

SPECIAL ELECTION BAROMETER

ZIMBABWE'S JULY 31 HARMONISED ELECTIONS: OUT OF THE CONCRETE CAN A FLOWER EMERGE?



THIS IS IT

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Introduction

With general elections due on 31 July 2013, our sixth edition of the Zimbabwe Transition Barometer (Issue 6) is a special election publication. Is the holding of general elections in Zimbabwe on 31 July 2013, a mere ritual meant to prolong the stay of President Mugabe and ZANU PF in the saddle of power? Is it true that elections generally, and these elections in particular, will change nothing?

The myth that elections in Zimbabwe will change nothing and that President Mugabe and his cohorts will not accept any result other than their victory is what we focus on in this special edition. We pursue, in this report, a bold claim that the forthcoming elections are more than just a participatory ritual meant to legitimise incumbent, President Mugabe's 'continued stay' at number 1 Chancellor Avenue.

We acknowledge that the challenges that have faced the forthcoming election from day one have had the effect of pouring concrete on the possibilities of a peaceful, free, fair and credible election. We have thus posed to our selves the question: Out of the concrete, can a flower emerge?

Our short answer is yes. We retain hope that in spite of challenges, the flower, even the rose, of the people's will, may still grow from the concrete. We are not saying democracy is fully functioning. We acknowledge that Zimbabwe's chain of democratic choice is not as solid as it should be. The five links - information, inclusion, insulation, integrity and irreversibility as explained in our paper 'Countering Electoral Manipulation: Strengthening Zimbabwe's Chain of Democratic Choice', have failed to hold together like a solid chain. But what we can say is that the politics is different. It is not business as usual.

Our optimism is not just based on theoretical propositions and wishful thinking, but also on practical observations. We argue that, 'the point of multi-party elections is that even if they are held in non-democratic settings, they have the potential to lead to real political competition and meaningful participation - that is, to lead to democracy' (Lindberg 2013:239). In addition, it is our contention that 'democratic performance improves over time and with experience of multi-party electoral politics. Thus, though...systems favour incumbents, the passage of time and the greater experience it affords is likely to serve to promote [opposition] party institutionalisation and improved [opposition] party performance' (see Van de Walle 2013:236). However, beyond our theoretical postulation, political developments in the past month also buttress our argument as we detail later.



Figure 1: Who will be the Last Man Standing

Hence, we argue that there is a possibility for power alternation in the next election from ZANU PF's President Robert Mugabe to the Movement for Democratic Change's President Morgan Tsvangirai, who has emerged as the main national contender in the run up to the election. The opposition in general (the 2 MDC formations) is tipped to get more ample representation in parliament and in councils despite the skewed electoral environment.

Unlike in the past, where general elections were convened regularly but as a mere ritual to retain the incumbent, the situation in Zimbabwe today is different. The wave of democratisation that has swept through Zimbabwe in the past four years has put political change firmly on the electoral menu of Zimbabwe's politics.

In the past, elections were such that President Mugabe would never face any real challenge in what Levitsky and Way (2002) called competitive authoritarianism or what Joseph (1998) calls façade democracy. However, we argue that it is difficult to remain at the same level of façade for a very long time as Zimbabwe has convened more than five elections since the founding election in 1980. Following Lindberg's electoral path to democratisation thesis, every election advances the prospects of democracy. In part, 'democracy is a learning process: with every election, the democratic machinery (ballot counting and reporting, election monitoring, party organization and so on), gains strength.' The evidence might be mixed in Africa but if elections are not improving, certainly they are not worsening in democratic quality.

Since the formation of the inclusive government, a process of democratic institutionalisation has started, and as van de Walle (2013: 228) argues in reference to African politics in general, 'the strength of opposition parties is positively correlated with the level of democracy'. There has been the development and strengthening of institutions of accountability to circumscribe authoritarian practices. In the run up to the 31 July election, the opposition Movement for Democratic Change led by Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, has been able to mobilise thousands of prospective voters and promote mass participation which also provides checks on state power. Citizens seem to feel more efficacious when they feel strong parties represent their views. The strength of the opposition is important for the success of democratisation. Most opposition African political parties have not been able to survive more than two electoral cycles but the MDC has managed to survive.

Outside political parties, counter-prevailing institutions of power have been redefined. Civil society, independent media, political parties, SADC and the international community have been able to serve as a check on state power. The pressure applied to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) has resulted in some of its members changing their calculations. Defending the interests of ZANU PF is no longer, automatically, the default option.

The architecture of the election has changed and Zimbabwe is entering a new era. 'It has been shown empirically that dictators in Africa who continue holding an unbroken series of elections typically lose their grip on power. Iterations of electoral contests also tend to unleash a series of self-reinforcing sub-processes making politics become less authoritarian' (Lindberg 2013:239). As elections are held, more and more autocratic rulers are leaving the scene in Africa. In most founding elections in Africa, the Presidential contests would get more than 60 per cent of the vote but in the fourth and later elections they would get less than half, averaging 47% (Lindberg 2013:241). 30% of African countries have seen power alternations after the founding election. Benin has had four multi-party elections and three have resulted in power alternation (see Lindberg 2013:238). The regional and international conditions make it difficult for excessive rigging. There is a threshold to which incumbents can rig the election. Former President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya tried (December of 2007) to fabricate results, President Mugabe also tried the same in 2008, though they remained in power they were forced into power-sharing arrangements with the intended victims of their deceit, and some would argue, the actual winners of the elections. President Mwai Kibaki served out the power sharing arrangement and avoided the possibility of an electoral defeat, choosing to retire from active politics and investing in a younger candidate in his godson Uhuru Kenyatta, who now leads Kenya as its President. 89 year old President Mugabe on the other hand served out the power sharing arrangement, but kept himself as a candidate, and only the people of Zimbabwe will decide whether he has reinvented himself enough to warrant another 5 years, but the possibility of them choosing not to invest the 5 years in him is very real and quite high as we argue later.



Will Zimbabweans Give HIM aAnother 5 years ?



From one to the Other: Democratic Transition in Kenya

Elections are a sub-game to the macro-game of democratic transition, hence, in this special edition that is focused on the July 31 Harmonised Elections, we shall not use the conceptual lens of possible transitional outcomes that we have used to analyse the broader transitional trajectory in the previous editions. We shall return to our broader transitional lens in our August edition, after the general election. For now, we are guided by the theoretical propositions above. Empirically, the focus in this issue is on four areas as listed below:

- Amendments to the Electoral Act and democratisation
- African Union and SADC Engagement
- Absence of “overt” violence
- Zimbabwe Electoral Commission “On or Off-guard for the Elections”

With elections due on 31 July, we focus on some key developments that have emerged in the run up to the elections, which are material to both the outcome and nature of the elections. Following a measure of the rate of progress, some recommendations are made in order to ensure that the ultimate goal of a free and fair election is realised. In the next section, we give an overview of our summary.

Executive Summary

The African Union (AU) and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) held “last gasp” meetings on 19th and 20th July to assess the preparations for the Zimbabwe elections. Both institutions concurred with the need to proceed to elections but called for political parties, citizens and state institutions to ensure credibility of the polls. Their meetings reflect their continued engagement and interest in the forthcoming elections. This also raises the levels of confidence within Zimbabwe that the AU and SADC are major stakeholders of the elections; not only by virtue of being “guarantors” of the GPA but through their respective constitutive mandates. The AU dispatched a Long Term Observer mission to Zimbabwe on 15 June that was joined by a short-term observer team on 24 July 2013. Whereas, SADC has reportedly kept vigil in the country since April with a 10-member observer team, and has now additionally dispatched about 600 observers, which is arguably the highest number to any election in the history of the regional bloc. The presence of these observer missions, complemented by others, is reflective of the institutions’ commitment. This also has a positive impact on the democratisation process in the country. Should these Observer missions ensure an immediate publication of the voters’ roll by the Registrar General and employ transparency as a measure of the quality of this election; then this will aid the democratic transition that the country has sought since the signing of the GPA in 2009. The AU and SADC must move beyond proclamation of statements to strengthening their implementation capacity. They should also extend their role to the post-election period in order to deal with the possibility of disputes or resistance to power transfer.

The run up to the elections has been characterised by a marked reduction of incidences of overt political violence and intimidation, in comparison to 2008. Although the sporadic incidences are a great cause of concern, it is the broader voter confidence that can be derived from the prevailing environment that contributes positively to the election processes. Political parties are making efforts to restrain political violence, as they are desperate for a SADC endorsed election outcome, should they win. SADC has been clear about its distaste for political violence and intimidation and this has become one of the clear templates through which this election will be judged. Although there are low levels of violence, the increased stakes as the country draws closer to elections may inflame tensions and ultimately cause violence. The Observer missions need to continuously engage across the country, as their oversight is a major restraint for violence escalation. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission must also immediately set up the Special Investigations Committees to handle violence and intimidation that may arise during the elections.

The low levels of violence and intimidation are likely to influence higher voter turnout on Election Day, which is supportive of the democratisation process in Zimbabwe.



Figure 2 Headlines on the morning after Mugabe's Poll announcement

President Mugabe used the Presidential Powers Temporary Measures Act to gazette the amended electoral act through statutory instrument 85 of 2013. Though the move was regrettable because of the undemocratic subversion of democratic process in enacting the electoral law amendments, an analysis of the content of the amended Act provides an opportunity to improve the democratic conduct of the elections. For example the following 6 things are definitive improvements to democratic prospects stemming from the amended act,

1. People who registered after closure of nomination court are allowed to vote on 31 July 2013.
2. Election agents are to be present in polling stations at all times to counter prospects of ballot stuffing.
3. Voters with registration slips will be allowed to vote so that no eligible voter is disenfranchised.
4. The manner of voting, as stated in section 57, has also improved as voters are no longer required to show their ballot to presiding officers.
5. Results are to be displayed for the public to see, but observers, agents and candidates can get copies of polling returns.
6. Votes are to be counted at the voting station,
7. Election results are to be announced within 5 days.

All the above stated elements will no doubt, improve transparency on the electoral process especially on Election Day.

The choice of electoral rules is one of the most important institutional decisions for any democracy. Whereas the unilateral manner in which the amendments to the Act were gazetted fell short of the democratic ideal; the contents and substance enhance the democratic conduct of the election and presents the opposition with a chance to unseat the incumbent and allow power alternation rather than just have elections as a ritual.

The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) issued an apology after the chaotic “special voting” process that was fraught with logistical challenges led to many failing to cast their vote. ZEC also made a court application to the Constitutional Court, whose judgement will now allow those who failed to cast their votes to do so on 31 July 2013.

The capacity and integrity of ZEC has been under more scrutiny ever since the “special voting” was concluded. ZEC has exhibited a “double nature” exposition; which has seen the emergence of two sides of the same institution. On one hand ZEC exhibits an intention and appetite for professionalism while on the other hand it reflects internal resistance or external influence/manipulation. The new Chairperson of ZEC, Rita Makarau, is credited with her efforts to create transparency and a wider engagement platform with civil society, media, political parties, and other stakeholders.

Besides some apparent residual resistance to the above within some elements of the commission, the Registrar General's office, responsible for voter registration and compilation of the voters roll, has not worked well with ZEC, especially under the new Chair. Although the Electoral Act mandates ZEC to supervise the electoral work done by the Registrar General, there have been indications of wilful defiance by the latter. This has complicated the role of ZEC and of the new chair.



ZEC Chairperson Judge Makarau. Given benefit of the doubt?

The new Chairperson's efforts in ZEC must be supported as she seems compliant to the new global trend in which Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) are becoming "centres of integrity" that strive for electoral credibility rather than being forced to do so. The new strategic approach for EMBs is to ensure that they work on a credible value system that must eventually create a culture of transparency, credibility and reliability. The new chairperson seems to have that drive to ensure a new culture prevails in ZEC, even in the 31 July election. She needs the support of civil society, political parties, media, observer missions, government and all stakeholders. Should this happen, it provides for increased levels of confidence in ZEC's ability to dispense its full constitutional mandate during the elections.

Given the host of reforms cited above, we now turn to the details of the empirics to substantiate our argument that the 31st of July 2013 elections are more than just a participatory ritual for the opposition political parties.

1.0 Barometer Indicator 1: African Union and SADC Engagement

1.1 Barometer Source

The African Union (AU) and SADC, being the “guarantors” of the GPA, are central to the upcoming elections. Their role is expected to ensure that the country holds a credible election that is able to lead towards a democratic transition from the GPA and the past political conflict epitomized by the 2008 disputed polls.

1.2 Prevailing issues

Previously, the AU has been criticised for being seen to be inactive in shepherding the Zimbabwe transition process. Its coordination with SADC, on this matter, has been considered as weak and disjointed. However, the AU dispatched a Long Term Observer (LTO) mission to Zimbabwe on 15 June, a development that is shaped by the continental body’s new strategic approach to elections.¹



SADC Heads of State in Mozambique in June 2013

At its 385th meeting that was held on 19 July 2013, the African Union Peace and Security Council had a briefing from the Department of Political affairs on the state of preparedness of the Zimbabwe elections. At that meeting, the AU commended the Zimbabwean government, political parties and electoral institutions for their efforts in ensuring a credible and peaceful election. Although the meeting was not explicit about the possible action the continental body would take should anomalies affect the credibility of the polls, it was a demonstration of the body’s responsibility over the Zimbabwe election. The meeting also served to address the historical ambiguity about the AU’s interest and mandate in the Zimbabwean transitional trajectory.

The SADC Troika of the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation also held a pre-election meeting on 20 July 2013 in Pretoria.² This meeting assessed the pre-election environment in Zimbabwe, noting the commitment from

¹ The Democracy and Electoral Assistance Unit (DEAU) of the AU, which is located within the Political Affairs Department, proposed that the continental body needed to institute a long-term observation mechanism for election, given the challenges of short term missions in Africa. In 2013, the concept of LTO will be employed in the Mali and Zimbabwe elections, and this is likely to set the precedence for other elections that follow across the continent.

² The meeting was attended by Namibia, Tanzania, and South Africa (who are members of the Organ Troika) and Mozambique (the Chair of the SADC Summit).

Zimbabwean parties to hold a credible election as well as the prevailing relatively peaceful environment. SADC also highlighted that it had sent in about 600 observers to Zimbabwe, its highest contingent in the history of the regional bloc. The challenges that faced the “special voting” were also noted and the political parties were encouraged to cooperate with Zimbabwe Election Commission (ZEC) to ensure such challenges do not emanate during the 31 July elections.

The AU and SADC meetings, coming at such a critical time, will provide the confidence and substantiation of the bodies’ oversight in the upcoming election. This will likely constrain any further efforts to restrain credibility of the polls through intransigence by political players and other stakeholders in the Zimbabwean political space. The bodies must however extend their expressed interest and roles to objective observation of the election process as well as establish a readiness to address any disputes that may arise during and after the elections.

1.3 Effects on democratisation

The SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections and the AU’s Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa provide the frameworks through which the two bodies can provide for a democratic election in Zimbabwe.

Although Zimbabwe’s preparation for elections has been fraught with;

1. defiance of the GPA by political parties,
2. allegations of rigging,
3. defiance of SADC recommendations,
4. lack of funding, and the
5. historical manifestation of an undemocratic culture in the country’s politics;

The AU and SADC can still invoke provisions of their electoral guides in order to salvage a democratic electoral process. For example, the SADC guidelines instruct that the observer mission has a mandate to ensure existence of “updated and accessible voters roll”.³ The Observer missions of the AU and SADC also have a mandate to consider the mechanics of voter registration in making their final call on the elections. Given that there is now limited time left before the elections are held, the AU and SADC will need to focus on the credibility of the eventual voters roll that will be used in the elections. The counter accusations of electoral process manipulation by the parties and the disorderly voter registration process have all tended to negatively affect public confidence in the eventual voters roll, the EMB and the election itself.

The democratic challenge of Zimbabwe’s historical elections has been that “the transparency of the electoral process was fatally flawed by the refusal of the Registrar-General’s office to make public, at any stage, a consolidated voters roll”.⁴ The voters roll remains the critical anchor for the credibility of the forthcoming election and AU and SADC observer missions must take interest in its availability to all stakeholders before the election. This is because transparency is the central tenet of democratisation.⁵

In addition, based on the principle of irreversibility, SADC and AU’s involvement would ensure that winners must be able to take state power and exercise their power in line with the constitutional term limits. To pass the democratic test an election must be decisive *ex ante* as well as irreversible *ex post*. SADC and AU’s involvement can enhance democratization by safeguarding against norm violations which can include stopping winners of the ballot from taking

³ Section 4.1.4 of “SADC principles and guidelines governing democratic elections”, SADC, 2004.

⁴ Lloyd Sachikonye, “Constitutionalism, the Electoral System and Challenges for Governance and Stability in Zimbabwe”, accessed on: mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/98099/.../Chapter8.pdf

⁵ John Gaventa and Rosemary McGee, “The Impact of Transparency and Accountability Initiatives”, Institute of Development Studies(IDS), University of Sussex; Palitha T.B. Kohona, “Strengthening the International Rule of Law: Contribution of the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs”, United Nations, 2004

state power, or allowing them to take power, then frustrate their operations through tutelage or masterminding a coup before their constitutional right is over.

1.4 Barometer Indicator Scorecard

Barometer Score Card Code: **Green** – High Score; **Orange** - Medium Score; **Red** – Low Score

EVALUATION COMPONENT	SCORECARD CODE	NOTES
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS		• AU and SADC have remained engaged and concerned about the Zimbabwe election and its implication for transition • SADC has dispatched its largest election observer mission in history • AU is pilot testing the Long-Term observer mission mechanism in Zimbabwe • The two bodies are still however faced by challenges in implementation of their own guidelines, recommendations and principles. • AU and SADC can still insist on immediate release of voters roll to all stakeholders, this will enhance transparency of the polls. • SADC and AU still to strengthen their role in ensuring peaceful transfer of state power

1.5 Likely scenario

The involvement and interest shown by AU and SADC will likely translate into them taking responsibility for the outcome of the election by ensuring a smooth political transition from the GPA arrangement to a new elected authority, and resolution of any major disputes arising from the election. Given the tension that characterises the political environment towards the elections, the contentions and counter accusations so far expressed in election related matters, and the low public confidence in electoral processes; a disputed election is likely.

The presence of AU and SADC will however assist in timely resolution of any such disputes. Unlike in 2008 where SADC and the AU had to intervene at a later stage, this time around both bodies are already “guarantors” of the elapsing GPA and such a role will ensure their availability to address challenges that arise during and after the elections. The presence of an intermediation role by the AU and SADC will likely lead to; timely address of disputes; restraint on flagrant defiance of democratic election tenets; and raising the confidence levels of the voters to freely express their vote. Should the election outcome lead to the need for a power transfer, the role of the AU and SADC will also be crucial.

1.6 Recommendations

- Civil society must continue to engage with AU and SADC and encourage them to focus on credibility of voters roll to be used in the elections
- AU and SADC must encourage ZEC and Registrar General to release final voters roll before voting day as this will boost public confidence and transparency of the electoral processes
- AU and SADC must also publish statements in the media encouraging political parties, the voters, and all stakeholders to conduct themselves accordingly. This will also help build public confidence in the electoral processes, knowing that the two bodies are actively involved and engaged.
- AU and SADC must ensure that winners must be able to take state power and exercise their power in line with the constitutional term limits so that the election is irreversible *ex post*.

2.0 Barometer Indicator 2: Absence of “overt” violence

2.1 Barometer Source

The Electoral Act outlines mechanisms of violence and intimidation prevention, inclusive of:

- I. Responsibilities of political parties and candidate;
- II. Appointment and functions of special police liaison officer;
- III. Appointment of special Investigation Committee;
- IV. Powers of Committee after investigation of alleged violence or intimidation;
- V. Investigations,
- VI. Prosecutions and trials of cases of politically-motivated violence or intimidation; and
- VII. Special penalty for politically motivated violence or intimidation.⁶

2.2 Key prevailing Issues

The violence of 2008 was mainly state-sponsored and the key institutions of police, army and central intelligence were actively involved. Setting up of “torture” bases was a central driver of violence and intimidation in communities especially in Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland West, Manicaland and Masvingo provinces. The electoral process has so far not exhibited high potential for violence and intimidation inflammation comparable to the levels of 2008. Sporadic incidences have been recorded in some parts of the country without a widespread presence as in 2008. The absence of overt violence has been credited to SADC’s insistence on a violence-free election. Political parties are also desperate for a SADC endorsed election outcome and have heeded the call for a peaceful process.

In the post 2008 election period, political violence and intimidation has largely been driven by youth militia groups that have emerged across the country.⁷ The activities of these militia groups have also been motivated more by extortion behaviour rather than overt political motivation. Since 2012, Mugabe and Tsvangirai have been consistently calling for peaceful elections and this seems to have found traction within their parties and supporters. As the election draws closer the choice for employment or restraint from violence will depend on:

- the perception of potential loss of a credible and peaceful election and associated risks;
- the assumed costs of engaging and driving the violence.

Impunity remains a possible driver of political violence and intimidation; however the watchful eye of the election observers, mainly from SADC and AU, creates limitations for escalation. Other regional and continental observer teams currently in Zimbabwe are also watchful of any incidences and cases involving intimidation and political violence.⁸

⁶ Section 133, Part XVIII B

⁷ ‘Chipangano’ is operating in Harare, ‘Top Six’ in Chinhoyi, ‘Jochomondo’ in Hurungwe, ‘Jambanja’ in Marambapfungwe, and ‘Alshabab’ in Kwekwe

⁸ Besides the SADC election observer mission (SEOM) and AU Long Term Observers (AU-LTO) mentioned earlier, there is also the SADC Parliamentary Forum observers (SADCPF), the Electoral Commissions Forum of Southern Africa observers (ECF), and the AU short term observer mission (AU-STO), and various observer missions from apex organisations of regional and continental non-state actors like SADC CNGO.

The political campaigns of the parties have been marred by hate speech and the state media also



continues to broadcast the same. Although there was an evident relationship between hate speech and inflammation of the political violence in 2008, the 2013 scenario has shown an indistinct relationship. This can be attributed to levels of political maturity among the Zimbabwean populace as well as the realisation by many of the dehumanising effects of the 2008 circumstances. Civil society has also had an increased presence in all violence and intimidation prone areas and has adopted technology platforms and social media to monitor such activities. This has provided information in real time leading to further restraint on violence and intimidation.



2.3 Effects on democratisation

Political violence and intimidation, as has been argued before in previous Barometer reports, denies the citizenry of their democratic right to freely participate in political processes, including elections. Once the citizens have formed their preferences and attained their right to participate in the election they must be able to express their choice freely. The use of the secret ballot is meant to insulate people from outside pressure, undue influence, intimidation, threats, coercion, bribery or even verbal disapprovals of their choice. Trends such as voter intimidation or harvest of fear violate this principle of insulation.⁹ Political parties, especially in the Zimbabwean experience, are both seen as agents for advancing democratisation as well as agents for fuelling political violence.¹⁰ This contradictory narrative has been at play in Zimbabwean politics in the post-independence period. It has led to the progressive alienation of democratisation by engagement and dispensation of violence and intimidation. The low levels of political violence being experienced therefore create opportunities for democratisation recovery in the forthcoming elections. The semblance of a peaceful environment is likely to encourage many voters to turnout at polling stations on 31 July, across the country, in both rural and urban areas.

During the Constitutional referendum in May 2013, an ascribable trend was observed. Most voters turned out at the polling centres in the afternoon and early evenings, compared to the mornings. This is what led to the late closure of some of the centres. This trend was precipitated by the violence and intimidation factor. Many voters waited for reports from those who went to the polling stations in order to ascertain the absence of intimidation and violence. Once they were able to do that, it motivated them to turn out in larger numbers in the afternoon and early evening. This trend reflects just how much violence and intimidation can unlock or arrest the value of election participation. Although there are low levels of violence currently being experienced across the country, there is a need for observers, civil society, political parties, and other stakeholders to ensure that the increased stakes, as the election nears, do not correspondingly escalate the violence and intimidation factor. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission must fully

⁹ *Countering electoral manipulation: strengthening Zimbabwe's chain of democratic choice*, Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition, 2013

¹⁰ Nawreen Sattar, "The Nexus of Democratization and Political Violence: Explaining Political Party Violence", 2008

dispense its mandate as accorded by the Electoral Act in establishing Special Investigations Committees, which must be empowered to discharge their mandate without bias, prejudice and political interference.

2.4 Barometer Indicator Scorecard

Barometer Score Card Code: **Green** - High Score; **Orange** - Medium Score; **Red** – Low Score

EVALUTATION COMPONENT	SCORECARD CODE	NOTES
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS		- Although there are sporadic incidences of political violence, the levels are not expected to reach those of 2008 - The Electoral Act provides for mechanisms to investigate and restrain political violence and intimidation - Mugabe and Tsvangirai have taken the lead in consistently calling for peaceful elections - Election observers, especially from SADC and AU, are vigilant on issues of and related to political violence and intimidation. - Utilisation of technology platforms and social media has assisted civil society to monitor acts of violence and intimidation across the country. This has aided restraint.

2.4 Likely scenario

Violence and intimidation will remain minimal given the recent calls by SADC¹¹ and AU¹². Although the 2008 political violence has been somewhat diffused in the last five years, the institutions,¹³ mechanics¹⁴ and drivers¹⁵ of violence remain in place. This increases the risk of escalation should there be a lapse in the current measures to arrest violence and intimidation. The threat of violence will remain high but managed towards the election. Political parties will attempt to ensure they are not seen as the perpetrators of violence, so as to avoid possible reprimand action from observer missions, which may delegitimise an election in which they emerge as winners.

¹¹ Summit of the Troika of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, held on 20 July 2013, Pretoria

¹² The 385th AU Peace and Security Council meeting held in Addis Ababa on 19 July 2013

¹³ The violence of 2008 was mainly state-sponsored and the key institutions of police, army and central intelligence have not been fully aligned to Constitutional provisions and the rule of law. Police and military leaders have not yet heeded the call by SADC to publicly retract partisan statements they have previously made. Mugabe has not complied with the SADC call requiring him to draw the attention of the security forces to provisions of Section 208 of the new Constitution, which must govern their behaviour and conduct in a non-partisan manner. Crisis Group interview, political researcher, Harare, 19 June 2013.

¹⁴ The setting up of “torture” bases, which were at the heart of driving violence and intimidation in communities in 2008, has not been discouraged. There are some “torture” bases that are reported to have been set up from 2012 in Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland West, Manicaland and Masvingo. Recent ZANU-PF “door-to-door” campaigns are alleged to have been directed from these bases. Crisis Group interview, political researcher, Harare, 19 June 2013; Christopher Mahove, “Torture bases resurface”, Zimbabwean, 13 September 2012.

¹⁵ Some known political violence perpetrators from 2008 have not faced justice to-date. The country’s history of impunity has been identified as breeding the evolving culture of violence. Crisis Group interview, national Church leader, Harare, 19 June 2013

Voter turnout is likely to be high, urged by the prevalence of limited violence and intimidation. There must be greater efforts to ensure that the current levels of freedom of public expression and assembly, as shown by high attendances at political rallies of both ZANU-PF and MDC-T parties, is maintained as this can translate to high turnout of voters on 31 July.



2.6 Recommendations

- Political party leaders must continue to call for peaceful elections and hate language must be discouraged
- The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission must immediately be seized with establishing the Special Investigations Committees and these must be fully mandated as indicated by the Electoral Act
- Civil society must continue to monitor the political landscape with special focus on intimidation and violence and exploit all available technology platform and social media. Civil society must feed its findings to observer missions, diplomatic community, as well as the public
- SADC and AU must continue to call for peaceful elections as this oversight pressure is able to contain the behaviour of politicians and their supporters. The bodies must also continue to tie the legitimacy of the elections to the violence and intimidation indicators – this has so far been an effective restraint.

3.0 Barometer Indicator 3: Zimbabwe Electoral Commission “On or Off-guard for the Elections”

3.1 Barometer Source

The Electoral Act of 2012 enhances the transparency and credibility of the electoral process in Zimbabwe. Its provisions further mandate the Zimbabwe Election Commission (ZEC) to ensure this transparency and credibility.¹⁶ The operational efficiency, capacity and credibility of ZEC is therefore significant in upholding the specified constitutional provision.

3.2 Key prevailing Issues

The first stage of voter registration which commenced on 29 April was disorderly and ZEC blamed it on funding delays. A fresh 30 day mobile voter registration process was ordered as from 10 June 2013 until 10 July. ZEC, mandated to supervise the registration process, blamed the Registrar General’s office (RG) responsible for logistics and the actual activity of registration. This exposed the lack of coordination between the two institutions,¹⁷ and the RG’s office was alleged to be reluctant to take instructions from ZEC.¹⁸ Although the second phase experienced some improvements,¹⁹ it still faced challenges that have potential to affect the quality of final voter’s roll.²⁰ ZEC admitted that the second stage had also faced process challenges.²¹

The special voting process which was held on 14th and 15th July was marred by logistical challenges leading to other polling stations failing to receive ballot material, while those that did could not process all available voters. On 15th July, ZEC issued a public apology for the chaotic “special voting” which resulted in failure by many in the uniformed forces to cast their vote. The electoral body blamed the challenges on the late printing of ballot papers for “special voting”. The ZEC chairperson indicated that, printing of final ballots could not have been done until legal issues involving the legitimacy of certain candidates had been concluded. ZEC also highlighted the late disbursement of funding as a major contributor to the chaos that prevailed. The ZEC chairperson promised to ensure that all those who failed to cast their vote would be allowed to do so on 31 July. However others argue that this is complicated as many of the uniformed forces will be on duty outside of their ward areas during the 31 July election.²² When disagreements arose on the exact number of those legally mandated to cast their votes in the “special voting”,²³ ZEC requested verification, especially from the Zimbabwe Republic Police.²⁴

¹⁶ Section 156 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe

¹⁷ Before the amendments to Electoral Act in 2012, the Registrar General’s office had the overall custodianship of the voter’s roll as well as the voter registration process. Since the Registrar General maintains all national citizens’ records, the role is now limited to voter registration and compilation of voters’ roll under supervision of ZEC.

¹⁸ “Zec to deal with security sector” Daily news live (www.dailynews.co.zw), 13 June 2013.

¹⁹ There was advance publication of registration centres as well as publicity campaigns to inform and encourage eligible citizens to register. ZEC trained and dispatched 4000 voter educators into all the wards. “Zec deploys voter educators”, Herald, 5 June 2013; Crisis Group interview, Elections expert, Harare, 18 June 2013

²⁰ The registration centres set up by the Registrar General’s office were less than the list earlier published by ZEC. Registrar General alleged that the funding that had been pledged for this voter registration phase had not all been disbursed leading to the failure to set up all intended centres. Minister of Finance and Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs announced the release of \$25million for second phase of voter registration, ZEC confirmed receipt of \$20million. There has been no clarity of the actual amounts as well as their comprehensive application. Registration centres still had irregular opening times and their distribution did not relate to national statistics in terms of population distribution but though to favour ZANU-PF strongholds, while some were located near political party office and Security sector institutions. Civil society organisations and MDC parties consider this to be intimidating to some voters, especially given the history of intimidation and political violence, allegedly blamed on security sector and ZANU-PF. Allegations of political party activities near registration centres and coercion of potential registrants also surfaced. “Voter Registration Improves But...”, Crisis In Zimbabwe Coalition (www.crisisinzimbabwe.org), 11 June 2013; “Zec gets US\$20m for voter registration”, bepa news (www.bepa.co.zw), 4 June 2013;

²¹ Ray Ndlovu, “Zimbabwe voter registration process flawed”, Mail and Guardian, 17 May 2013.

²² Chairperson of ZESN, Rev. Dr. Zwana, on Television interview, 19 July 2013.

²³ Tendai Biti - minister of finance; and Theresa Makone - co-minister of home affairs disputed the 80,000 total tally of “special voters” that had been presented by the Zimbabwe Republic Police.

²⁴ ZEC chairperson, Rita Makarau quoted in Thomas Chiripasi, “ZEC Probes Huge Armed Forces Special Vote Applications”, Voice of America (www.voazimbabwe.com), 10 July 2013



ZEC Chair - Good Guy?



ZEC Deputy Chair:-Bad Guy??

ZEC seems to exhibit a “double nature” exposition. While there are visible efforts by the Chairperson to ensure transparency and credibility of the elections, there are some other quarters within and outside, pulling otherwise. The lack of coordination between ZEC and the RG and the exhibited reluctance by some members of the ZEC secretariat to openly engage with civil society and provide transparent information, confirms this ambiguity.

3.3 Effects on democratisation

The new strategic approach in fighting electoral fraud begins with the Elections Management Body (EMB), taking decisive action to utilise its mandate to do that.²⁵ For effectiveness, prevention of electoral fraud must not be imposed on the EMB, but it must take root as the EMB’s priority task.²⁶ Rather than political parties, EMBs are considered the main players in the prevention of electoral fraud. In systems that aim for minimalist approach, EMBs focus only on outcome determinative fraud; this is fraud considered to have a material effect on outcome of elections.²⁷ However the optimum is for EMBs to focus even on non-outcome determinative fraud, even if it does not have that much significance in the outcome of the polls. EMBs are therefore driven more by a value system than by influence of the political environment and terrain.²⁸ This value system, if sustained breeds a culture of transparency, credibility and reliability, which is the epitome of independence of EMBs.

While there is a general notion of disappointment with the current status of ZEC in preparing for the pending elections, there are some positive aspects to salvage. The critical role being played by the Chairperson of the Commission is exemplary in attempting to ensure the body is credible and influences a credible electoral process. It is regrettable that there are forces of retrogression that seem not to be supporting her role and efforts, both within ZEC and on the broader outside electoral landscape. The efforts by the Chairperson are a good foundation to build an EMB that is distasteful to fraudulent and low quality elections. The value system that the Chairperson has attempted to support within ZEC must be commended and complimented. She has engaged broadly with the media and civil society, as well as being open enough to admit the limitations of the electoral system in the “special voting” process. Although there is a sense of the Chair “fighting a lone battle”, her professionalism provides opportunities for ZEC to positively contribute to the democratisation process in Zimbabwe.

In the past, ZEC has been considered to be a politically sensitive institution, which has also been closed to the “outside” world. The new Chairperson has managed to open it up and create channels of interaction with the “outside”. Should civil society, political parties, observer missions, and other progressive forces support the ZEC chairperson’s efforts, this may have significant democratisation outputs even in the forthcoming elections. Her professionalism and eagerness to address the historical tainting that ZEC has had in the past, is a platform upon which

²⁵ Staffan Darnolf, “Assessing Electoral Fraud in New Democracies: A New Strategic Approach”, *International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)*, 2011

²⁶ *Ibid*

²⁷ Rafael Lopez-Pintor, “Assessing Electoral Fraud in New Democracies: A Basic Conceptual Framework. Electoral Fraud White Paper Series”, *International Foundation for Electoral Systems*. Washington D.C., 2010, page 7.

²⁸ Sarah Birch, “Electoral Management Bodies and the Electoral Integrity: Evidence from Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union”, *University of Essex*, Working paper No. 2

a democratic election can be built. In that regard, she must be encouraged to ensure that the voting process, outcome and results are strictly reflective of the will of the Zimbabweans. This is important in upholding the integrity of the vote.

In a democracy, once citizens have voted their votes must be counted honestly and be weighed equally to uphold the principle of one person one vote, (very central during Zimbabwe's liberation struggle). The professionalism, independence and competence of ZEC and related election management institutions should be at the center of this. This is meant to avoid the rigging of votes during counting characterized by inflation and deflation of votes and institutional bias in the management of the elections.²⁹

3.4 Barometer Indicator Scorecard

Barometer Score Card Code: **Green** - High Score; **Orange** - Medium Score; **Red** – Low Score

EVALUTATION COMPONENT	SCORECARD CODE	NOTES
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS		- Special voting process was marred by poor logistical arrangement as well as poor and late funding - The new Chairperson of ZEC has shown a high level of professionalism in her conduct and efforts to engage and open up the operations of ZEC to the "outside" world. - There are other electoral bodies and persons within ZEC who exhibit resistance to the ZEC chairperson's insistence on openness, transparency and engagement with "outsiders".

3.5 Likely scenario

The negative forces weighing down on ZEC's professionalism will likely escalate towards the elections. ZEC will likely split into two camps – the proponents for a credible electoral process and those eager to push through their partisan interests in the institution. These splits will either lead to a total loss of credibility in ZEC; which will discredit the polls; or will amplify the push for enhanced credibility of the institution; salvaging the integrity of the polls. Should adequate support be given to the ZEC chairperson's efforts, by civil society, observer missions, and political parties; this will lead to the greater projection of the institution's constitutional mandate during the elections. However should that support be absent, it merely serves the retrogressive forces, within and outside of ZEC. The Electoral Act's strengths in enhancing transparency of the elections will also likely support the current efforts by the ZEC chairperson in discharging her duties and mandate. **This coming election presents the opportunity for ZEC to correct its historically tarnished image.**

3.6 Recommendations

- Civil society organisations must implement alternative vote count systems, as this will help complement ZEC and provide a benchmark of the credibility of its management of the electoral process.

²⁹ Countering electoral manipulation: strengthening Zimbabwe's chain of democratic choice

- Civil society and observer missions must utilise the open channel of communication that the new ZEC chairperson has created to collaborate and support the work of ZEC in enhancing the transparency of the elections.
- ZEC must immediately take full charge of every part of the election process and ensure where necessary, that its supervisory role is not compromised or prejudiced.
- ZEC is encouraged to continue to communicate openly and invite media and civil society to interact with it even on sensitive issues as vote counting and tabulation, this helps create and sustain its value system as well as in-build a positive culture of transparent election management in the country.
- ZEC must also continue to engage with the media and civil society as a way of building public confidence in its ability to handle a credible election. Should public confidence in ZEC increase, this will give the voters the confidence that their vote will count and will therefore motivate them to turn out at the polls in huge numbers.
- ZEC must also critically look at the issues and anomalies raised by civil society, as the period before elections must be utilised to address these and take corrective action where necessary.

4.0. Barometer Indicator 4: Amendments to the Electoral Act and democratisation

4.1 Barometer Source

The constitution provides for an Electoral ACT to govern the election. Zimbabwe now has an amended electoral act that provide for:

- i. the terms of office, conditions of service, qualifications and vacation of office of members of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission,
- ii. the procedure at meetings of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission and the appointment of the Chief Elections Officer;
- iii. to provide for the Registrar- General of Voters and constituency registrars;
- iv. to make provision for the registration of voters and form the lodging of objections thereto;
- v. to provide for the preparation, compilation and maintenance of voters rolls;
- vi. to prescribe the residence qualifications of voters and the procedure for the nomination and election of candidates to and the filling in of vacancies in Parliament;
- vii. to provide for elections to the office of the President;
- viii. to provide for local authority elections;
- ix. to provide for offences and penalties, and for the prevention of electoral malpractices in connection with elections;
- x. to establish the Electoral Court and provide for its functions;
- xi. to make provision for the hearing and determination of election petitions; and
- xii. to provide for matters connected with or incidental to the foregoing.

4.2. Prevailing issues

In June, the Zimbabwe Cabinet agreed to amendments to the electoral act after protracted negotiations. This progressive step was undermined by President Mugabe's unilateral move to use the Presidential Powers Temporary Measures Act to gazette the amended act through statutory instrument 85 of 2013. As a result debate has been around the pros and cons of such unilateralism and its effect on democratisation. Little has been done to interrogate the substance of the amendments and how they can leverage a democratic transition if followed consistently. There were key amendments that will aid the *democraticness* of the next election and its potential to ensure power alternation and opposition representation. The following are the progressive changes:

- 1) A person who registered 12 days after the nomination day on 28 June 2013 or transferred his or her vote is eligible to vote on the 31st of July. This reduced the number of people who could have been disenfranchised after sitting of the nomination court as per the old electoral act.³⁰
- 2) If the name of any voter does not appear on the ward voters roll, he or she shall be entitled to vote upon production to the presiding officer of- a voters registration certificate issued to him or her and proof of identity.³¹
- 3) A political party may appoint one person for each ward in which it is fielding candidates to appoint a roving election agent who shall have the authority to enter and move through a polling station to observe the conduct of the election within that polling station, and to confer with any chief election agent or election agent of his or her political party who is present within that polling station. A roving election agent shall have the powers equivalent to that of a chief election agent.³²

³⁰ Section 26 A of the Electoral Act of Cap.2:13

³¹ Amendment of section 56 of Cap.2:13

³² Section 93A of the Electoral Act

- 4) The Act now provides for three election agents to be present within or in the immediate vicinity of each polling station of whom one shall be inside the polling station and the other two can relieve the other election agent entitled to be inside the polling station.³³
- 5) Voters are no longer required to hold up their ballot paper so that the presiding officer can recognise the official mark.³⁴



- 6) In addition to displaying polling station returns so that all members of the public can see a candidate or election agent or observer can request a copy of a completed ward return, or constituency return and be given one. Election agents are also allowed to take notes.³⁵
- 7) Duplicate copies of the polling returns shall also be transmitted to the constituency, provincial and national command centre³⁶
- 8) Candidates can request for a recount of the votes within 48 hours³⁷

4.3 Effects on democratisation

The choice of electoral rules is one of the most important institutional decisions for any democracy.³⁸ Electoral laws define and structure the rules of the elections; they help determine how an election is to be conducted, and may have an impact on who is elected. The legislation allows votes to be counted at each polling station that is at each voting station. This aids transparency of the count because votes do not need to be moved from point A to point B. This necessitates safety precautions to overcome ballot stuffing possibility, security and public trust considerations mentioned above.

The presence of election agents at all times inside the polling station safeguards against ballot stuffing and manipulation of numbers during the counting process. In addition, the provision of copies of polling returns to agents makes it difficult to pad the numbers. The presence of election agents enhances the democratic conduct of elections as they are there to ensure that the electoral processes at the polling station concerned are conducted in accordance with the law and the constitution.

³³ Amendment of section 95 of the Electoral Act

³⁴ Amendment of section 57 of Cap.2:13

³⁵ Section 65 of the Electoral Act

³⁶ Amendment of section 37 c

³⁷ Section 67 Electoral Act

³⁸ See IDEA 1997, 2012 <http://www.idea.int/esd/>

Zimbabwe's past elections have failed to pass the democratic test due to the inflation and deflation of votes in ways that favour the incumbent. Counting the votes at the station, presence of election agents, display of results to the public and transmission of polling returns to the constituency, provincial and national command centre shall minimise chances of electoral manipulation through ballot stuffing.

The Zimbabwe election has also been undermined by questions around its secrecy. The secrecy of the vote is an integral aspect of the democratic conduct of elections. The fear has resulted in some voters being forced to vote for a candidate who is not of their choice. The amendment of section 57 deals with the aspect of the margin of terror as it enhances the secrecy of the vote.

Whereas the unilateral manner in which the amendments to the Act were gazetted fell short of the democratic ideal the contents and substance enhances the democratic conduct of the election and presents the opposition with a chance to unseat the incumbent and allow possibilities for power alternation rather than just have elections as a ritual.

4.4 Barometer Indicator Scorecard

Barometer Score Card Code: Green - High Score; Orange - Medium Score; Red – Low Score

EVALUATION COMPONENT	SCORECARD CODE	NOTES
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS		• People registered after closure of nomination court allowed to vote • Election agents to be present in polling stations at all times • Voters with registration slips allowed to vote • Voters no longer allowed to show their ballot to presiding officers • Results to be displayed for the public to see • Observers, agents and candidates can get copies of polling returns • Votes to be counted at the voting station • Election results to be announced within 5 days

4.5 Likely scenario

The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission will in general ensure that elections are conducted according to the amended electoral act. Voters with their identity cards and voter registration slips will be allowed to vote, election agents will be allowed to carry out their duties professionally, voters will not be allowed to show their ballot papers to presiding officers, votes will be counted at the centre; results will be displayed outside the polling stations.

However, in terms of implementation of the law some presiding officers might apply the law in a discriminatory manner in some areas that have a history of intimidation. Due to the fact that some voters are not privy to the amendment of section 57, they might, as per tradition, hold up their ballot papers for the presiding officer to see the mark. It is also possible that political parties might fail to field election agents in all the polling stations due to logistical challenges or as a result of intimidation by competitors. Such areas include rural areas in Mashonaland provinces, rural Midlands and parts of Masvingo such as Mwenenzi and Chiredzi north. In order to avoid a repeat of the March 2008 fiasco, ZEC is most likely to do everything possible to ensure that the results are released on time.

4.6 Recommendations

- Political parties must utilise provisions provided for in the law by ensuring that in each and every ward there is a roving election agent and that there are three election agents at each and every polling station
- Civil society must ensure visibility of observers in electoral hotspots such as the Mashonaland provinces, rural Midlands and parts of Masvingo such as Mwenenzi and Chiredzi north
- SADC observers must ensure visibility in electoral hotspots such as Mashonaland provinces, rural Midlands and parts of Masvingo rural in order to ensure that election agents from the opposition are not intimidated out of polling stations or away from immediate vicinity of the polling station
- ZEC, civil society and political parties must place an advert on radio especially radio Zimbabwe that reaches out to the vast of the rural population at least two days before the polling that explains to voters that they are no longer required to hold up their ballot papers to the presiding officer
- ZEC must insist on the professionalization of presiding officers and other election officers for credibility of the poll

5.0 Conclusion

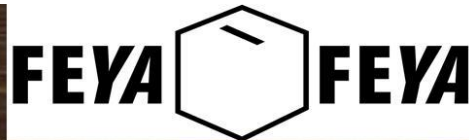
In conclusion, we restate our bold claim that the general election on 31 July is more than a participatory ritual meant to retain President Mugabe in power as has been the case in the previous elections. This is not meant to deny that our five links to Zimbabwe's chain of democratic have been violated in various ways. However, opposition political parties, in particular, the MDC, led by Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, still has a better chance than ever to supplant the incumbent and increase its representation in parliament and in council. Even though the environment does not match the democratic ideal, the fact that Zimbabwe is holding its 7th election since the 1980 general election, means that the democratic conduct of election is geared to improve. This is premised on our theoretical proposition that every election advances democratic quality premised on Lindberg's electoral path to democratisation thesis. As van de Walle (2013:232) argues, a number of electoral cycles are needed to 'master the technology of campaigning, voter registration and mobilisation, and electoral monitoring'.

However, our view is also substantiated beyond theoretical propositions as developments in the run up to the elections point to a competitive election. As argued above, ZEC has been under scrutiny and is under pressure to deliver a credible election especially after the chaotic special vote. Amendments to the Electoral Act serve to enhance the democratic conduct of the elections. Even though SADC and the AU need to do more, the fact that they have kept engaged on Zimbabwe work to increase the cost of authoritarian practices. In addition, the absence of overt violence instils confidence in some voters to exercise their right and may boost voter turn-out as happened on March 29 2008 election. These developments in the past month, a result of interventions made by the independent media, civil society, political parties, SADC and AU in the run up to the 31 July election will show that we are at a juncture where the election is anybody's to win, including the opposition.

We want to take this opportunity to wish Zimbabweans a Feya Feya election and to urge all those who are registered to turn out at the polls. The democratic transition of Zimbabwe relies hugely on this participation. Concrete has been poured over Zimbabwe's electoral terrain, but we retain a hope that flowers can still grow out of the cracks that have emerged as articulated in this report.



Our next edition will analyse the outcome of Zimbabwe's transition in August.



FEYA FEYA 11-PRINCIPLES WE ABIDE BY

1. That all members of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) don't show favoritism whenever they are carrying out any of their duties.
2. That the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission and the government allow all political parties and all citizens to have a fair and equal chance to be covered in the public media; meanwhile they must protect journalists so they can work freely and without fear as stated in Section 61 of our Constitution.
3. That the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission uses all its powers and authority to permit every observer, whether local or regional or international, to operate freely and without fear of being excluded, threatened or arrested.
4. That the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission always transmits and tallies the votes in any election in a transparent and timely fashion and make certain that they announce election results within 5 days of the polls as required in the amended Electoral Act and in our Constitution, within 5 days of the polls.
5. That everyone is free to decide whom they prefer to vote for without fear of being harmed or threatened and the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission must protect the voter by ensuring that they can vote in secrecy.
6. That the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission acts with honesty and integrity in counting every vote to ensure that everyone's vote counts so that the outcome is a fair one reflecting the true wishes of the people and that the results can be irreversible.
7. That members of the police, army and other security services don't show favoritism whenever they are carrying out any of their duties so that no one feels afraid of fully participating in elections especially women, youths, people living with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
8. That The Police and prosecuting authorities allow civil society organizations and citizens groups to do their lawful work without any hindrance or harassment and that the police do not allow themselves to be manipulated into arresting innocent people to serve political interests.
9. That Electoral Stakeholders such as Political Parties, ZEC, Government Institutions, the Media and the Judiciary, use their words and deeds to create a conducive environment for the holding of free and fair elections, to live up to the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections.
10. That all contesting political parties and stakeholders in the elections should make sure that all eligible and willing citizens of the Republic of Zimbabwe, are allowed the opportunity to enjoy full and equal participation in the elections without being restricted or denied.
11. That international actors and solidarity partners do not encourage our country to make compromises that promote a lower standard which is outside the agreements of our regional blocs as expressed through the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections and The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.



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