



## Zimbabwe - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Wednesday 30 & Thursday 31 January 2019

### Information on the current security situation

A report issued in January 2019 by *Human Rights Watch* commenting on events of 2018 states that:

“Relatively peaceful national elections marred by disputed results and post-election violence signified that little had changed in Zimbabwe in 2018” (Human Rights Watch (17 January 2019) *World Report 2019: Zimbabwe*, p.1).

In January 2019 *Amnesty International* states in a document that:

“As a result of the crackdown at least eight people have reportedly been killed by the security forces and 200 arbitrarily detained” (Amnesty International (15 January 2019) *Zimbabwe: Crackdown escalates on protests over massive fuel price hikes, hundreds arrested*).

A document published by *Human Rights Watch* in January 2019 notes:

“Zimbabwe security forces fatally shot at least five people and wounded 25 others during a crackdown on nationwide protests beginning January 14, 2019...” (Human Rights Watch (16 January 2019) *Zimbabwe: Security Forces Fire on Protesters*).

A report released in January 2019 by the *International Crisis Group* states that:

“The scale of violence is the worst the country has witnessed in some time” (International Crisis Group (18 January 2019) *Revolt and Repression in Zimbabwe*, p.3).

The *Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum* in January 2019 states that:

“Reports of violence and torture have continued to trickle in from all corners of the country” (Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (25 January 2019) *#ZimShutdown Human Rights Update – 25 January 2019*).

A report released in January 2019 by *Amnesty International* states that:

“At least 12 people have been killed and dozens more injured by the security forces since protests began on 14 January. Up to 700 people, including minors, have been detained after being arrested on trumped-up charges, or brought before courts in hearings that do not meet fair trial standards. Hundreds have been denied bail” (Amnesty International (25 January 2019) *Zimbabwe: Security forces must be held accountable for the brutal assault on human rights*).

In January 2019 the *Southern Africa Litigation Centre* notes that:

“The Southern Africa Litigation Centre (SALC) is concerned with reports of serious human rights violations and commission of atrocities by the police forces,

government armed forces and ZANU PF members in Zimbabwe since Monday 14 January” (Southern Africa Litigation Centre (25 January 2019) *News Release: International Crimes being committed in Zimbabwe*)

BBC News in January 2019 notes:

“...criticism of the way security forces have handled recent protests” (BBC News (28 January 2019) *Zimbabwe President Mnangagwa 'appalled' by attack on protester*).

In January 2019 the *Armed Conflict Location and Events Dataset* states in a report that

“As of January 2019, the state has cracked down on demonstrations at a rate comparable to that of Mugabe in the decade before his ousting” (Armed Conflict Location and Events Dataset (29 January 2019) *The fangs beneath the facade: repression under Zimbabwe’s new regime*, p.2).

The *Guardian* in January 2019 points out that:

“Internal Zimbabwean police documents passed to the Guardian suggest the army has been responsible for murder, rape and armed robbery during the ongoing brutal crackdown in the southern African country” (Guardian (30 January 2019) *Zimbabwean police files implicate army in widespread abuses*).

This document also states that:

“At least 12 people are thought to have died when security forces opened fire on civilians during a three-day shutdown called by unions after a fuel price rise this month. One police officer is believed to have been killed. The death toll is expected to rise. The violence is the worst in Zimbabwe for at least a decade and has dashed any remaining hopes that the end of the 37-year rule of the autocratic leader Robert Mugabe 14 months ago would lead to significant political reform” (ibid, pp.1-2).

*Reuters* in January 2019 states that:

“Mnangagwa’s government has come under severe criticism for a crackdown on protestors that rights groups say killed at least 12 people and injured scores. Police say three people died. The president, who took over in 2017 when his predecessor Robert Mugabe was forced to resign after a coup, promised during campaigning for a presidential election last year to repair the economy and break with Mugabe’s politics. But the crackdown has alarmed rights groups, who fear a return to the authoritarian regime that characterized much of the Mugabe era, and have demanded the government investigate reports of rape and other abuses by security forces” (Reuters (31 January 2019) *Rapes by Zimbabwe troops go unreported as victims fear reprisals*).

## References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre 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. Please read in full all documents referred to.

### **Sources Consulted**

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