

Lies, Looting and Arson

... Militia make mockery of GPA as Shamuyarira's manager named in arson attack

The owners of Mount Carmel farm, where two farm houses were burnt to the ground last week, have implicated militia allegedly deployed to the farm by ZANU PF spokesman, Nathan Shamuyarira, who is fighting to take over the property.

Mike (78) and Angela (67) Campbell, owners of Mount Carmel, suspect the fire was an arson attack to cover up looting by Shamuyarira's militia as well as harass the farm owners off the property.

The Campbells, together with their son-in law, Ben Freeth and 72 other white commercial farmers, successfully took their right to stay on the farms to the SADC tribunal in November last year.

Now, both the Campbells and Freeths have lost their homes and most of their property.

Despite Zimbabwe being bound by the tribunal's rulings, Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs, Patrick Chinamasa, has repeatedly refused to abide by the SADC judgment arguing that the government will not be bound by a tribunal which is "not yet operational". (see page 3).

Shamuyarira claims he was offered the farm by the government under the chaotic land reform programme and militias aligned to him have kept a constant, often violent, presence at the farm.

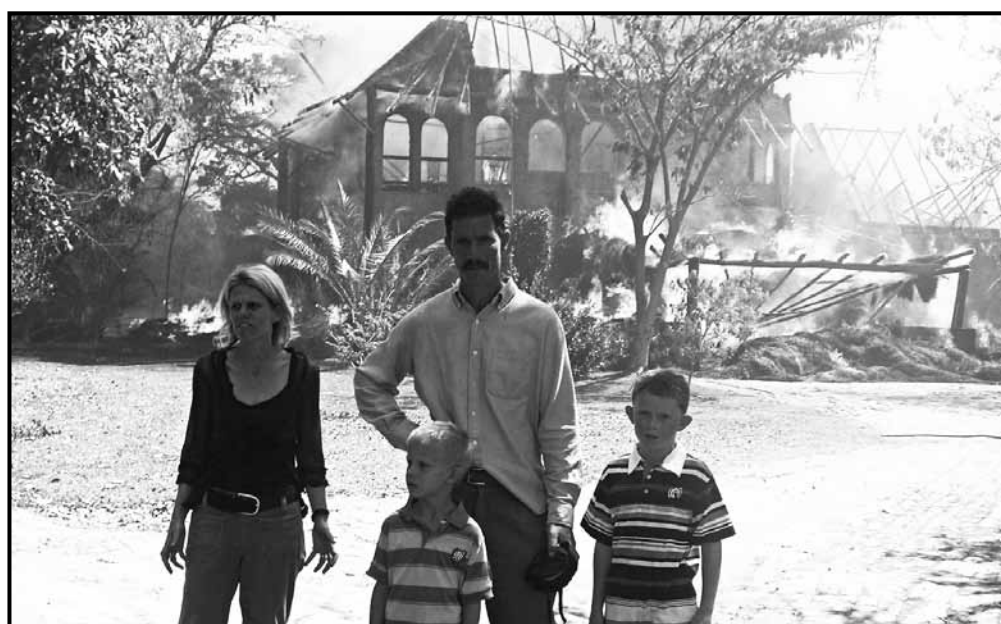
Laura Freeth, Ben's wife, whose adjacent farmhouse was burnt down three days before the Campbells, has been running the farm after the elderly Campbells left in April.

"At the height of election violence in June last year, war veterans and soldiers abducted and tortured the two families for nine hours to force them to drop SADC Tribunal litigation"

Mrs Freeth named Lovemore "Landmine" Madangonda, a representative of Shamuyarira as a prime suspect in the arson attack in her police report RRB No. 0611384 on Wednesday. Madangonda, who claims to be Shamuyarira's farm manager, has been forcibly residing on the farm and pressuring the Campbells and Freeths to leave.

"I am requesting a thorough investigation into the cause of the fire at my parents' house on Mount Carmel farm due to the possibility of arson," Mrs Freeth wrote to Senior Assistant Commissioner Mushaurwa, the police Officer Commanding, Mashonaland West Province.

"They (Shamuyarira's deployees) are covering up their looting. They had asked us to remove my parents' furniture from the house so that they could live in it. We suspect that they had been looting



The Freeth family stand in front of their burning house

and torched the place to cover up their looting," said Mrs Freeth.

The Campbells, together with the other farmers won a long court battle against the government when the SADC tribunal condemned Zimbabwe's land reform programme as discriminatory on the basis of race.

Since taking the government to the SADC tribunal, the Campbells and the Freeths have lived under constant harassment.

At the height of election violence in June last year, war veterans and soldiers abducted and tortured the two families for nine hours to force them to drop SADC Tribunal litigation.

Chinamasa last week unilaterally announced Zimbabwe's withdrawal from the SADC Tribunal, saying the country would no longer be bound by past and future rulings of the tribunal.

It has emerged that despite Chinamasa's statement, Zimbabwe has seconded a High Court Judge – Justice Antonia Guvava - to sit as a Member (Judge) of the SADC Tribunal as well as fulfilling other requirements that bind Zimbabwe to the tribunal.

Both Attorney General Johannes Tomana and his Deputy Prince Machaya formally accepted the Tribunal's jurisdiction during the hearing of the case.

Chiadzwa: We need answers

The following is a ZLHR editorial on the mystery surrounding the Kimberley Process visit and human rights abuses at Chiadzwa.

In July an investigating team of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), led by Liberian Deputy Mines Minister, Kpandei Faiya, visited Zimbabwe in efforts to uncover the truth behind illegal mining activities and human rights violations said to have

been perpetrated by, amongst others, the military, at the Chiadzwa diamond fields in Marange, in Manicaland.

But nothing has been made public about the investigations by the government.

During its investigations, the KPCS team got submissions from the government, affected members of the Marange community, and international and local human rights organisations.

At the end of July, following its intensive fact-finding mission, the investigating team produced an interim report and recommendations which were submitted to the government.

The recommendations have, to this day, never been made public, although they are easily accessible on the internet and are in the public domain. In the public interest, the recommendations are reproduced in full, as accessed

from the website of IRIN humanitarian news and analysis - a project of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

In the third week of August 2009, Zimbabweans were surprised to learn that a second team from the KPSC was in Zimbabwe. This delegation was led by the KPSC Chairperson and Namibian Mines Minister Bernhard Esau.

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Probe army role in abuses: KP

Below are the Interim Steps and Immediate Recommendations provided by the KP investigative team to the Government of Zimbabwe. These are part of its draft interim report (Draft: 15/07/09), which is in the public domain and the link to which can be accessed at: www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85875 (last accessed 5 September 2009)

INTERIM STEPS

In the close-out session on 4 July, the Team presented the Minister and Deputy Minister of Mines and other stakeholders with several immediate steps that could be taken to establish the commitment of the Government of Zimbabwe to rectify the situation. These recommended steps included:

- Acknowledgment by Zimbabwe that KP minimum standards have not been met and that it seeks to work with the KP to come back in to compliance.
- A suspension on production and exports from Marange, at a minimum, until effective security, internal control measures and resources are in place in a manner that indicate Zimbabwe's control and authority over the Marange fields.
- Immediate demilitarization of the Marange fields and a comprehensive investigation of the role of the ZNA, ZRP, and other officials in abuses in the Marange diamond operation.
- Acknowledgment of, and initial steps toward, the creation of an independent, multi-stakeholder monitoring body,

consistent with the tripartite nature of the KPCS, that would create and oversee implementation of a workplan to bring Zimbabwe in to full compliance within a specific period of time. This body would also coordinate the request and receipt of technical assistance and support through the KPCS and its Participants and Observers.

- Consideration of the appointment of a special rapporteur or other appropriate mechanism to further document the human rights concerns.

The Government of Zimbabwe made a request during the close-out session for immediate KPCS presence in and around Marange to assist with and observe actions taken by the Government of Zimbabwe.

IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS:

In light of the above, the Team recommends the following, immediate actions:

1. Facilitation by the KP of the appointment of an independent monitor to assist with the implementation of the necessary changes at Marange and elsewhere in the Zimbabwean KP compliance system overseen by an independent multi-stakeholder monitoring body, consistent with the tripartite nature of the KPCS, that would create and oversee implementation of a workplan to bring Zimbabwe in to full compliance within a specific period of time. This body would also coordinate the request and receipt of technical assistance and support through

the KPCS and its Participants and Observers. The independent monitor should develop a system for communication with the KP Chair and Working Group on Monitoring (see #5).

2. Facilitation by the KP of the provision of security personnel and other technical assistance, e.g. security cameras, fencing, and other equipment, during which time the Government of Zimbabwe implements a security program that excludes the ZNA, and to the fullest extent possible, the ZRP.
3. Resolution, in accordance with Zimbabwean law, ownership rights, tenures security and land claims in and around Marange.
4. Development of a workplan to provide for an expedited transition to a sustainable and secure production environment at Marange.
5. Creation of a Regional Task Force (including Angola, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe) to provide an on-going mechanism for provision of technical assistance, information sharing, and other coordination efforts. The Task Force could work directly in conjunction with the independent monitor, or as a mechanism within the KP (e.g., initiative of the KP Chair).
6. Implementation of enhanced security measures at the MMCZ complex.
7. Consideration by the Government of Zimbabwe of revising the current

KP compliance structure to create a simplified process that reduces the number of actors involved.

8. Suspension of Zimbabwe from importing or exporting of rough diamonds within the KPCS for a period of at least 6 months, but until such time as a KP team determines that minimum standards have been met (see #9).
9. Consideration by the WGM, WGDE, and the Government of Zimbabwe of the development and implementation of a direct monitoring system that could allow for certain shipments to be exported during the suspension period.
10. Outreach by the KP and individual Participants, as appropriate, to encourage Mozambique to improve border control and consider joining the KP as a means to combat smuggling efforts.
11. Investigation by neighboring and primary importing/trading Participants of potential smuggling routes and implementation of additional measures to combat smuggling of diamonds from Zimbabwe. Reference could be made to other information produced by the KP, including the WGM Experts report, DRC and UAE review visit reports, etc.
12. Consideration of the appointment of a special rapporteur or other appropriate mechanism to further document the human rights concerns and violence at Marange.

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Chiadzwa: We need answers

The delegation, during its time in Zimbabwe, was accompanied by the Deputy Mines and Mining Development Murisi Zwizwai.

Zwizwai is a representative of the main Movement for Democratic Change in the inclusive transitional government.

While it met with various government officials, civil society representatives were never informed about the visit, and nor were they invited to provide information or make further submissions.

When journalists from the private media attempted to contact Minister Zwizwai for interviews and information, he was not willing to assist and referred queries by one reporter to the state owned Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC)'s cameraman.

Amongst other activities, Zwizwai accompanied the team to the homestead of Newman Chiadzwa, together with a production crew from the ZBC. Newman Chiadzwa had provided first-hand testimony to the initial KPSC investigating team about alleged human rights abuses at the Marange diamond fields and surrounding area.

He is being sought by the police, allegedly in connection with charges relating to illegal diamond mining, which he denies.

In what appeared to be concerted efforts to discredit this individual and his testimony to the initial KPSC team, ZBC main news and radio bulletins, on 21 August 2009, showed the second KPSC team in the company of the Deputy Minister, visiting Chiadzwa's homestead.

ZBC producers had inserted their own opinions into the news reports about the credibility of this individual and his guilt in relation to the charges against him.

Towards the end of this second team's visit, Mr Esau is reported to have made a public statement indicating that the KPSC "will not entertain" calls for the suspension of Zimbabwe from the KPSC.

He provided no basis for reaching such an opinion or conclusion. Nor did he address the progress made by the Zimbabwe government to comply with and implement the initial recommendations.

Questions which all reasonable Zimbabweans should be asking about the manner in which this second KPSC mission was conducted abound.

Why were human rights groups not informed that the second team would be visiting? Why were the organisations not asked to provide information to this team?

Why were journalists from the private media - who have a right to practice their profession and make available to Zimbabweans information which is in the public interest - referred to a ZBC journalist by Minister Zwizwai?

Why is such behaviour coming from Zwizwai, whose party's criticism of the continued failure of the authorities to reform the hate-mongering and partisan public media is well recorded?

Why, indeed, did the Minister consent to appear on ZBC in footage used to assassinate the character of an individual who has a right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty by a court of law?

Why was there excessive focus on this one individual who had previously provided testimony to the initial KPSC team, and a failure by the state media to inform Zimbabweans that many other individuals from the Marange community had provided similar testimony to this initial team?

Why have the recommendations - accessible as they are through the electronic media - never been made public in full through the state media and by the inclusive government?

Why is there such silence in relation to how far these recommendations have been complied with and implemented, such that there is now debate about whether to proceed with suspension?

It is not disputed that Zimbabwe faces a continuing economic and social crisis and that the inclusive government is still struggling to raise the resources necessary to support crippled education and health services, as well as the improvement of basic infrastructure.

Responsible use of the natural resources of the country can contribute immensely to addressing this crisis. However, there is need to do so in a transparent and accountable manner, in consultation with the affected communities, and all other relevant stakeholders, so that no harm is done and all people benefit, particularly the communities which have lived for generations on this land.

The vast environmental degradation in Marange must also be stopped and addressed in such a process.

If human rights violations are found to have occurred, victims deserve official acknowledgement of such. So too, people need security of person and assurances that the government is rapidly moving the military out of the area.

The inclusive government owes it to the people of Zimbabwe to provide information about the report and how far they have gone in implementing the recommendations if we are to believe that we have a new responsible government which respects the will of the people and their rights.

HON. CHINAMASA'S ATTEMPT TO 'PULL OUT' OF SADC TRIBUNAL FUTILE AND UNJUSTIFIABLE

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) has been observing with great alarm the repeated contemptuous attacks on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Tribunal by various state representatives since 2008. These have culminated in an article penned by one Mabasa Sasa, reported in *The Herald* of 2 September 2009 and entitled 'Zim pulls out of SADC Tribunal'.

The article follows ZLHR's disclosure in *The Legal Monitor* of Monday 31 August 2009 of the falsity of Minister of Justice & Legal Affairs, Patrick Chinamasa's contention that the Republic of Zimbabwe is outside the jurisdiction of the Tribunal and/or that the Tribunal is 'illegal'. Honourable Chinamasa – using the state-controlled and unreformed public media – has repeatedly provided legally and factually incorrect information to the Zimbabwean public and observers further afield as to the legality of the Tribunal *vis-à-vis* Zimbabwe and, by implication, other SADC Member States.

If the Honourable Minister is being advised by government lawyers from the office of the Attorney General, as is the proper course of business, these individuals are negligently or intentionally misleading the Honourable Minister to make false statement to the general public, and it is clear that he needs new, properly informed, advisors. It would be of even greater concern if such misleading submissions were to be repeated by any member of the Zimbabwean delegation who will attend the upcoming SADC Summit.

According to Minister Chinamasa, the SADC Protocol on the Tribunal ("the Tribunal Protocol") has been ratified by less than two-thirds of the total membership of SADC and, as such, the Tribunal is not validly constituted. He goes on to argue that, consequently, the SADC Tribunal cannot exercise jurisdiction over Zimbabwe or any other SADC Member State.

It would appear that the Minister, through his errant advisors, is relying on Articles 35 and 38 of the Tribunal Protocol, which read as follows:

'ARTICLE 35 RATIFICATION

This Protocol shall be ratified by Signatory States in accordance with their constitutional procedures.'

'ARTICLE 38 ENTRY INTO FORCE

This Protocol shall enter into force thirty (30) days after deposit, in terms of Article 43 of the Treaty, of instruments of ratification by two-thirds of the States.'

What Honourable Chinamasa fails and/or neglects to mention or address is the fact that, in 2001, the SADC Treaty was amended so as to make the SADC Tribunal an integral part of both the Treaty and the Institution of SADC. The said amendment to the SADC Treaty specifically established the SADC Tribunal and incorporated it into SADC as an integral organ. The amendment went on to refer to the Tribunal Protocol and **categorically excluded it from the usual requirement for ratification by two-thirds before it could come into force and effect.**

The relevant section of the Amendment to the SADC Treaty reads as follows:

'ARTICLE 16 THE TRIBUNAL

1. *The Tribunal shall be constituted to ensure adherence to and the proper interpretation of the provisions of this Treaty and subsidiary instruments and to adjudicate upon such disputes as may be referred to it.*
2. *The composition, powers, functions, procedures and other related matters governing the Tribunal shall be prescribed in a Protocol, which shall, notwithstanding the provisions of Article 22 of this Treaty, form an integral part of this Treaty, adopted by the Summit.* [Own emphasis added.]

3. *Members of the Tribunal shall be appointed for a specified period.*
4. *The Tribunal shall give advisory opinions on such matters as the Summit or the Council may refer to it.*
5. *The decisions of the Tribunal shall be final and binding.'*

Article 22 referred to in Article 16 above provides as follows:

'ARTICLE 22 PROTOCOLS

1. *Member States shall conclude such Protocols as may be necessary in each area of co-operation, which shall spell out the objectives and scope of, and institutional mechanisms for, co-operation and integration.*
2. *Each Protocol shall be approved by the Summit on the recommendation of the Council.*
3. *Each Protocol shall be open to signature and ratification.*
4. *Each Protocol shall enter into force thirty (30) days after the deposit of the instruments of ratification by two thirds of the Member States.* [Own emphasis added.]
5. *Once a Protocol has entered into force, a Member State may only become a party thereto by accession.*
6. *Each Protocol shall remain open for accession by any State subject to Article 8 of this Treaty.*
7. *The original texts of each Protocol and all instruments of ratification and accession shall be deposited with the Executive Secretary who shall transmit certified copies thereof to all Member States.*
8. *The Executive Secretary shall register each Protocol with the Secretariat of the United Nations Organization and the Commission of the African Union.*
9. *Each Protocol shall be binding only on the Member States that are party to the Protocol in question.*
10. *Decisions concerning any Protocol that has entered into force shall be taken by the parties to the protocol in question.*
11. *No reservation shall be made to any Protocol.'*

As a result of this amendment to the SADC Treaty, Articles 35 and 38 of the Tribunal Protocol, which had required the two-thirds ratification, were **repealed** and the requirement therefore fell away. The Agreement Amending the Protocol clearly provides for this, as follows:

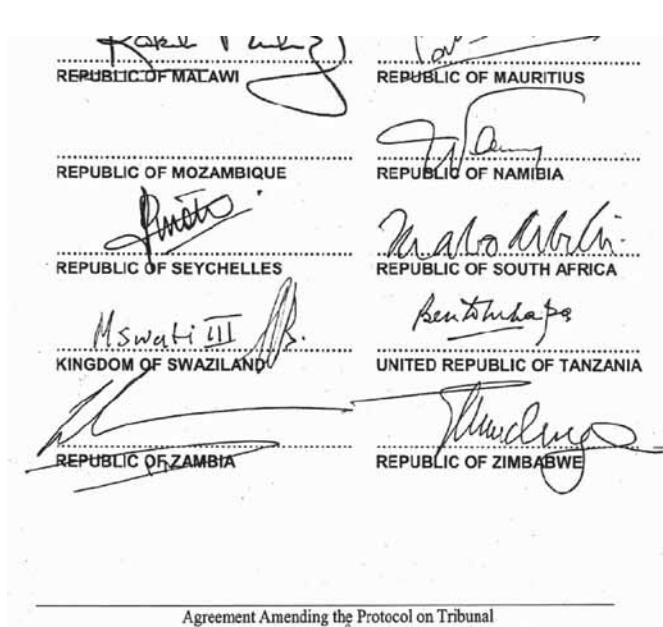
'ARTICLE 16 REPEAL OF ARTICLE 35 OF THE PROTOCOL

Article 35 of the Protocol is repealed.'

'ARTICLE 19 REPEAL OF ARTICLE 38 OF THE PROTOCOL

Article 38 of the Protocol is repealed.'

Honourable Chinamasa and/or his legal advisors neglected or failed to appreciate that these requirements for ratification were thus made redundant by the SADC Agreement on the Amendment to the Protocol at their meeting in Luanda, Angola, on 3 October 2002. SADC Member States' Heads of State and Government and/or their duly authorized representatives agreed that it was not necessary to ratify the Protocol and appended their signatures to this Agreement. In fact, the Minister's colleague and counterpart, Stanislaus Mudenge, agreed and signed this Amendment on behalf of Zimbabwe, as follows!



Contrary to Honourable Chinamasa's contentions, therefore, the Tribunal is a creation of the Declaration and Treaty of SADC, and **does not** owe its existence to the ratification of the Tribunal Protocol. It is clear from the above provisions of the SADC Treaty that, while all other Protocols require ratification by two-thirds of SADC Member States, the same rule **does not** apply to the Protocol relating to the Tribunal. This was knowingly agreed to by SADC Member States and, in fact, they found this Tribunal to be so critical to the protection of the objectives and workings of SADC that they knowingly, intentionally and willingly did away with the need for ratification by two-thirds of the SADC Member States.

It is being economic with the truth for the government Minister to state that Zimbabwe did not ratify the Protocol and fail to also disclose that having not so ratified the Protocol it did however find it fitting to amend it.

If Honourable Chinamasa, despite this, would have the public believe that there is a need for SADC Member States to ratify the Protocol establishing the Tribunal, he is alone in this regard. No other SADC Member State has read the Treaty and/or the Tribunal Protocol in the same manner.

Further, if the Minister truly believes that this is the legal position and that the SADC Tribunal is not legally in existence, we challenge him to advise the public as to why the Government of Zimbabwe found it necessary and in their interests to nominate and second a Judge of the High Court of Zimbabwe – Justice Antonia Guvava – to sit as a Member (Judge) of the SADC Tribunal, and why she has not been recalled.

In his article Mabasa Sasa alleges that the Government of Zimbabwe '... and nine other SADC members are yet to ratify both the Protocol creating the Tribunal and a subsequent amendment to that document'. The facts on the ground speak otherwise.

What is most alarming is that, as the SADC Tribunal is now an integral part of the SADC Treaty, any attempt to "pull out" of the Tribunal would amount to pulling out of SADC as a whole. It has serious economic and other implications. In turn, this would put the integrity of Zimbabwe within the SADC region, and the SADC-brokered Interparty Political Agreement, in jeopardy. Clearly this cannot be the intention of the inclusive government. In any event, Honourable Chinamasa cannot unilaterally have the privilege of opting out of voluntarily assumed commitments that he or his colleagues no longer like unless he is properly authorized by his superiors, who are the President and the Prime Minister.

ZLHR is reliably informed that such utterances and others attributed to the Attorney General and his underlings have fuelled mayhem and pandemonium as violations continue to occur on farms with the perpetrators claiming that the SADC Tribunal has no jurisdiction over Zimbabwe.

The utterances of government officials in Zimbabwe have the potential to cause extreme harm to the integrity of this integral organ of SADC, and endanger the protection of the rights of Member States and their subjects as enshrined in the SADC Treaty and an extensive range of Protocols. ZLHR calls on the leaders of the Inclusive Transitional Government to reflect and take action on this potentially far-reaching decision.



Swearing in of a member, left, H.E. Justice Antonia Guvava (Zimbabwe): www.sadac-tribunal.org/php?p=gallery (last accessed 3 September 2009)

For more information, please contact:
Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, 6th Floor, Beverley Court
100 N. Mandela Avenue, Harare
Tel: (04) 705370 or 708118 or 251468 Fax: (04) 705641
E-mail: info@zlh.org.zw Web: www.zlh.org.zw

SADC to tackle Zim impasse

Zimbabwe's wrangling transitional government and ongoing violent farm invasions are set to top discussion when regional leaders meet for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) summit in DRC this week.

President Robert Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai have accused each other of failing to fulfill conditions of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) that forms the basis of the transitional government.

Tsvangirai wants the 15-nation bloc to push for the full implementation of the political agreement, including an end to ongoing rights violations.

Presidential spokesman George Charamba has said President Mugabe will ask SADC to pressure Tsvangirai's MDC party to actively campaign against US and EU sanctions as part of the implementation of the GPA.

The Windhoek-based SADC tribunal last week also referred Zimbabwe's land dispute to the Summit after it ruled that the government was in contempt of its (Tribunal) orders.

South Africa, the current SADC chair has confirmed that this week's summit presented an opportunity for regional leaders to resolve differences within Zimbabwe's transitional government.

Speaking on Zimbabwe, South Africa's director general for international relations and cooperation, Ayanda

Ntsaluba told a media briefing last week that: "The important thing is that even now it is going to be important moving forward for SADC to act in unison."

After failing to patch up tense relations during a two-day visit last week, South African President Jacob Zuma said he would deliver a progress report on Zimbabwe's transitional government to this week's summit.

"Chinamasa's declaration had no government endorsement"

Local rights organisations such as the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum report that army-led violence, police brutality on peaceful protestors, criminal prosecutions of human rights defenders and a hostile media environment continued.

Justice and Legal Affairs Minister, Patrick Chinamasa, last week caused controversy when he declared that Zimbabwe was withdrawing from the SADC tribunal after the court ruled in favour of commercial farmers whose land was targeted for seizure.

The regional court last November ruled that President Mugabe's seizure of white-owned farms for redistribution to cronies under a chaotic and often violent land reform programme was

discriminatory, racist and illegal under SADC treaties.

Zimbabwe, which had legal representation during court hearings, has refused to respect the ruling, with Chinamasa saying the country would not respect the Tribunal's past and future judgments.

Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Gordon Moyo said Chinamasa's declaration had no government endorsement, signaling how President Mugabe and Prime Minister Tsvangirai could be running parallel governments.

Dennis Shivavangula, the Tribunal clerk last week told the media that the SADC Summit should make a determination on the matter.

"We cannot say what will happen to all the proceedings involving the Zimbabwe government until the matter is discussed by the SADC summit," he said.

Observers however, question regional leaders' leverage on Zimbabwe, pointing out that most SADC countries, with the exception of Botswana, have previously protected Mugabe from international scrutiny.

Incoming SADC chairman, Joseph Kabila, owes part of his power to Mugabe's military intervention that drove away a rebel takeover, weakening his ability to nudge the 85-year-old Zimbabwean leader.

Students to stand trial

A Harare Magistrate last week dismissed an application for refusal of remand filed by four students who are accused of participating in a gathering with intention to promote public violence and breach of peace.

Through their lawyer Jeremiah Bamu, the students Clever Bere, Kudakwashe Chakabva, Archieford Mudzengi and Brian Rugondo, had argued that there was no reasonable suspicion that they committed the alleged offence to warrant them remaining on remand.

Magistrate Munamoto Mutevedzi dismissed the students' application, saying there was reasonable suspicion that the four committed an offence and must face trial. He remanded the students – who are out of custody on bail – to 30 September 2009.

The four were arrested as they addressed students over a decision by authorities at the University of Zimbabwe to bar students who have not paid their tuition fees from attending lectures or using the library.

International human rights organisations have condemned the students' arrest saying it was tantamount to harassment.

ZLHR reaches out to villagers

The Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) last week held community workshops in Manicaland and Midlands provinces to sensitise people on the Global Political Agreement (GPA) and transitional justice mechanisms.

Lawyers from ZLHR took villagers through the GPA, explaining the essence and provisions in the agreement, signed in September last year and creating the basis of the transitional government formed in February this year.

Villagers, traditional leaders and local political leaders attended the workshops, held at Katiyo Tea Estates in Honde Valley, Manicaland, and Sogwala, in Lower Gweru, Midlands.

The lawyers conscientised villagers on transitional justice mechanisms that will assist in dealing with conflicts that are tearing apart communities and stalling development since the violent June 2008 elections.

Blessing Nyamaropa, the ZLHR regional projects lawyer for Manicaland and Masvingo Satellite Office, explained to villagers how

traditional leaders should use their status to play a leading role in promoting human rights and national healing.

Nyamaropa explained the various mechanisms which villagers affected by last year's political violence could use to seek redress and reclaim property forcibly taken away by militias.

Some villagers in Bikita and Nyanga have already successfully used the courts to force those who looted property from political rivals to return or compensate for the stolen assets.

Nyamaropa addressed villagers on the controversial constitution-making process and explained the importance of enshrining human rights in the Bill of Rights.

Participants raised concern about police inaction against law breakers and the failure by offenders to abide by court orders.

One traditional leader who attended the Manicaland workshop encouraged his subordinates to report cases of seizure of property to his court, and pledged to deliver justice.



ZLHR Lawyer Blessing Nyamaropa addressing villagers in Honde Valley



Tineyi Mukwewa of ZLHR in Lower Gweru