



Australian Government
Refugee Review Tribunal

Country Advice

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe – ZWE36402 – Movement for Democratic Change – ZANU-PF – Green Bombers – National Youth Service – ZRP – CIO

21 April 2010

1. Please provide an overview of the current political situation in Zimbabwe.

As a result of the 2008 general elections, the political situation in Zimbabwe remains complex. A unity government, comprised of two opposing political parties - the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) are now engaged in a power sharing arrangement through the Global Political Agreement (GPA). Under this agreement, Robert Mugabe, leader of the ZANU-PF, remained the President of Zimbabwe whilst Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the MDC, became the Prime Minister.

The most recent US Department of State (USDOS) Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Zimbabwe for 2009 states that:

In September 2008 the three parties signed the Global Political Agreement (GPA), a power-sharing agreement under which Mugabe would retain the presidency and Tsvangirai would become prime minister-elect. On February 11, Tsvangirai was sworn in as prime minister. On February 13, new cabinet ministers and deputy ministers from MDC-T, MDC-M, and ZANU-PF were sworn in.¹

This power sharing agreement between ZANU-PF and MDC “marks a sort of resolution to a political crisis that has been ongoing in the country since the disputed 2008 elections.”²

However, under the GPA, the MDC and ZANU-PF were unable to reach agreement on several issues including the distribution of portfolio ministries between the parties. Therefore, the GPA did not create a government of unity, but instead has led to a political stalemate due to the fact that the ZANU-PF has retained most of its power and continues to dominate the Zimbabwean government. Further, factions of the ZANU-PF still engage in politically motivated violence against Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) supporters and any other people perceived to be opponents to their party as stated in the following reports:

- The USDOS 2009 report states that:

Security forces, the police, and ZANU-PF-dominated elements of the government continued to engage in the pervasive and systematic abuse of human rights. ZANU-PF’s dominant control and manipulation of the political process through trumped-up charges and arbitrary arrest, intimidation, and corruption effectively negated the right of citizens to change their government.³

- According to a Stratfor Global Intelligence article published in 2009, “the move does not mean that actual power is being transferred from ZANU-PF to the MDC, however...the

¹ US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, US State Department website, 11 March <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135984.htm> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 1.

² ‘Zimbabwe: A Power-Sharing Deal with No Real Sharing of Power’ 2009, Stratfor Global Intelligence website, 30 January <http://www.stratfor.com> – Accessed 8 April 2010 – Attachment 2.

³ US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, US State Department website, 11 March <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135984.htm> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 1.

power-sharing agreement is structured in such a way that ZANU-PF has not really given up much actual power to the opposition.”⁴

- Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that the signing of the GPA did not bring to an end the ZANU-PF’s attacks on its opponents and critics. It continued to use state institutions against MDC supporters, civil society activists and human rights defenders.⁵ Further and notwithstanding the implementation of this power sharing agreement, HRW in February 2010 reported that: “there has been no meaningful political transition, and that ZANU-PF continues to engage in political violence against perceived opponents.”⁶

For further reading and background information, please see the previous RRT Research Responses below:

- *RRT Research Response ZWE35970*⁷ dated January 2010 provides at question one background information on the political situation in Zimbabwe, from the signing of the GPA up to December 2009. It states that the MDC-ZANU-PF Coalition Government faced several problems including difficulties in reaching agreement on issues such as the distribution of ministries as well as alleged attacks on MDC supporters. Despite this, Zimbabweans saw the Coalition Government as providing relative stability after years of chaos.
- *Research Response ZWE35086*⁸ from June 2009 states that the overall level of political violence in Zimbabwe has decreased compared to 2008. However, the human rights situation remains fragile and whilst the security sector remains in the hands of ZANU-PF and the culture of impunity remains entrenched in Zimbabwe, there is the potential for violence to re-surface.
- *RRT Research Response ZWE34457*⁹ dated February 2009 provides further information on the power sharing arrangements of the coalition Government. A *BBC News* article published September 2008¹⁰ also provides an extensive outline of the Global Political Agreement.

2. Please outline recent political incidents particularly in Bindura, Zimbabwe.

Non-government organisations and media reports indicate that the situation in Zimbabwe is still considered to be fragile and localised incidents are still occurring. For example, in early March 2010, the Executive Director of Zimbabwe Human Rights was reported as saying: “members of civil society are receiving text messages warning them against pursuing their mandate to conduct civic education in rural areas on the constitution making process.”¹¹ The article chronicles several incidents including one occurring in Bindura that has been reported in multiple media articles including:

- On 4th March, SW Radio Africa reported that three members of the Bindura Civic Education Trust were arrested: “meanwhile in Bindura, some facilitators belonging to the Civic Education

⁴ ‘Zimbabwe: A Power-Sharing Deal with No Real Sharing of Power’ 2009, Stratfor Global Intelligence website, 30 January <http://www.stratfor.com> – Accessed 8 April 2010 – Attachment 2.

⁵ Human Rights Watch 2009, ‘Crisis without Limits: Human Rights and Humanitarian Consequences of Political Repression in Zimbabwe’ January www.hrw.com Part V p.24 – Attachment 3.

⁶ Human Rights Watch 2010, ‘Zimbabwe One Year On, Reform a Failure’ 2010, 12 February <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/02/12/zimbabwe-one-year-reform-failure> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 4.

⁷ RRT Research & Information 2010, *RRT Research Response ZWE35970*, 5 January – Attachment 5.

⁸ RRT Research & Information 2009, *RRT Research Response ZWE35086*, 1 July – Attachment 6.

⁹ RRT Research & Information 2009, *RRT Research Response ZWE34457*, 13 February – Attachment 7.

¹⁰ ‘Zimbabwe deal: Key points’ 2008, *BBC News*, 15 September <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7617731.stm> – Accessed 4 January 2010 – Attachment 8.

¹¹ ‘Zimbabwe’s security forces threaten Civil Society Organisations’, 2010, ZIMDIASPORA website, 3 March http://www.zimdiaspora.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2888:zimbabwes-security-forces-threaten-civil-society-organisations&catid=38:travel-tips&Itemid=18 – Accessed 12 April 2010 – Attachment 9.

Trust (Civnet), Taurai Chigunwe, Tinashe Madzimbamuto and Faustino Mukakati, were arrested last week for allegedly holding a public meeting.”¹²

The following reports highlight the occurrence of political incidents in other areas of Zimbabwe and demonstrate that the overall situation in Zimbabwe is still unstable:

- A recent media report from the Zimbabwe Metro, dated 6 March 2010 states:

Three teachers in Masvingo are nursing wounds at Gunikuni clinic after they were severely beaten by Zanu PF youths for refusing to demonstrate against Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai for failing to end western sanctions on Zimbabwe... This is happening country wide, teachers are forced to condemn Tsvangirai and in some cases they are told to arrange demonstrations.¹³
- A media article from *The Zimbabwean* dated 4 March 2010, reported that “despite what was thought to be the dawn of a new era for human rights defenders with the formation of a Government of National Unity, the last three months have seen an escalation in the number of threats, intimidation and harassment levelled against members of civil society.”¹⁴
- An article published on a Zimbabwe Diaspora website on the 3 March 2010, states that security forces are threatening Civil Society Organisations. The article reports that: ‘Zimbabwe’s state security agents have stepped up threats, harassment and intimidation of members of the civil society to force them to stop their work in defending human rights and campaigning for a truly democratic Zimbabwe constitution.’¹⁵
- A Human Rights Report dated February 2010 indicates that political opponents have continued to be targeted by different factions of the ZANU-PF as stated below:

Groups of war veterans and ZANU-PF youth, who have been deployed in the past to target the opposition, remain intact. For example, in the first week of February 2010, police disrupted MDC-organized constitutional reform meetings, beat up participants, and arbitrarily arrested 43 people in Binga, 48 in Masvingo, and 52 in Mt. Darwin.¹⁶

3. Please provide an outline of the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF).

The Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) was formed in 1963 as a result of a split in the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU). By 1976, Robert Mugabe was widely recognised as the leader of ZANU and he formed a political alliance, the Patriotic Front (PF), with ZAPU under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo. This alliance eventually broke down, and during the 1980 assembly election Mugabe’s party campaigned as ZANU-PF, and Nkomo’s party as PF.¹⁷ Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980 and Mugabe and the ZANU-PF were in power from this time until 2008. According to the International Crisis Group:

¹² Bell, A. 2010, ‘Zimbabwe: Civil Society Warns of Worsening Rights Abuse’, AllAfrica website SW Radio Africa (London), 4 March <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/201003040960.html> – Accessed 9 April 2010 – Attachment 10.

¹³ ‘Green Bombers Force Teachers to Demonstrate against MDC-T’ 2010, Metro Zimbabwe website, 6 March <http://www.zimbabwemetro.com/news/green-bombers-force-teachers-to-demonstrate-against-mdc-t/> – Accessed 9 April 2010 – Attachment 11.

¹⁴ ‘Zimrights/zlhr concerned about rising threats, harassment against human rights defenders’ 2010, *The Zimbabwean*, 4 March <http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/2010030429309/human-rights/zimrights/zlhr-concerned-about-rising-threats-harrasment-against-human-rights-defenders.html> – Accessed 9 April 2010 – Attachment 12.

¹⁵ ‘Zimbabwe’s security forces threaten Civil Society Organisations’, 2010, ZIMDIASPORA website, 3 March http://www.zimdiaspora.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2888:zimbabwes-security-forces-threaten-civil-society-organisations&catid=38:travel-tips&Itemid=18 – Accessed 12 April 2010 – Attachment 9.

¹⁶ Human Rights Watch 2010, ‘Zimbabwe One Year On, Reform a Failure’ 2010, 12 February <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/02/12/zimbabwe-one-year-reform-failure> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 4.

¹⁷ Banks, Arthur & Muller, Thomas C. (eds) 2009, ‘Zimbabwe’, *Political Handbook of the World Online Edition*, CQ Press, Washington DC <http://library.cqpress.com/phw/index.php> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 13.

Mugabe, with his ZANU party, came to power in 1980 as Africa's most feted leader, after a UK-brokered agreement ended a protracted guerrilla war against the white minority government of Ian Smith. The early 1980s were marked by a five-year brutal repression in Matabeleland and Midlands against the minority Ndebele population that supported rival ZAPU. ZAPU was later forced into a merger, leaving Mugabe head of a de facto one party state, under ZANU-PF, by 1987.¹⁸

The 2009 *Political Handbook of the World – Zimbabwe* states that:

Despite the schisms within ZANU-PF, Mugabe was re-elected without opposition as party president in 1999. Subsequently, in controversial balloting, ZANU-PF retained a narrow majority in the assembly in June 2000, and Mugabe was re-elected to another term as president in March 2002. With the rise of factionalism within ZANU-PF, party solidarity began to disintegrate in 2004.¹⁹

By 2007, international pressure had built for Mugabe to hold free and fair elections which he scheduled for March 2008. According to a US Report to Congress paper titled '*Zimbabwe: 2008 Elections and Implications for U.S. Policy*', dated 2008:

Following the violent March 2007 assault by police on government critics, which drew widespread international criticism, South African President Thabo Mbeki initiated a mediation effort between the Government of Zimbabwe and the opposition. The main objective of the mediation, as described by Mbeki, was to create political conditions for free and fair elections, the results of which would be accepted by all parties. Although the negotiations resulted in the amendment of some laws seen as restricting press freedom and political activity, the talks were abandoned after Mugabe announced that elections would be held on March 29, 2008.²⁰

The March 2008 elections were Zimbabwe's first attempt at holding "harmonised" elections for all levels of government (local, National Assembly, Senate, and presidential) simultaneously.²¹ The result of these elections is stated in the USDOS whereby "the outcome of the March 2008 election resulted in the two factions of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) gaining a parliamentary majority."²²

As observed in 2009 by The International Crisis Group in a report titled '*A way forward for Zimbabwe*':

Despite the skewed playing field, Zimbabwe's people clearly signaled their rejection of the status quo: for the first time, ZANU-PF lost control of parliament to the MDC, which made unprecedented gains in rural areas.

Mugabe and his hardline supporters moved to force victory, withholding the results of the presidential election and launching a countrywide campaign of violence and intimidation. Tsvangirai withdrew from a second round presidential run-off set for 27 June over election violence, leaving Mugabe open to claim his sixth term in office on 29 June. Amid rising international condemnation, talks between ZANU-PF and the two MDC factions began on 24 July under the mediation of South African President Mbeki. After

¹⁸ International Crisis Group 2009, '*A way forward for Zimbabwe*', August <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3535> – Accessed 9 April 2010 – Attachment 14.

¹⁹ Banks, Arthur & Muller, Thomas C. (eds) 2009, '*Zimbabwe*', *Political Handbook of the World Online Edition*, CQ Press, Washington DC <http://library.cqpress.com/phw/index.php> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 13.

²⁰ Ploch, L. 2008, '*Zimbabwe: 2008 Elections and Implications for U.S. Policy*', Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, Foreign Press Centre website, 22 May <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/106142.pdf> – Accessed 9 April 2010 – Attachment 15.

²¹ Ploch, L. 2008, '*Zimbabwe: 2008 Elections and Implications for U.S. Policy*', Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, Foreign Press Centre website, 22 May <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/106142.pdf> – Accessed 9 April 2010 – Attachment 15.

²² US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, US State Department website, 11 March <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135984.htm> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 1.

stop-start negotiations, a power-sharing deal between Mugabe and Tsvangirai was eventually signed on 11 September.²³

Nonetheless, violence and intimidation have continued to be reported since the establishment of the power sharing deal. The USDOS for 2009 reported that: “the government or its agents committed politically motivated, arbitrary, and unlawful killings during the year... The killings were primarily committed by members of ZANU-PF, ZANU-PF youth militia, war veterans, and, to a lesser extent, members of the military and police.”²⁴ The major factions of ZANU-PF are discussed in detail below:

a) **The National Youth Service (ZANU-PF Youth)**

The UK Home Office states that according to Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment Country Profile – Zimbabwe, dated February 2009, “the National Youth Service programme was established in 2001 and is ostensibly a post-school ideological and vocational training scheme for those who are seeking to enter further education or government service.” It further reports that:

The mission of the National Youth Service is to ‘transform and empower youths for nation building through life skills training and leadership development’. However, members of the service are thought to be taught using ZANU-PF speeches and campaign material and have been condemned by the West and Africa for carrying out gross human rights violations on behalf of the party.²⁵

The USDOS Report for 2009 also noted that:

The government gave preference to national youth service graduates among those entering and those seeking employment in the civil service, especially in the security forces. The stated purpose of the training camps was to instil national pride in youth, highlight the history of the struggle for independence, and develop employment skills; however, news reports quoted deserters as saying that the camps subjected trainees to partisan political indoctrination as well as military training. There were numerous credible reports that graduates were used by the government to carry out political violence.²⁶

b) **Green Bombers (Youth Brigade)**

The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada reports that the Green Bombers are:

[s]o named because of their green uniforms, are also commonly referred to as the “youth militia” and the “Zanu-PF militia” The youth militia are trainees of Zimbabwe’s National Youth Service program established in 2001. The NYS program has reportedly involved military training, including weapons training and lessons in the doctrines of the ruling party, the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front.²⁷

The USDOS report for 2009 states that “youth militia and war veterans trained by ZANU-PF were also deployed to harass and intimidate members of the opposition, labour, student

²³ International Crisis Group 2009, ‘A way forward for Zimbabwe’, August

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3535> – Accessed 9 April 2010 – Attachment 14.

²⁴ US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, US State Department website, 11 March <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135984.htm> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 1.

²⁵ UK Home Office 2009, *Country of Origin Information Report: Zimbabwe*, 23 December, p.51

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs09/zimbabwe-231209.doc> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 16.

²⁶ US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, US State Department website, 11 March <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135984.htm> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 1.

²⁷ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2006, ZWE101403.E : ‘Zimbabwe: The Green Bombers or the youth militia; whether it is still operating; its leadership; whether it commits human rights abuses and if so, whether the militia’s abuses have been reported to the police and police response; whether it targets MDC supporters(2001 – 2006)’ Refworld website, 22 June <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,QUERYRESPONSE,ZWE,456d621e2,45f147ce2f,0.html> – Accessed 9 April 2010 - Attachment 17.

movement, civic groups, and journalists considered critical of the government, and white farmers and their employees.”²⁸ A report by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), updated 9 June 2008, provides further details of actions undertaken by the Green Bombers:

The youth militia, also known as the Green Bombers, is part of Zimbabwe’s National Youth Service, a program started in 2000. They loot land owned by white farmers, beat opposition members, and rape women and girls linked to opposition groups (NYT). Ahead of elections, they are charged with distributing food aid and intimidating voters. In April 2008, veterans and youth militias began targeting MDC members and supporters in a campaign of violence and oppression that included a network of illegal detention centers.²⁹

The following media article indicates the on-going influence and fear that the Green Bombers perpetuate throughout Zimbabwe:

- A UK media article from *The Telegraph*, published in November 2009 states that:

Meanwhile, inside Zimbabwe Mugabe is, as always, planning for the future. Earlier this month he was photographed inspecting a passing out parade of the latest graduates of his “Green Bombers” youth league, an indoctrination programme that costs an estimated \$6 million a year. The Green Bombers are the enforcers of ZANU PF’s hardline policies, deployed in opposition strongholds and in the rural areas far beyond of the reach of the international media, terrorising ordinary citizens and suppressing by force any dissent.

If Mugabe does live long enough to contest another election – the one that, according to the GPA, will be free and fair – Zimbabweans fear it will be preceded by another campaign of killing, kidnapping and torture at the hands of the Green Bombers.³⁰

c) **Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP)**

The USDOS report for 2009 states that “the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) is responsible for maintaining law and order. Although the ZRP officially is under the authority of the Ministry of Home Affairs, in practice the president’s office, through the Joint Operations Command (JOC), controlled some roles and missions.”³¹

The UK Country Origin Information (COI) reports that according to Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment Country Profile – Zimbabwe, dated February 2009, states that:

Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP): The force is an armed, quasi-military organisation, which is modelled more along the lines of a military gendarmerie than a civilian police force. It has approximately 20,000 full-time members and is deployed throughout the country. Its presence is most evident in cities and towns, but thinly spread in rural areas. It is responsible to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Following the signing of the power-sharing agreement in September 2008, one of the key portfolios fought over by the political rivals was that of Home Affairs. Subsequently, as per a recommendation of the regional Southern African Development Community (SADC), the portfolio was initially to be co-managed by Robert Mugabe’s Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and Morgan Tsvangirai’s Movement for Democratic Change formation (MDC-T).³²

²⁸ US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, US State Department website, 11 March <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135984.htm> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 1.

²⁹ Hanson, S. 2008, ‘Zimbabwe’s Security Sector’ Council on Foreign Relations website <http://www.cfr.org/publication/15793/> – Accessed 9 April 2010 – Attachment 18.

³⁰ Boynton, G. 2009, ‘Robert Mugabe: will Zimbabwe be let back into Commonwealth?’ *The Telegraph*, 28 November <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/zimbabwe/6671136/Robert-Mugabe-will-Zimbabwe-be-let-back-into-Commonwealth.html> – Accessed 9 April 2010 – Attachment 19.

³¹ US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, US State Department website, 11 March <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135984.htm> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 1.

³² UK Home Office 2009, *Country of Origin Information Report: Zimbabwe*, 23 December, p.42-43 <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs09/zimbabwe-231209.doc> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 16.

A media article from *The Herald* published in February 2010, reports that the ZRP is cracking down on corrupt policeman and states that: ‘a Bindura policeman was last week arrested after he was found in possession of a diamond while on duty at a roadblock.’³³

A Human Rights Watch report states that:

Since the formation of the power-sharing government, a pattern has developed in which MDC legislators and activists are targeted for arrest by the police and the Office of the Attorney General on apparently baseless charges.

...the police in Zimbabwe continue to harass members of the media and to improperly limit the right to free expression.

...While police have been quick to make these kinds of arrests based on politically motivated charges, no action has been taken against those who attack MDC members and supporters.³⁴

The HRW *World Report 2010* states that the ZANU-PF and its supporters have continued to violently invade commercial farms in total disregard of the rule of law, and police intimidation and harassment of MDC and human rights activists persist unabated. Police, prosecuting authorities, and court officials aligned with ZANU-PF have persecuted MDC legislators and activists through politically motivated prosecutions.³⁵

d) Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO)

The UK Home Office reports that according to Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessments, Zimbabwe updated in February 2009, the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) of Zimbabwe:

Was formed by the Rhodesian authorities in the late 1960s as the country’s main civilian intelligence agency. It was later taken over by the Zimbabwe government, ideologically re-oriented and placed under the Ministry of National Security in order to adopt a protective role for the new regime.³⁶

The 2009 USDOS report states that the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO), under the Ministry of State for National Security, is responsible for internal and external security.³⁷

A report in 2008 by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) in regards to Zimbabwe’s security sector noted that:

Experts say the most powerful arm of Zimbabwe’s security apparatus is the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO). It is the ‘brains behind the regime,’ ... and [is] deeply feared by Zimbabweans inside and outside the country. There is no public record of the CIO’s size, but it is thought to have thousands of operatives. Many Zimbabweans think the organization has a network of informers that extends into the Zimbabwean diaspora. Within Zimbabwe, CIO agents have infiltrated the MDC, and are believed to have covertly taken over two newspapers in 2006. Organizations such as Human Rights Watch have documented systematic acts of violence and intimidation committed by the CIO and the police against opposition members or individuals suspected of allegiance to the opposition.³⁸

³³ ‘Zimbabwe: ZRP Cracks Down On Corrupt Cops’ 2010, AllAfrica website – *The Herald*, 16 February <http://allafrica.com/stories/201002160040.html> – Accessed 12 April 2010 – Attachment 20.

³⁴ Human Rights Watch 2009, *False Dawn – The Zimbabwe Power-Sharing Government’s Failure to Deliver human rights improvements*, August 31 <http://www.hrw.org/node/85306> – Accessed 14 April 2010 – Attachment 21.

³⁵ Human Rights Watch 2010, *World Report 2010* <http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2010> – Accessed 14 April 2010 – Attachment 22.

³⁶ UK Home Office 2009, *Country of Origin Information Report: Zimbabwe*, 23 December, p. 49 <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs09/zimbabwe-231209.doc> – Accessed 23 March 2010 - Attachment 16.

³⁷ US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, US State Department website, 11 March <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135984.htm> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 1.

³⁸ Hanson, S. 2008, ‘Zimbabwe’s Security Sector’ Council on Foreign Relations website <http://www.cfr.org/publication/15793/> – Accessed 9 April 2010 – Attachment 18.

4. Please provide an outline of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC).

According to the website for the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), the party was formed in 1999 as a result of the “need for a political movement to directly and politically confront the Zanu PF Government with a view to seeking the people’s mandate to form an alternative government”.³⁹ The party reportedly has its roots in Zimbabwe’s labour movement, but is also “backed by business, church, women’s organisations, students, human rights and civic groups, the impoverished rural population and the urban poor.”⁴⁰

The *Political Handbook of the World – Zimbabwe*, states that:

The MDC was an outgrowth of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions and the National Constitutional Assembly ZCTU/NCA. Its core components included workers, students, middle-class intellectuals, civil rights activists, and white corporate executives opposed to the perceived corruption of the ZANU-PF government as well as its management of the economy...The MDC was the first opposition party to have broad inter-ethnic appeal and challenge the ruling party for every elected seat. Party leader Morgan Tsvangirai narrowly lost to President Mugabe in the controversial 2002 presidential election.”⁴¹

In October 2005, the MDC split into two factions known as MDC-T and MDC-M for their respective leaders, Morgan Tsvangirai and Arthur Mutambara. Overtime, both factions realised that their common goal was to defeat the ZANU-PF and so they contested the 2008 elections as a coalition.

The March 2008 election was a volatile time in Zimbabwe as stated by the *Political Handbook of the World– Zimbabwe*:

Leading up to the 2008 elections, tensions heightened within the MDC when Tsvangirai supporters attacked the Matibenga faction during a march on MDC headquarters in November...Before the presidential election in March and the runoff in June 2008, violence against the MDC increased but ultimately, the MDC won the most seats in the assembly, despite weakening party alliances and alleged intimidation by ZANU-PF.⁴²

Against a background of continuing violence, Amnesty International reported that increased “Efforts by SADC [Southern African Development Community] to find a political settlement between ZANU-PF and the two formations of the MDC resulted in a political agreement signed in September [2008].⁴³

The impact of the Global Political Agreement (as outlined in question 1) on the MDC was discussed by the International Crisis Group (ICG) which reported on 20 April 2009, that:

The MDC’s decision to “... join the government was made amid major divisions within the party.” The Global Political Agreement, signed in mid September 2008, was seen by both factions of the MDC as an uneasy compromise that left them as the junior partners, but provided them with a reasonably viable route to power.⁴⁴

The International Crisis Group also reported in March 2010 on the apparent dysfunction of the unity government currently operating in Zimbabwe. The report states that:

³⁹ ‘About MDC’ (undated), Movement for Democratic Change website <http://www.mdczimbabwe.org/About/about.htm> – Accessed 23 March 2007 – Attachment 23.

⁴⁰ ‘About MDC’ (undated), Movement for Democratic Change website <http://www.mdczimbabwe.org/About/about.htm> – Accessed 23 March 2007 – Attachment 23.

⁴¹ Banks, Arthur & Muller, Thomas C. (eds) 2009, ‘Zimbabwe’, *Political Handbook of the World Online Edition*, CQ Press, Washington DC <http://library.cqpress.com/phw/index.php> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 13.

⁴² Banks, Arthur & Muller, Thomas C. (eds) 2009, ‘Zimbabwe’, *Political Handbook of the World Online Edition*, CQ Press, Washington DC <http://library.cqpress.com/phw/index.php> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 13.

⁴³ UK Home Office 2009, *Country of Origin Information Report: Zimbabwe*, 23 December, p. 22 <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs09/zimbabwe-231209.doc> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 16.

⁴⁴ UK Home Office 2009, *Country of Origin Information Report: Zimbabwe*, 23 December, p. 22 <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs09/zimbabwe-231209.doc> – Accessed 23 March 2010 – Attachment 16.

As Zimbabwe enters its second year under a unity government, the challenges to democratic transformation have come into sharp focus. Despite reasonable progress in restoring political and social stability, ending widespread repression and stabilising the economy since February 2009, major threats could still derail the reform process.

...But major concerns undermining the transition process have come to the fore. Hardline generals and other Mugabe loyalists in ZANU-PF are refusing to implement the government's decisions, boycotting the new national security organ and showing public disdain for Tsvangirai.⁴⁵

For further background information on the establishment of the MDC, please see *RRT Research Response ZWE31560* dated 5 April 2007.⁴⁶

Attachments

1. US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, US State Department website, 11 March <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135984.htm> – Accessed 23 March 2010.
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