

# ZIMBABWE BRIEFING

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## Patronage and Military entrenchment in the national economy



**THE PRESIDENT'S MEN:** Zimbabwe's Service Chiefs are suspected to have played a key role during the election.-zimbabweinpictures.com

*This week, we continue with publishing edited excerpts from a report published by the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition titled *The Military Factor in Zimbabwe's Political and Electoral Affairs*. Below is Chapter 5 of the report which looks at how service chiefs are being handsomely rewarded for their role in maintaining the status quo.*

Through an elaborate patronage system established to reward partisan senior military officials and keep them loyal to ZANU-PF and to President Mugabe, the military has increasingly played central and critical role in directing production

and controlling ownership of the means of production. The military, through political patronage, has become a significant part of the domestic bourgeoisie class and many top commanders have teamed up with politicians and businessmen to form political and economic interest groups venturing into lucrative businesses such

as platinum and gold mining. This section examines the extent to which ZANU-PF's political patronage has entrenched the military in national economic affairs and the likely impact on electoral processes.

Retired and serving senior military officers have, in the recent past, been ap

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## The Bottom Line is Economic Empowerment

*"I believe that if we solve the economic problems then other things will fall into place. It is like this: if you are a healthy person you can do everything, but if you are sick you can't do anything."*

As a founding director and current secretary of the Zimbabwe Diaspora Development Chamber, I am based in South Africa and my goal is to economically empower the Zimbabwean diaspora. If members of the diaspora are empowered economically they can make a meaningful impact back home, where people are suffering everyday from poverty and government oppression. The current situation of Zimbabweans in South Africa is a catch 22. Initially we were not recognized as refugees unless we could prove that we were beaten and our life was threatened in Zimbabwe. We lobbied the South African government to insist that sometimes people are secondary or tertiary victims to the violence that happens in Zimbabwe. We succeeded in that.

Now the issue is that Zimbabweans come to South Africa looking for work because there is 94% unemployment in our country and, as of 2009, the Zimbabwean currency was suspended. Yet when people arrive in South African officials say, "We cannot give you refugee status. You must have a work permit." The irony of it is that the Zimbabwean government doesn't have the capacity to issue its citizens with passports and you need a passport to get a work permit. People come illegally into South Africa only because they have no other option—it is not that they want to stay in the country undocumented. The South African government recently declared a moratorium stating that by December 31, 2010 all Zimbabweans in South Africa must have work permits. Yet the Zimbabwean government is still not issuing passports. The same problem—lack of documentation—that led people to apply for asylum in the first place still exists so what are people to do? The only solution I

see is for the South African government to give the Zimbabwean government money to process passports.

The solution is not for people to be forced back to Zimbabwe. Even if the political situation is to normalize the economic situation has a long way to go. I, and others like me, will serve no purpose if we go back to Zimbabwe. And if I go back, my seven years of activism in South Africa will be wasted. I am better positioned to do something for my country from the outside.

Currently people in the diaspora send money to their relatives in Zimbabwe informally. I worked for 4 years in foreign exchange at Barclays bank and I understand that this will not strengthen an economy like the one we have in Zimbabwe. But if an individual owns a business outside and then opens a branch in Zimbabwe that would help the economy. People can get employment from that kind of investment. And in this way, the diaspora can have a very powerful impact. Through the Zimbabwe Diaspora Development

Chamber we tell people, "You can be the employer rather than always having to shout about the unemployment rates. You can help our citizens."

If we empower the citizens, they won't be bulldozed by the systems. For example, right now in Zimbabwe if you don't have a party card and there is a drought you don't get food aid. In that way, people are bulldozed by the system. However, if people had their own access to food they wouldn't need the government rations. It is for this reason that I believe empowering citizens is important.

In 2003, I read the book *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* by Robert Kiyosaki and it inspired a paradigm shift in me. I took a lot of life lessons from that book. One specific lesson was: work for free and money will come. That is my life philosophy now.

In Africa the first and foremost issue is a bread and butter issue. People are poor. You can't put democracy on a plate and eat it. In the United States you don't kill each other when you

are campaigning for elections. In Zimbabwe people are dying. Even right now, people are dying as they mobilize for a new constitution. People need to be in our shoes and see it from our perspective to know what solutions will work. The bottom line needs to be about the citizens.

I believe that if we solve the economic problems then other things will fall into place. It is like this: if you are a healthy person you can do everything, but if you are sick you can't do anything. If African citizens are economically empowered then democracy will come.

*By Nora Chengeto Tapiwa a former 2010 Women PeaceMaker at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice. This article was first published in October 2010 and appeared at: <http://www.peacexpeace.org/2010/10/the-bottom-line-is-economic-empowerment/>. It is re-published here with the author's permission.*

# Propaganda Undermining Democracy & Development

## Coordinator's Note



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Propaganda is loosely defined as information of a misleading nature used to promote a political cause. A casual observation of the kind of political information disseminated in Zimbabwe today reveals propaganda in its extremities, which, I submit, is dangerously undermining democracy and development and holds the country captive to extreme polarization and feeds the monster of political violence. Proganda is a toxin that poisons our democracy, political, community and family relations. It is closely related to the practice of populist politics, where political actors purport to represent the interests and views of ordinary people when in fact there are only serving their own parochial interests.

Populist propaganda that we are fed daily via blatantly partisan mouthpieces of ZANU-PF that are state controlled papers, television and radio, is that Zimbabwe is faced with some imaginary, phantom enemies who are lurking behind tenets of democracy, good governance, transparency, accountability and human rights respect. According to the propagandists, to respect everyone's basic rights would be tantamount to opening the doors for the enemy to take over the country. The nonsense spewed out by the propagandists does not stop there, they go on convince themselves, and others, that in order to defend the country from these imaginary enemies, it is necessary to cook up all manner of repressive laws, and commit all sorts of evil in the name of the people.

As a result, ordinary people have been subjected to the worst kinds of brutality, cruelty, inhuman or degrading treatment at the hands of members of their own government who have deluded themselves to think that such diabolic actions are in the interests of the country. Perpetrators of the widespread, horrific political violence of 2008, often claimed that they wanted to defend the country from democracy, to prevent the people of Zimbabwe from expressing their free will by voting for Morgan Tsvangirai and the MDC as they viewed this to be an act of 'selling-out the country' to the imperialist west.

The most shocking aspect of this whole propaganda, populism affair is that no-one really believes in the hocus pocus nonsense. The bottom line is that propaganda and populism are convenient instruments to pave way for repression and violence that enables a small, unpopular political clique to remain in power in defiance of democratic values. The purveyors propaganda themselves are desperate to be accommodated by the very west that they demonize on a daily basis. Many of them have received western education, and those who have been slapped with travel restrictions long to resume their shopping sprees in London, Paris or New York; their children are abroad, receiving western education while their condemn the children of ordinary Zimbabweans to substandard education. Despite attacking the United Kingdom on a daily basis,

a Zimbabwe diplomatic remains posted in London, another in the United States and in various other western countries.

It is high time the people of Zimbabwe reject propaganda and refuse to be used as cannon fodder in a political game that has only a few enriching themselves while the vast majority continues to wallow in extreme poverty. All manner of self-serving policies designed to loot and plunder the national wealth are coined in beautiful language that gives the impression that it is about empowering ordinary people when in fact it is all about the economic enrichment for a few. This is the same story with the loot and plunder of the Marange diamonds, which has left the Chiadzwa and Marange communities impoverished and traumatized by state-sponsored violence while a few people benefit from the national resource. Those with strong connections to the political elite are milking the country dry in the name of sovereignty over our national resources. And, as finance minister Tendai Biti will testify, there is no accountability for diamond revenue. A small but powerful political elite aligned to ZANU-PF has the audacity to loot the country in the name of the people.

This phenomenon, of a small, parasitic political elite that milks the country dry and benefits from the sweat of the masses is best illustrated by the behavior of the wasps that hover above a beehive in order to kill the bees that bring nectar to the hive and then drink the nectar

themselves. The wasps do not bother to go out into the wild to gather nectar; they simply wait by the beehive to kill hardworking bees for their nectar. We have such wasps in our politics, who cannot work for themselves, but wait for hardworking, ordinary Zimbabweans to literally kill them and take over property and wealth they have worked for all their lives. We have experienced this with the farm invasions. I am told some of the invaders would actually wait for harvest time in order to take over ripe fields ready for harvesting! If no drastic measures are taken soon, we shall witness the same things happening to companies under the dubious – waspy – indigenization regulations that are being advanced by ZANU-PF official and cabinet minister Saviour Kasukuwere.

The Inclusive Government, particularly the pro-democracy forces within the MDC formations, must move swiftly to smash propaganda and populist politics in order to create a fresh environment where there is no polarization, hate speech or outright lies about our challenges and the causes thereof. Dangerous propaganda, such as that coming from sections of the military that Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai and the MDC are a national security threat must be dismissed with the contempt they deserve. State-controlled media, such as the Herald, the Sunday Mail ZBC TV and radio must be reformed to become genuine independent public media which is non-partisan that is not

used as a propaganda and populism mouthpiece. No-one should fear democracy or see ghosts and shadows where non exist – or exhibit a phobia for free political activity and association.

Unless there is an acknowledgment that all citizens have a fundamental right to fully participate in their government, which includes making a choice as to who should, or should not govern them, we cannot begin chat a new political direction for our country. We must move away from the outright lies and propaganda that we are fighting enemies in our midst to embrace the reality that we are all Zimbabweans with common aspirations for ourselves and our children and that we should simply give democracy a chance. Change is part of life; it is inevitable, and therefore to resist change is to fight in vain.

Democratic pursuit of change of government, or regime change if you like, is a basic right that must be enjoyed by all citizens. Only those caught up in a time warp – believing Zimbabwe to be still experimenting with the failed and discredited idea of a one-party state – would frown upon free political activity. No society has ever reached its innovation or development potential under an environment of fear and repression. Now is the time to take Zimbabwe in a new political direction, away for extreme polarization, violence, fear and intolerance.

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## Cynthia Manjoro deserves to be free!

Clad in a white and red striped jersey with an apparent tear on the left shoulder, a green prison garb, stompies and long socks (supposedly to shield herself from the cold weather), Cynthia Manjoro looked somewhat fine on the outside. However, a closer look at her face revealed a tired gaze that would tell a hundred and one tales about her ordeal behind bars. All this I witnessed during a recent visit to Chikurubi prison to see Cynthia Manjoro who has been languishing behind bars for about five weeks now.

This past week has been overwhelming with thoughts on how to get Cynthia Manjoro freed. The fact that she is incarcerated is appalling and what just continues to be talked about when one mentions her name around my line of work is that she should be freed and freed now. On that note, a lot of work is being done to support her at various ways such as visiting her in prison thus bringing her food, ensuring her son and family at large are catered for, among other things. What is important I suppose is that she gets the justice that she deserves and that is to release her.

She did smile and came across as happy but a deep sense of loss could be detected from her eyes and look. One could hardly tell that she is incarcerated for, let's see, her car being present at the scene of a crime or is it that she is still used as bait for her boyfriend – something that I think is abusing her very basic human rights. Moreover, those that fish know that some bait does not attract a particular type of fish and considering the past month, Cynthia may not be bait we want to be dangling. During the visit, Cynthia did laugh along with her visitors, talked about her son, and expressed her wish to have her favorite food from Millers amongst other things. This can only become a reality if we all join hands and not rest until Cynthia is released and she regains her freedom and rights! Her life has been reduced to idleness and reading novels (when she can) and until she is freed, her once lived reality remains a mirage, let us do something and do it now. Whatever you can to get her freed, do it!

Despite many attempts to apply for bail, Cynthia still remains behind bars. She deserves to be enjoying her life and exploring more of this world and its advance

along ICT lines amongst other things. Cynthia has a right to be released on bail like her many colleagues have been and there is no reason that the law should be selectively applied. If the authorities want her boyfriend, then they should look for him. Well, considering that Zimbabwean intelligence is ranked amongst the highest on the continent, this should not be difficult should it? Cynthia should therefore not be used as bait for them to solve this case at hand.

Many initiatives have already been implemented in a bid to free Cynthia, however, these still need to be scaled up until we see Cynthia released and have her once again enjoy her human freedoms as she deserves. Let us all join forces and do what we can to support her during this time of her life. We could visit her at Chikurubi, be guardians to her son, be the beam of hope for her family and above all expose the abuse of human rights by the law enforcement agents and also put pressure that they release Cynthia from this unlawful incarceration.

You and I can do this. Do not fear but stand up and  
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## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:

- ▶ **PLAY - Rituals (Rooftop Promotions):**
- **Wits University (13- 14 July 2011)**
- **Central Methodist Church (15 July 2011)**
- **Hillbrow Theatre (16 July 2011)**

# Patronage and Military entrenchment in the national economy



**FAITH IN THE BALLOT:** Voting lines such as these were a common feature across Zimbabwe on March 29, 2008.-zimbabweinpictures.com

*From Front Page*

pointed in large numbers to run various state-owned companies. For instance, Retired Colonel Samuel Muvuti was appointed by President Mugabe to head the country's sole buyer and seller of maize, the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) before his dismissal in 2008 on corruption allegations in what may have been mere in-fighting within ZANU-PF. President Mugabe in 2004 appointed Retired Major-General Mike Nyambuya provincial governor of Manicaland and later Minister of Energy up to 2007. Previously Retired Colonel Christian Katsande, now the deputy secretary to Cabinet, headed the state-owned oil procurement company – the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCIZM).

Senior military officers were also appointed to lead strategic state institutions including the Zimbabwe Prisons Service (ZPS), the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO), the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) (under retired Air Commodore Michael Karakadzai) and The Department of National Parks and Wildlife. The increased militarization of the state has led to the military taking control of an expanding range of decisions and actions, from political strategy to the formulation and implementation of agrarian and economic policy.

Retired Major General Jevan Maseko is Zimbabwe's ambassador to Cuba while retired Brigadier-General Elisha Muzonzini heads the mission in Kenya. In late 2008 Mupfuhira and most of the Minerals Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe board were abruptly replaced. Rtd. Col. Nelly Abu Basutu heads the MMCZ while her husband, Air Vice-Marshal Titus Abu Basutu, is deputy to the Air force Chief Perence Shiri.

In 2009 the ZANU-PF Information and Publicity Minister, Webster Shamu, in violation of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) appointed eight senior military officials to boards of media and information state companies – the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ), Zimbabwe Broadcasting Holdings (ZBH), Zimbabwe Newspapers group (ZIMPAPERS), NewZiana, Transmedia and Kingstons.

President Mugabe has gone to great lengths to ensure the military's continued loyalty, including dis-

tribution of land, housing and prominent political positions to top-ranking military officials and the distribution and production of food. Mugabe placed national food distribution and various agriculture programmes directly under the control of the army through control of Grain Marketing Board sales since 2002.

Senior military officials rank among the top beneficiaries to the violent and chaotic commercial farm invasions that began at the instigation of ZANU-PF in February 2000. An investigation by a Zimbabwean online publication revealed that of the 200 army officers from the rank of Major to Lieutenant General of the Zimbabwe National Army, at least 90% benefited from farm invasions and have farms in most fertile parts of the country. The Zimbabwe Defence Forces Commander, Constantine Chiwenga owns two farms near Harare including a 1,200-hectare farm known as Chakoma Es-

**A number of government and independent land audits have found widespread evidence of corrupt allocations and looting of farm equipment by senior politicians and military officers**

tates while Air Marshall Perence Shiri owns at least two farms in Marondera and Shamva. Retired Army General, Solomon Mujuru and his wife, Vice President, Joyce Mujuru together with their close family members allegedly own at least 25 farms totaling 105,000 Hectares.

A number of government and independent land audits have found widespread evidence of corrupt allocations and looting of farm equipment by senior politicians and military officers. General Mike Nyambuya is implicated in the looting of essential farm equipment at the invaded Kondozi Horticultural Estate in Manicaland, which was one of the biggest agro- export industries in the region before invasion.

Members of the Zimbabwe National Army aligned to ZANU-PF were also implicated in the looting and plundering of the Democratic Republic of Congo

(DRC)'s natural resources following Zimbabwe's intervention in the DRC war between August 1998 and July 2003. A United Nations expert panel investigating the plunder of DRC resources found that joint venture companies to exploit resources were formed between 'generals and other top officers in the Ugandan and Zimbabwean army and other top officials and unsavory politicians in the government of the DRC.' Among the top military leadership, General Vitalis Zvinavashe (the late), was a major stakeholder in a company called Operation Sovereign Legitimacy (OSLEG) which had lucrative mining contracts in the DRC through a partnership with a firm owned by DRC's late president, Laurent Kabila.

The Marange diamond fields in the east of the country are under the tight control of the military who control access to them. However, there is rampant systematic smuggling of Marange diamonds and a thriving illicit

trade in the diamonds across the porous Mozambican border. The global blood diamond watchdog to which Zimbabwe belongs, the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) has so far failed to end the smuggling or the widespread abuses in Marange diamond fields in which soldiers are implicated. There are genuine fears that diamond revenue from Marange which is not properly accounted for is being used by the military and those aligned to ZANU-PF to

build a war chest to fund electoral violence should Zimbabwe go to elections in 2011 as ZANU-PF so much wants.

The companies that were granted licenses to mine diamonds in Marange under unclear circumstances and in violation of Zimbabwe's laws and regulations regarding tender procedures are controlled by senior military officers. The chairperson of Mbada Holdings is former Vice Air Marshal, Robert Mhlanga, who was Mugabe's helicopter pilot for over 20 years and a key state witness in the treason trial against MDC President, Morgan Tsvangirai in 2003 while Canadile Miners' Director is Retired Captain Kurotwi. Several military officers are also listed as shareholders in both companies.

*Chapter 6 follows next week. - Editor.*

## Cynthia Manjoro deserves to be free!

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be the change that she deserves. Denounce the treatment Cynthia is getting and demand to see her freed. In your own space and at whatever level, do your bit and let us

see Cynthia Manjoro be the mother, sister, friend, aunt, daughter, colleague, IT Specialist and woman that she deserves to be in this world and not behind bars. Yes we indeed can make this a reality...it is up to you, act now!

Grace Chirenje-Nachipo is a gender activist who also gives social commentary on various issues affecting Zimbabwean life.