country's stones.
- During a mining conference earlier this month, the banking group said that it would not deal with Zimbabwe or its diamonds, citing concerns about its reputation. Both Victor van der Kwast, a senior ABN Amro official and Pierre de Bosscher from the Antwerp Diamond Bank, made it clear that "reputational issues" stood in the way of their banks involvement with Zimbabwe.
- Van Der Kwast expressed that this decision was also made to comply with EU sanctions currently in place against trading in Zimbabwean diamonds.

7) School children and teachers force-marched to ZANU PF rallies by Irene Madongo

- The president of the Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ) has said that primary school children and their teachers are still being forced to attend pro-ZANU PF political rallies in Masvingo and the Midlands: "The teachers are forced to abandon their work to attend a political rally. That is not proper. Teachers have become targets of political violence, it is unfortunate. A war vet known as Jabulani Sibanda is well known for writing letters to several schools in Zhaka, Masvingo, Bikita, ordering teachers to close their schools and attend political rallies. This is very unfortunate taking into consideration what happened in terms of political violence to teachers. School children lose their learning time and they are also called to attend the political rallies and they lose the value for learning, and it is not a proper environment to learn. When they arrange meetings, they call anyone, even from those who are in primary school as well as those at secondary school. There are cases where the crowd is so low, so they want to boost the crowd by the number of school pupils, they are then forced to attend."

Dated 28 October 2010

8) Tsvangirai to sue Mugabe by Faith Zaba

- Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai has threatened to sue President Robert Mugabe for making a series of unilateral appointments which he has described as "unconstitutional, null and void". Mugabe recently appointed provincial governors, judges and ambassadors unilaterally.
- Constitutional lawyer Lovemore Madhuku said taking Mugabe to court was a waste of time because Section 31 (K) of the national constitution does not allow the courts to enquire into how the president exercises his discretion.
- Section 31 (K) reads: "Where the President is required or permitted by this Constitution or any other law to act on his own deliberate judgment, a court shall not in any case inquire into any of the following questions or matter -(a) whether any advice or recommendation was tendered to the President or acted on by him; or (b) whether any consultation took place in connection with the performance of the act; or (c) the nature of any advice or recommendation tendered to the President; (d) the manner in which the President has exercised his discretion."
- Madhuku said that because of this section, the Supreme Court would not allow such a lawsuit to be brought before it, adding that there was no way that Mugabe would tell the courts that he has violated the constitution that he swore to abide by.

9) Principals' Relations Plunge Further by Dumisani Muleya

- The recent good working relationship between President Robert Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai has all but broken after the president's recent unilateral appointments which outraged the premier and re-ignited their fierce rivalry.
- The prime minister boycotted cabinet for the second time this month. Tsvangirai chose to travel to Zambia to meet President Rupiah Banda to brief him on Mugabe's increasing unilateralism within the inclusive government instead of attending Tuesday's cabinet meeting, the most important gathering on the government calendar.
- Mugabe has referred to Tsvangirai's complaints as "nonsensical"

10) Mugabe Poll Strategy Targets Youths, Churches

- Robert Mugabe's ZANU PF has adopted a new strategy of mobilizing voters by appealing to the youths and trying to penetrate churches, especially apostolic sects, in a bid to win elections in June next year.
- Mugabe and his allies are now using both persuasion and coercion as a new strategy to woo voters, mainly in Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's urban strongholds.
- ZANU PF officials say the party was targeting the Apostolic (Vapostori) sect, with a membership running into millions, to register as voters and spread the party's propaganda ahead of 2011 polls.
- The party has also roped in young musicians, including a 10-member group called the Born Free Crew, which released an eight-track album titled Get Connected. The tracks are loaded with songs praising Mugabe with a special appeal to the youths to be close to the ageing president. The propaganda songs are being aired on Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) television and radio stations, sparking a barrage of criticism from MDC-T, MDC and civil society.
- Mugabe and ZANU PF adopted South African President Jacob Zuma's campaign style which included using artists and celebrated disc jockeys to appeal to the youths who constitute the largest voting bloc.

London-based *Zimbabwe Independent* SW Radio Africa, in English, 0000 gmt 20 October 2010.
Privately-Owned.

1) Zuma's Facilitation Team Meets With Zimbabwe Civil Society Leadership by Tichaona Sibanda

- On Wednesday, Zimbabwe's CSO on Wednesday held consultative talks with South African President Jacob Zuma's facilitation team in Pretoria that have been described as "ice-breaking" by Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition national coordinator, Macdonald Lewanika.
- The six individuals from Zimbabwe CSO presented the facilitation team with a 5 page briefing paper that urges the SADC mediator to ensure that a credible election, based on key benchmarks, takes place in Zimbabwe, also advocating for a SADC-led elections supervisory mechanism for the country's next vote, to prevent state-sponsored violence. They want it in place at least 6 months before the elections and 3 months after.

2) Election Commission Says it's Ready to Conduct Elections by Lance Guma.

- Joyce Kazembe, the acting chairperson of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), has said they are ready to conduct national elections if the leadership in government asks them to do so, directly contradicting ZEC chairperson Justice Simpson Mutambanengwe, who in August said the country will not be able to conduct elections next year due to inadequate funding and the need to carry out reforms to make the vote more credible.
- Last week, Mugabe said the coalition government could be dissolved within 4 months, when the life of the GPA comes to an end in February next year, also indicating that elections could be held in the middle of 2011, after a referendum on the draft constitution is concluded.
- The state owned media has been on the offensive trying to portray the MDC as reluctant to go into an election.

3) Police Bar MDC From Holding Harare Meetings by Tererai Karimakwenda

- The MDC reported that senior police officers from Southerton Station barred their members from holding a consultative meeting on Wednesday at Cyril Jennings Hall in Harare. The officers claimed that they had not been notified on time. The police have also barred a meeting that was scheduled for Glen View on Friday.
- The Wednesday meeting was part of a nationwide programme of consultative meetings to explain the GPA to their supporters and the continuous violations by Mugabe and ZANU PF.
- Military chiefs have this week reiterated their position that Tsvangirai would never rule Zimbabwe, exposing the powerless position in which the MDC finds itself since joining the coalition government.

Dated 22 October 2010

4) EU Resolution Calls on Mugabe To Scrap Planned Evictions at Hatcliffe by Tererai Karimakwenda

- Members of the European parliament on Thursday passed a resolution which called on Robert Mugabe to drop the planned evictions of about 20,000 people from Hatcliffe Extension settlement outside Harare. Residents there were being forced to pay exorbitant lease renewal fees, which the resolution said the residents "simply have no means of paying."

- The pending evictions were used as an example of continuing human rights abuses in Zimbabwe and provided a case against Mugabe's demands that the EU should remove the targeted sanctions against him and close associates.
- Member of European Parliament Geoffrey Van Orden said he strongly believes that until there is real change in Zimbabwe and the people are enjoying true freedom and democratic space, the restrictive measures on Mugabe and his cronies should remain in place.

5) Bennett Says Military Junta Running Zimbabwe by Lance Guma

- MDC-T Treasurer General Roy Bennett has said the military junta is now running the country and that long time Dictator Robert Mugabe is now just a figure head: "I think Mugabe is a senile old man. He is no longer in control of events in Zimbabwe and the military junta calls the shots."
- Bennett also said that the junta still needs Mugabe as a civilian face to what has effectively become military rule.
- Bennett was acquitted of terrorism, banditry and insurgency charges by Justice Chinembiri Bhunu, the same judge who is now claiming compensation from him for defamation in an article published online.

6) Diaspora Draft Constitution Ready for Submission to COPAC by Tichaona Sibanda

- Diaspora groups, representing almost four million Zimbabweans living in exile, have had an input in the new draft constitution that will be presented to COPAC management committee on Tuesday.
- on citizenship, the diaspora groups say everyone born in or outside Zimbabwe is a Zimbabwean citizen by birth if either of his or her parents is a Zimbabwean citizen at the time of birth. Currently, Zimbabweans lose their rights to vote if they stay outside their constituency for two years
- A copy of the draft advocates for a president to be elected directly by the people and who should not be in office for more than two five year terms. Any appointments to positions such as the head of the Army, Air force, Police, Prison service and the CIO must done by the President with the advice and approval of Parliament.
- The Zimbabwean diaspora groups have also requested COPAC to include them in future processes and structures such as the thematic committees, the second national stakeholders' conference, the drafting stage and the constitutional referendum.

Dated 25 October 10

7) IMF Visit Spells Bad News for Zimbabwe's Central Bank by Irene Madongo

- An economic analyst has stated that the visit this week of officials from the IMF to Zimbabwe spells bad news for the country's Reserve Bank and government officials hostile to transparency.
- The six-member IMF team will meet a number of senior government officials, including Finance Minister Tendai Biti and Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) governor Gideon Gono. The team will examine the state of the economy under its Article IV provision, which requires it to visit member countries, collect information and discuss economic developments and policies.

Dated 28 October 2010

8) Traditional Leaders Summoned To Army Barracks for Indoctrination by Tichaona Sibanda

- The commander of 3 Brigade in Mutare, Brigadier-General Douglas Nyikayaramba, last week summoned close to 200 traditional leaders from Manicaland province for a two-day 'indoctrination' workshop, attended by chiefs, headmen and village heads from all the seven districts of the province.
- Robert Mugabe has started mobilizing his party for next year's anticipated elections. The top brass of the army, police and intelligence structures have been reactivated to push the ZANU PF agenda in the rural areas, where the party has lost considerable support.

Privately-Owned Zimbabwean weekly *Financial Gazette* website, Harare, in English, on 29 October.

PM Defies Police: . . . as Cracks in Inclusive Gov't Widen by Njabulo Ncube

- Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai has defied police orders to abort his consultative meetings with supporters of the MDC-T countrywide as the rift in the shaky inclusive government continues to widen. On Tuesday, the premier resumed his unsanctioned consultative process as directed by his party's national executive council two weeks ago by proceeding to hold a meeting at Cyril Jennings Hall in Highfield despite police outlawing the public gathering.
- Nelson Chamisa, the MDC-T spokesperson, said yesterday the party would continue with its consultative agenda.