Refugee Review Tribunal AUSTRALIA

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

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Gukurahundi

This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

Questions

- 1. Does the MDC have an office in Harare?
- 2. How many branches are there in the province of Bulawayo?
- 3. How many wards are there?
- 4. Can you provide information on the leaders of the MDC in the province of Bulawayo?
- 5. Can you provide information on the activities of the MDC in the province of Bulawayo in 2006?
- 6. Can you provide information on council elections in Bulawayo around October 2006?
- 7. Did Zanu PF lose seats in the council elections in Bulawayo in October 2006?
- 8. Can you provide information about Gukurahunde?

RESPONSE

1. Does the MDC have an office in Harare?

The MDC headquarters are located in Harvest House, the corner of Angwa Street and Nelson Mandela Avenue in Harare. Angwa Street is parallel to First Street. Attached is a map of Harare, showing Angwa Street, First Street and Nelson Mandela Avenue (*Africa South of the Sahara 2003* 2003, Europa Publications, 32nd edition, London, p.1190 – Attachment 1; Mawarire, Matseliso 2007, 'Police left a trail of destruction at Harvest House', Zimdaily.com website, 29 March http://zimdaily.com/news/117/ARTICLE/1480/2007-03-29.html – Accessed 30 March 2007 – Attachment 2; 'Harare' 1998, Hotels-Tours-Safaris.com website http://www.hotels-tours-safaris.com/zimbabwe/harare/images/citymap.gif – Accessed 30 March 2007 – Attachment 3).

Information on the MDC is also in RRT Country Research 2007, *Research Response ZWE31560*, 5 April.

2. How many MDC branches are there in the province of Bulawayo?

No information was found in the sources consulted on the number of MDC branches in Bulawayo.

It is of interest that the city of Bulawayo is some 400 kms south-west of Harare and has provincial status. Wikipedia¹ notes the city is in Matabeleland (Central Intelligence Agency 2007, *The World Factbook: Zimbabwe*, 15 March

https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/zi.html – Accessed 18 April 2007 – Attachment 5; 'Zimbabwe' 2004, United Nations: Department of Peacekeeping Operations: Cartographic Section January

http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/zimbabwe.pdf – Accessed 23 March 2007 – Attachment 6; 'Bulawayo' 2007, Wikipedia website, 28 March
 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulawayo – Accessed 5 April 2007 – Attachment 7).

Maps of Bulawayo from *Microsoft Encarta Interactive Atlas* and Lonely Planet² are attached ('Bulawayo' 2000, *Microsoft Encarta Atlas* – Attachment 8; Swaney, Deanna and others 2003, *Southern Africa*, Lonely Planet Publications, 3rd ed., September, Melbourne, p.732 – Attachment 9).

3. How many wards are there in Bulawayo?

Country information indicates that there are 29 wards in Bulawayo (Maduna, Taurai 2006, 'Radio Dialogue: taking radio to the people!', Kubatana.net website, 13 April http://www.kubatana.net/html/archive/media/060413kub1.asp?sector=MEDIA&range_start=1 — Accessed 20 April 2007 — Attachment 39; Dawu, Julius 2007, ""This is an attempt to destroy the local authorities", ZWNEWS.com website, source: Mail & Guardian (SA), 16 February http://www.zwnews.com/print.cfm?ArticleID=16067 — Accessed 20 April 2007 — Attachment 40).

4. Can you provide information on the leaders of the MDC in the province of Bulawayo?

The MDC split in 2005 over participation in the Senate elections although there were long-simmering leadership divisions. Both factions claimed the MDC name and logo. The antisenate faction is led by Morgan Tsvangirai and the pro-senate group is led by Arthur Mutambara. The anti-senate Tsvangirai group appears to have maintained the bulk of the grassroots support. Sources indicate, however, that Bulawayo is said to be a stronghold of the pro-senate faction of the MDC led by Mutambara (US Department of State 2007, 'Elections and Political Participation' in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2006 – Zimbabwe*, 6 March – Attachment 11; International Crisis Group 2007, *Zimbabwe: An End to the Stalemate?*, Africa Report No. 122, 5 March, pp.8-9 – Attachment 12).

¹ Users should be aware that Wikipedia is a Web-based free-content encylopaedia which is written collaboratively by volunteers. Country Research recommends that users of Wikipedia familiarise themselves with the regulatory practices which Wikipedia employs as a preventative measure against vandalism, bias and inaccuracy.

² Lonely Planet guidebooks strive to provide travellers everywhere with reliable, comprehensive and independent travel information. Lonely Planet authors are seasoned travellers who are also writers and researchers. Travellers can also submit information on a voluntary basis. The guidebooks provide general information on the country's history, culture, environment, health and language. The guidebooks also provide information on cities and towns with reference to accommodation, transport and entertainment. Lonely Planet guidebooks provide useful maps of regions, cities and towns. Most Lonely Planet guidebooks are updated on a two-year cycle. Lonely Planet can be a useful research tool for general background information only such as the location of a place of worship in a town, the address of a post office, the contact details of a hospital, the time taken to travel from A to B etc. Care should be exercised when using Lonely Planet for any other reason.

According to information accessed from the Wikipedia website the MDC won all seven seats contested in the 2005 parliamentary elections. The successful MDC candidates were:

Bulawayo East: Prof. Welshman Ncube

Bulawayo South: David Coltart

Lobengula/Magwegwe: Fletcher Duluni Ncube
Makokoba: Thokozani Khuphe
Nkulumane: Gibson Sibanda
Pelandaba/Mpopoma: Milton Gwetu
Pumula-Luveve: Esaph Mdlongwa

('Results of the Zimbabwean parliamentary election, 2005' 2007, Wikipedia website,

3 March

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Results_of_the_Zimbabwe_parliamentary_elections,_200

5 – Accessed 26 March 2007 – Attachment 13).

Of the above members of parliament Welshman Ncube and Gibson Sibanda are aligned with the pro-senate Mutambara faction. It was reported that David Coltart joined the Mutambara faction in June 2006. The ICG also identified MDC spokesperson for Bulawayo as Priscilla Misihairambwi Mushonga in November 2005 ('MDC intra-party violence over senate poll' 2005, *IRIN*, 27 October – Attachment 14; International Crisis Group 2006, *Zimbabwe's Continuing Self-Destruction*, Africa Briefing No. 38, 6 June, p.1,5-6 – Attachment 15; 'David Coltart Joins Mutambara Faction' 2006, AllAfrica.com website, source: Zimbabwe Independent (Harare), 16 June http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200606160054.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 16; 'Coltart Joins Mutambara Faction' 2006, AllAfrica.com website, source: The Herald (Harare), 16 June http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200606160483.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 17).

The anti-senate Tsvangirai faction has named its leaders for Bulawayo, in undated information accessed from the MDC website, as:

Chairperson Agnes Mloyi
Secretary Reggie Moyo
Treasurer Siphiwe Ncube
Org. Secretary Victor Mapungwana
Women Chair Gladys Gombami
Youth Chair Thamsanga Ncube

('National Executive and Portfolio Secretaries' (undated), Movement for Democratic Change website http://www.mdczimbabwe.org/Profiles/NewNationalExecutive.htm – Accessed 23 March 2007 – Attachment 18).

5. Can you provide information on the activities of the MDC in the province of Bulawayo in 2006?

Reports on activities of the MDC in Bulawayo are outlined below.

Country information indicates that Bulawayo is a MDC stronghold. The ICG also noted that the majority of "rebel" (pro-senate Mutambara faction) branches are in the Matabele-speaking provinces including Bulawayo. The Mutambara faction has also been described as the "Bulawayo-based rebel grouping". An October 2005 article stated that the pro-senate faction "appeared to have gained control of the [MDC] offices in Bulawayo" (International

Crisis Group 2006, *Zimbabwe's Continuing Self-Destruction*, Africa Briefing No. 38, 6 June, footnote 44/p.6 – Attachment 15; Ncube, Njabulo 2006, 'Defections Hit Mutambara Faction', AllAfrica.com website, source: Financial Gazette (Harare), 12 April http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200604130772.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 19; 'MDC intra-party violence over senate poll' 2005, *IRIN*, 27 October – Attachment 14).

However, news articles state that following municipal elections in Bulawayo in 2006 the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party appears to be making inroads into the MDC stronghold (Matikinye, Ray 2006, 'Poll Loss a Wake Up Call for MDC', AllAfrica.com website, source: Zimbabwe Independent (Harare), 10 March http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200603100907.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 20; Ncube, Njabulo and Sibanda, Nkululeko 2006, 'Outrage Spreads Over Gukurahundi Remarks', AllAfrica.com website, source: Financial Gazette (Harare), 25 October http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200610260148.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 21).

On 25-26 February 2006 the pro-senate Mutambara faction held its congress in Bulawayo with an estimated 3,700 attendees. It was reported that during the congress Arthur Mutambara was elected president and amendments to the party's constitution were adopted which the rival Tsvangirai faction attacked (International Crisis Group 2006, *Zimbabwe's Continuing Self-Destruction*, Africa Briefing No. 38, 6 June, p.6 – Attachment 15; Banya, Nelson 2006, 'MDC War: Statistics, Statistics, Damn Statistics', AllAfrica.com website, source: Financial Gazette (Harare), 29 March http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200603300137.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 22). Mafunda, Kumbirai 2006, 'MDC Rebel Faction Amends Constitution', AllAfrica.com website, source: Financial Gazette (Harare), 1 March http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200603020755.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 23; 'Zimbabwe police raid opposition offices' 2006, *ISI Emerging Markets Africawire*, 20 March – Attachment 24).

According to Banya a Mutambara rally was also held in Bulawayo's White City Stadium on 19 March 2006, the same day an anti-senate faction congress in Harare, which retained Tsvangirai as president, finished. Estimates of the crowd at the rally varied widely, from 800 to 10,000 people; local journalists estimated the crowd at 1,200 (Banya, Nelson 2006, 'MDC War: Statistics, Statistics, Damn Statistics', AllAfrica.com website, source: Financial Gazette (Harare), 29 March http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200603300137.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 22).

In March 2006 it was reported by that the government continued a crackdown when police raided the MDC's offices in Bulawayo in search of weapons and "other subversive material" – none were found ('MDC Undeterred By Zanu-PF Threats On Protests' 2006, AllAfrica.com website, source: UN Integrated Regional Information Networks, 23 March http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200603230601.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 25).

An April 2006 article reported that the Bulawayo provincial executive "of the opposition MDC anti-senate faction" faced a no-confidence vote over the nomination of party's vice presidency. Party members questioned the removal of the name of Getrude Mthombeni from the vice-presidency list forwarded by the districts to the province. The vice-presidency

position was won by the Makokoba member of parliament Thokozani Khuphe (Dube, Loughty 2006, 'Trouble Brews Over Khuphe Election', AllAfrica.com website, source: Zimbabwe Independent (Harare), 7 April

http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200604070602.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 26).

A May 2006 article reported comments of Bulawayo MDC parliamentary members on the 33 people, mostly children under the age of five, who died of malnutrition in Bulawayo in January 2006 ('Malnutrition Kills 33 in Bulawayo' 2006, AllAfrica.com website, source: Zimbabwe Standard (Harare), 21 May

<u>http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200605220506.html</u> – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 27).

In November 2006 the Bulawayo High Court passed a default judgment against the MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai where he was sued for a total of \$80 million by four members of the rival MDC (Welshman Ncube, Gibson Sibanda, Fletcher Dulini Ncube and Paul Themba Nyathi) – each seeking \$20 million from Tsvangirai in defamation charges. One applicant in the case, Gift Chimanikire, withdrew after defecting to the Tsvangirai faction. The case was to resume without further notice to Tsvangirai or his lawyers ('Tsvangirai Loses Suit By Default' 2006, AllAfrica.com website, source: Zimbabwe Independent (Harare), 10 November http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200611100461.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 28).

6. Can you provide information on council elections in Bulawayo around October 2006?7. Did Zanu PF lose seats in the council elections in Bulawayo in October 2006?

Information in the sources consulted on the council elections in Bulawayo around October 2006 is scarce. No information was found in the sources consulted on ZANU-PF losing seats in Bulawayo council elections.

A news article, dated 25 October 2006, stated:

The MDC made a clean sweep of parliamentary seats in up to 90 percent of Matabeleland – including Bulawayo – in the 2000 general election, but the ruling party [ZANU-PF] has been steadily making in-roads into the MDC's strongholds, winning a number of wards in the recent Bulawayo council polls (Ncube, Njabulo and Sibanda, Nkululeko 2006, 'Outrage Spreads Over Gukurahundi Remarks', AllAfrica.com website, source: Financial Gazette (Harare), 25 October http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200610260148.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 21).

An earlier article, dated 10 March 2006, reported that two municipal wards in Bulawayo were lost by the MDC to ZANU-PF. The article continued:

Until last week, Zanu PF had not won either municipal or general polls in Bulawayo since 2000, much to the chagrin of ruling party leader President Mugabe who wondered why "the people of Matabeleland had put themselves in the political wilderness" during a campaign meeting in Tsholotsho in March last year (Matikinye, Ray 2006, 'Poll Loss a Wake Up Call for MDC', AllAfrica.com website, source: Zimbabwe Independent (Harare), 10 March http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200603100907.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 20).

A February 2007 article states that the MDC has 25 of the 29 wards in Bulawayo (Dawu, Julius 2007, "This is an attempt to destroy the local authorities", ZWNEWS.com website, source: Mail & Guardian (SA), 16 February http://www.zwnews.com/print.cfm?ArticleID=16067 – Accessed 20 April 2007 – Attachment 40).

The ICG has also reported that in the 2003 municipal council elections the MDC won all 29 of the elected council seats in Bulawayo (International Crisis Group 2005, *Zimbabwe's Operation Murambatsvina: The Tipping Point?*, Africa Report No. 97, 17 August, p.4/footnote 29 – Attachment 10).

8. Can you provide information about Gukurahunde (Gukurahundi)?

Gukurahundi is the term used for the actions taken by Robert Mugabe's Fifth Brigade in the Ndebele provinces of Matabeleland and Midlands in the mid to late 1980s. It has been estimated that some 20,000 people were killed, mostly the Ndebele people. The spectre of *Gukurahundi* was raised again in October 2006 by the ZANU-PF spokesman Nathan Shamuyarira.

Gukurahundi is a Shona term which means "'the early rain which washes away the chaff before the spring rains" ('Gukurahundi' 2007, Wikipedia website, 2 April http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gukurahundi – Accessed 5 April 2007 – Attachment 29; 'Surreal succession' 2006, *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 47, No. 23, 17 November, p.1 – Attachment 30).

The campaign is said to have lasted from 1982 to 1987 ending with the Unity Accord signed in December 1987 by Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo. Sithole and Makumbe, however, write that the *Gukurahundi* policy was adopted in 1979 and continued until the early 1990s ('Gukurahundi' 2007, Wikipedia website, 2 April http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gukurahundi – Accessed 5 April 2007 – Attachment 29; 'Surreal succession' 2006, *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 47, No. 23, 17 November, p.1 – Attachment 30; Sithole, Masipula and Makumbe, John 1997, 'The *Gukurahundi* Policy' in 'Elections in Zimbabwe: The ZANU (PF) Hegemony and its Incipient Decline', *African Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp.122-139 http://digital.lib.msu.edu/projects/africanjournals/pdfs/political%20science/volume2n1/ajps002001007.pdf – Accessed 18 April 2006 – Attachment 31).

Joshua Nkomo led the Ndebele-dominated Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). The Shona-dominated Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) was led initially by the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole and later by Robert Mugabe (UK Home Office 2007, *Country of Origin Information Report: Zimbabwe*, 21 February, para.3.02 – Attachment 32).

The UK Home Office summarises sources on *Gukurahundi* in the following terms:

MATABELELAND INSURGENCY 1983-87

3.05 Europa 2005 states that the alleged discovery of large caches of arms on ZAPU-owned properties in Matabeleland in 1982 led to Joshua Nkomo's dismissal from government office. Dissidents from Nkomo's former guerrilla force, ZIPRA, [Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army] perpetrated indiscriminate acts of violence. The Government responded by sending the North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade to Matabeleland in early 1983 to quell dissent. The mainly Shona Fifth Brigade was accused of committing atrocities against civilians in its 'pacification' campaign and it alienated support for the Government amongst

Matabeleland's Ndebele population. It has been estimated that as many as 10,000, civilians died during the Fifth Brigade's campaign...An article published by Worldpress.org on 12 March 2006 stated that the number killed could have been up to 20,000 civilians...(UK Home Office 2007, Country of Origin Information Report: Zimbabwe, 21 February, para.3.05 – Attachment 33).

A recent article notes that most of Bulawayo's citizens are from the minority Ndebele population ('Tensions simmer in Zimbabwe opposition stronghold' 2007, Africasia website, source: AFP, 17 March http://www.africasia .com/services/news/newsitem.php?area=africa&item=0703170 82739.vbxzfud0.php -Accessed 28 March 2007 – Attachment 34).

There are reports that the spectre of the Gukurahundi has continued.

According to a 2000 *Time Europe* article on the 2000 elections:

...Talk that the gukurahundi was back spread quickly through the rural population [in Matabeleland]. "With it came fear, insecurity and uncertainty," said elected mdc candidate Lovemore Moyo (Hawthorne, Peter 2000, 'Mugabe feels the chill', Time Europe, Vol. 156, No.2, 10 July – Attachment 35).

In 2001 Sithole wrote the ZANU-PF was the party of which the people in Matabeleland still identify with Gukurahundi atrocities (Sithole, Masipula 2001, 'Fighting Authoritarianism in Zimbabwe', Journal of Democracy, Vol. 12, No. 1, January, p.167 – Attachment 36).

A March 2005 report by the Social Movement delegation³ on the Independent Media Centre South Africa website states:

Without undertaking a process of reconciliation, Zimbabwean history is taut with fear that still affects the present. The Gukurahundi massacre in the early 1980s still weighs heavily on Ndebele people. People interviewed in Bulawayo broke into tears recounting how their families were decimated by the slaughter. The government admitted to killing 20,000 people in conditions it described as 'warfare'. Other sources describe the incursion into Matabeleland by the Fifth Brigade as tantamount to genocide in which 250,000 lives were claimed. Orphans of the conflict are still internally displaced people who have been denied citizenship. The need for protection of minority rights is felt by the Ndebele minority to be imperative for their security ('Report by Social Movement observer delegation to Zimbabwe' 2005, Independent Media Centre South Africa website, 22 March, p.5 http://southafrica.indymedia.org/news/2005/03/7803.php – Accessed 6 May 2005 –

Attachment 37).

The Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition invited members of South African social movements to visit Zimbabwe to observe the possibilities for a democratic poll. The six activists that constituted the delegation were drawn from the Anti Privatisation Forum (3), the Landless Peoples Movement – Gauteng (1) and Jubilee South Africa (2). From the 2nd to the 11th of March, Laurence Ntuli (APF) and Ndade Mxunya (Jubilee) met with civil society and local government representatives in Bulawayo, and Tumi Cayicayi (APF), Nicolas Dieltiens (APF), Paul Pie (Jubilee) and Bongani Xezwi (LPM -Gauteng) were sent to Harare ('Report by Social Movement observer delegation to Zimbabwe' 2005, Independent Media Centre South Africa website, 22 March, p.1

http://southafrica.indymedia.org/news/2005/03/7803.php - Accessed 6 May 2005 - Attachment 37).

³ According to the report:

In October 2006 the ZANU-PF spokesman, Nathan Shamuyrira, was quoted in a press report as saying the actions of the Fifth Brigade in the 1980s were "'not regrettable as they (the Brigade) were doing a job to protect the people". These remarks were deplored by the ZANU-PF national chairman (Ncube, Njabulo and Sibanda, Nkululeko 2006, 'Outrage Spreads Over Gukurahundi Remarks', AllAfrica.com website, source: Financial Gazette (Harare), 25 October http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200610260148.html – Accessed 16 April 2007 – Attachment 21).

Minority Rights Group International also reported:

Shortly after his [Mugabe's] 1980 election, following the ouster of white supremacist Ian Smith's regime, Mugabe summoned nationalism among the Shona people – comprising about 70 per cent of the population – to consolidate his power and sideline his greatest liberation rival, the Ndebele tribesman Joshua Nkomo. It is estimated that Mugabe's 'Gukurahundi' pogrom in the Ndebele heartlands of Matabeleland and the Midlands from 1983 to 1987 resulted in 10,000–20,000 killings. In recent years, Mugabe has discriminated against opposition supporters, and thus many Ndebele, in distribution of food aid necessitated by his economic policies. In October 2006, Mugabe's party spokesman resurrected bitterness over Gukurahundi, saying he had no regrets about the atrocities (Minority Rights Group International 2007, *State of the World's Minorities 2007*, March, p.59 – Attachment 38).

List of Sources Consulted

Internet Sources:

Google search engine http://www.google.com.au/ All Africa website http://allafrica.com/search.html

Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)
BACIS (DIMA Country Information database)
REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)
ISYS (RRT Country Research database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)
RRT Library Catalogue

List of Attachments

- 1. *Africa South of the Sahara 2003* 2003, Europa Publications, 32nd edition, London, p.1190. (MRT-RRT Library)
- Mawarire, Matseliso 2007, 'Police left a trail of destruction at Harvest House', Zimdaily.com website, 29 March http://zimdaily.com/news/117/ARTICLE/1480/2007-03-29.html – Accessed 30 March 2007.
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- 27. 'Malnutrition Kills 33 in Bulawayo' 2006, AllAfrica.com website, source: Zimbabwe Standard (Harare), 21 May http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200605220506.html Accessed 16 April 2007.
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 http://digital.lib.msu.edu/projects/africanjournals/pdfs/political%20science/volume2n1/ajps002001007.pdf Accessed 18 April 2006.
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