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Hate Speech Report for the month ending August 2013

THE report records inflammatory, intimidating, insulting and abusive language carried in both the local print and electronic media during the month of August 2013.

The country's mainstream media, both print and electronic, were monitored. Fig 1 shows the surveyed media.

Fig.1 List of surveyed media

Media	Frequency	Status
ZTV (ZBC)	Everyday	State-run media
Spot FM	Everyday	State-run media
Star FM	Everyday	Privately owned
Zi FM	Everyday	Privately owned
Studio 7	Everyday	Privately owned
SW Radio Africa (SWRA)	Everyday	Privately owned
<i>The Herald</i>	Daily	State-run media
<i>NewsDay</i>	Daily	Privately owned
<i>Daily News</i>	Daily	Privately owned
<i>Zimbabwe Independent</i>	Weekly	Privately owned

Summary of Findings

THIS report is based on the analysis of insulting, abusive, inflammatory and intolerant language contained in the surveyed media, which were classified according to offenders; victims; and methods/categories of hate speech.

- A total of 29 counts of such hate language were recorded, representing a 16% increase from last month's 25 cases.
- As in our previous three reports, *The Herald* recorded the most counts of hate speech and intolerant language. The paper published 19 (66%) such counts. Of the 19 counts, 15 (79%) were committed by its columnists. Three (16%) appeared in news reports, while the remaining one appeared on its leader page.
- *NewsDay* and the *Daily News* came a distant second with four incidents each, three of which were news reports of politicians making intolerant and inflammatory comments. Collectively, this represented 28% of the incidents. Notably, these two private dailies did not advocate hate speech through their own editorial columns or through editorial intrusions into news stories. They simply reported politicians committing the offence.
- The national television station, ZTV, closely followed with three (10%) incidents. This represented a 57% decline from last month's seven counts.
- *The Sunday Mail* recorded two incidents, while the *Zimbabwe Independent* carried one.
- Notably, Studio 7, SW Radio Africa, ZiFM Stereo, Star FM; Spot FM; *The Standard* and *The Daily News On Sunday* did not record any incidents of hate speech this month.

2. Hate language offenders

Preachers of the language of intolerance and hatred recorded this month mostly comprised influential people in society. These ranged from politicians, media columnists and political analysts.

2.1 Media columnists

MEDIA columnists topped the list of offenders. They committed 17 (59%) counts of hate speech. This represented a massive 425% increase from last month's four counts.

All these columnists belonged to the State-owned media.

The worst offender was Mai Jukwa (four), followed by Nathaniel Manheru, Darlington Mahuku/Bowden Mbanje and *The Sunday Mail* Assistant Editor Munyaradzi Huni, who committed two counts each.

2.2 Politicians

POLITICIANS were among the offenders. They were recorded making public statements that were insulting, abusive and frequently based on false premises. While only one of the eight incidents recorded in this category was directly threatening, they were all intended to incite public contempt for their targets and reflected extreme intolerance. The eight incidents represented a 38% decline from last month's 13 counts.

President Mugabe (six) was the chief culprit. Other offenders included Zimbabwe Development Party leader Kisinoti Mukwazhe and an MDC-T activist, Innocent Mundanga. The two were recorded making inflammatory comments on one occasion each during the month.

2.3 Editorial intrusions

ONCE again, only *The Herald* was responsible for spreading intolerant and inflammatory language through its news reports. The paper inserted inflammatory editorial comment in their news stories on three occasions. The official daily also carried an editorial comment of the same nature.

3. The victims of hate speech

OUTGOING Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai and his MDC-T party and their alleged Western allies were the major targets of insulting, inflammatory and intolerant language.

They were widely condemned by President Mugabe and his ZANU PF party and the state-owned media for criticizing the manner in which the July 31 elections were held and the outcome of those elections.

Tsvangirai, the MDC-T, the West and some domestic civic groups, such as the Zimbabwe Election Support Network, were castigated for claiming the elections were either rigged, or that the conduct of the electoral process compromised the election outcome. This was evident in 28 (97%) out of the 29 counts.

The remaining one case involved an MDC-T activist who uttered vulgar language against the police in Masvingo.

4. Methods of hate speech in the report

4.1 Dehumanising metaphors

THE use of dehumanising metaphors and the use of animal, pagan and other unflattering figures of speech were prominent in the media. This was used to strip victims of their human dimension and to instil hostility and public contempt for those individuals or groups who were targeted.

This included the use of such labels as, "**horny toad**", "**frog**", "**dunce**", and "**Britain's cat paw**".

There were eight such cases recorded in the media.

They included:

“...The popularity the opposition seemed to enjoy among urbanites in the last three general elections had more to do with its virginity, once it was deflowered in the inclusive Government it became the village bicycle no suitor took seriously” – An editorial intrusion in a news story (*The Herald* 2/8)

Herald columnist Nathaniel Manheru (3/8) - ***“Today he stands at the crossroads: to reinvent himself away from the obloquy of post-colonial treachery of a collaborator to an ex-Prime Minister of this country. Or to reinforce that execrable image he has picked from his past politics as Britain’s cat paw, getting hanged by it politically”***

“While ZANU PF did their homework and studied voting trends so as to target areas where their vote was low, he (Tsvangirai) was busy chasing teenagers like a horny toad on steroids” – *Herald* columnist Tinomudaishe Chinyoka (6/8).

“This is what my mother used to call being dull” - President Mugabe chiding Tsvangirai for challenging ZANU PF’s election victory in the courts (*NewsDay*, 26/8).

“What security sector reforms? I had never heard of that word before; sector reform ipi yaunoziva iwe (what reform do you know of?) Since when has a frog aspired to being a crocodile?” - Mugabe (*NewsDay* and *Daily News* 26/8).

4.2 Insulting, abusive and divisive language

The use of insulting and abusive language was also prevalent in the media. Such language was mostly targeted at Tsvangirai and the MDC-T.

Descriptions for these included ***“sell-outs”, “witless puppets”, “sex-crazed” “dunce”*** and ***“fool”***.

The media recorded nine such cases:

“The reaction by Mr Tsvangirai to the crushing defeat was more comic than a Mr Bean sketch. Watching him describe the elections as a farce while putting on a cap like a drunk village head left many in stitches, but others felt sorry for him” - *The Sunday Mail*’s political editor Munyaradzi Huni (4/8).

“Surely we must not muddy the legacy of Mandela by comparing him to a confused dunce like Tsvangirai”, another *Herald* (5/8) columnist Mai Jukwa.

“Tsvangirai will go down in history as the fool that tried to fight the land reform, the witless puppet that tried to fight indigenization” - Mai Jukwa (*The Herald*, 5/8)

“Makabetsera ZANU kubirira maelections mucham* nenzara naMugabe wenyu iyeye, Tsvangirai achavharisa maborder, uye muchafa neAids maARV tamavharisa. Tuuniform itwotwo tuchabvaruka mukasara makashama”*** (You helped ZANU PF rig elections now you are going to suffer hunger, Tsvangirai is going to shut down international trade and you are going to die of AIDS after we stop supplying ARVs. Your uniforms will soon wear out and you

will be in tatters) - MDC-T activist Innocent Mundanga (*Daily News*, 7/8).

“Ultimately, his image changed from being a squeaky-clean routinely-victimised president-in-waiting to the “creepy-looking rich guy always looking like he has gulped down a bucket of Viagra” – Herald columnist Knowledge Mushohwe (*The Herald*, 7/8).

“At some point, sell-outs emerged from amongst us – those who allowed themselves to be used by our erstwhile colonizers to take our land from us” - Mugabe (*NewsDay*, 13/8).

“Whoever is unhappy with the election results should go hang, we don’t care. Even dogs won’t bother to sniff their dead bodies” - Mugabe (*NewsDay*, *Daily News* and *Zimbabwe Independent*, 13 & 16/8).

“The whites know Tsvangirai is a half-wit, sex-crazed man that has nothing to offer. He is no Kofi Annan. It is for this reason that he was such a useful asset to pinks like Roy Bennett and Eddie Cross” - Mai Jukwa (*The Herald*, 19/8).

“The puppets have resigned to fate. The puppetry is no longer interesting it can’t pull crowds anymore! The equatorial assignment they had been assigned, that is, to depose Robert Mugabe, is ‘mission impossible’. You can visualize Morgan Tsvangirai and Tendai Biti themselves; “What offering are we going to offer at the White House or at Number 10 Downing Street?” – The Herald’s columnist Kuchidzamhandu Gumboreshumba (20/8).

“Did you really think that level of ignorance could run the country? Harare and Bulawayo actually voted for this amount of ignorance, chiendai munopihwa zvamakavhotera (now go and get what you voted for from them) – Mugabe (*NewsDay* & *Daily News*, 26/8).

4.3 Flawed argumentation

THESE form of statements included *ad hominem* attacks (attacking an opponent's character rather than answering his argument), guilt by association, appeal to fear, and misrepresentation of an opponent’s position.

The media recorded seven such cases:

“The media are pimps who go where the money is, tenacious predators who smell where the money isn’t. Between reality and Morgan stood a lying media. That was his bane” – Nathaniel Manheru (*The Herald*, 3/8).

“The MDC-T has to reinvent itself. Of course this won’t be easy considering the cocktail that makes up that party and the unrepentant Rhodes who continue to fool themselves that Zimbabwe will one day be a colony again” – Munyaradzi Huni (*The Sunday Mail*, 4/8).

“We were working with the very enemy we had dislodged as colonial master here and wanting the very enemy to come back, and that worked against them. Even their own identity and genuineness remains questionable. They are not themselves; they are a belonging of someone else, an imperialist. They are a puppet organization” - Mugabe (*ZTV*, 7/8, 8pm).

“They (the MDCs) are thieves... The people have realized that they are thieves and voted them out” - Mugabe (NewsDay, 13/8).

“In 2000 it used to be ZESN and in 2005 it turned to ZESN and MDC, in 2008 it changed to ZESN-MDC and in 2013 it completely transformed itself to MDC-MDC. Right from the pre-election, election and post-election days these Western controlled marionettes had already come up with an outcome which of course would be favourable to Tsvangirai and his Western handlers” – Bindura University lecturers, Darlington Mahuku and Bowden Mbanje (The Herald, 15/8).

“The MDC-T, largely the tool of North American and Western European investor interests, represents foreign capital, and promotes a pro-foreign investment agenda” – Columnist Stephen Gowans (The Herald, 17/8).

“Tsvangirai initially supported indigenization before being brought to order by his handlers. There is...video footage of him fully supporting the policy before he abruptly changed his position without explanation. Tsvangirai must cut off the puppet strings holding him back” - Mai Jukwa (The Herald, 19/8).

4.4 False facts

THIS consisted of the use of half-truths, distortions and misrepresentations, among others, to harm the reputation of opponents.

There were five such cases in the media.

These were:

“Tsvangirai himself has never prioritized humanitarianism or democracy itself in his master-puppet relationship with his Western allies, and he must be aware that the people he once asked to economically strangle Zimbabwe have no humanitarian consideration” – The Herald's Australia-based columnist Reason Wafawarova (The Herald, 1/8).

“The observer teams should be alive to this scenario, the MDC-T does not have genuine concerns; it is flying a kite for its Western masters who desperately want to tarnish the elections in a bid to try for what they failed to achieve in the ballot” – An editorial opinion in a news report (The Herald, 2/8).

“Morgan Tsvangirai and the MDC are tools for imperialist robbery in Zimbabwe and this is why the US and the UK are hell-bent on the destruction of President Mugabe and the ZANU PF government in Zimbabwe” – An opinion piece by Alicki Secka of the Pan-African Improvement Organisation of Ghana (The Herald, 2/8).

“We hope that since we are now going to the Heroes holiday we (will) maintain the peaceful atmosphere so that we shun the Selous Scouts who are being used by the imperialist, especially the British and Americans” - Elphas Chitera, chairman of the Harare chapter of the Zimbabwe Liberation War Veterans' Association - (ZTV, 9/8,8pm).

“It is therefore surprising that some misguided fellow countrymen at the behest of their Western allies blatantly disregard the good work done by the Zimbabwe Defence Forces. They disguise this by demanding what they call security sector reform, when it is obvious the enemy’s real aim is to dilute the efficiency of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces”

– Mugabe (ZTV, 13/8, 8pm).

RECOMMENDATIONS

ALTHOUGH the new Constitution and other laws, such as the Criminal Law (Codification Reform) Act, the Zimbabwe Electoral (Amendment) Act and the Broadcasting Services Act, discourage the media from propagating abusive, intimidating and inflammatory language, there is no specific legislation in Zimbabwe that regulates hate speech.

MMPZ recommends that:

- The new government ensures that the media comply with Section 61 sub-section 5 (a-d) of the new Zimbabwe Constitution, the Criminal Law (Codification Reform) Act, the Broadcasting Services Act and 160J (f-g) of the Electoral Act, which urge the media to refrain from using abusive language that may incite hostility, political intolerance and ethnic hatred, or that unfairly undermines political parties and other organisations or promoting political parties or candidates that do so;
- Regulatory bodies, such as the Zimbabwe Media Commission (ZMC), the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ) and the Zimbabwe Electoral Authority (ZEC) to demonstrate political will by taking measures against media institutions that promote inflammatory and intolerant language;
- Journalists, columnists and media institutions appreciate that it is not only a legal requirement for them to refrain from propagating hate speech, but also a professional journalistic obligation, which they should adhere to;
- The public be made aware of the negative effects of hate language in creating a divided, intolerant and authoritarian society, and complain to media regulatory bodies about such unprofessional conduct; and
- Media rights CSOs target politicians, the media and the public about the negative effects of hate language.

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