

# **ZIMBABWE HUMAN RIGHTS NGO FORUM**

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## **POLITICAL VIOLENCE REPORT: FEBRUARY 2003**

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14 March 2003

A report by the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum

## OVERVIEW

In the month of February, the ZRP officers appeared to be the principal perpetrators of human rights abuses, particularly in the unlawful arrest and torture of civilians. It appears that the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) has been the main basis of arrests of journalists, pastors, and clergy, members of parliament and ordinary citizens. The Human Rights Forum condemns the use of various sections of POSA to curtail people's constitutional rights, particularly the right to freedom of association, assembly and expression. The arrests in February 2003 of organisers of a Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition meeting at Northside Community Church; of 23 pastors and members of clergy on their way to present a petition to the Deputy Commissioner of Police at Police General Headquarters and of 70 persons marching for love against all forms of violence on Valentines Day in a procession organised by Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) have illustrated the extent to which the Public Order and Security Act (predominantly sections 16, 17, 19 – 22) is being misapplied to effect unlawful arrests.

All persons in the above named sections had given the regulating officer in their respective areas "four clear days' written notice" of their intention to hold a gathering as prescribed by S24 of POSA. However the perception by regulating police officers in the respective areas that they have the right to give permission for gatherings and take away such permission at random has resulted in arrests when the police have no reasonable suspicion that the person being placed under arrest has committed a crime. Prima facie, there appears to be a tendency to arrest and then investigate in order to arrive at reasonable suspicion.

Cases of assault have apparently continued in the country, with assault remaining as one of the major weapons employed by various individuals to coerce civilians into supporting the political parties that they personally support. In Kuwadzana constituency where a parliamentary by-election is due on March 29 and 30, one victim, S, and his four friends claim that ZANU PF supporters attacked them with clenched fists because they are supporters of the opposition MDC. Keresenzia Musonza (MDC Branch Chairperson for Kuwadzana 3) claims that she was stripped naked, assaulted, and left unconscious by ZANU PF youths on allegations that she was Morgan Tsvangirai's prostitute. In Chitungwiza, fifteen scholars, suspected to be MDC supporters, claim that ZANU PF youth militia assaulted them with open hands, threatened them with unspecified action, and chased them away from their homes, on allegations of intending to interrupt the cricket match in Harare.

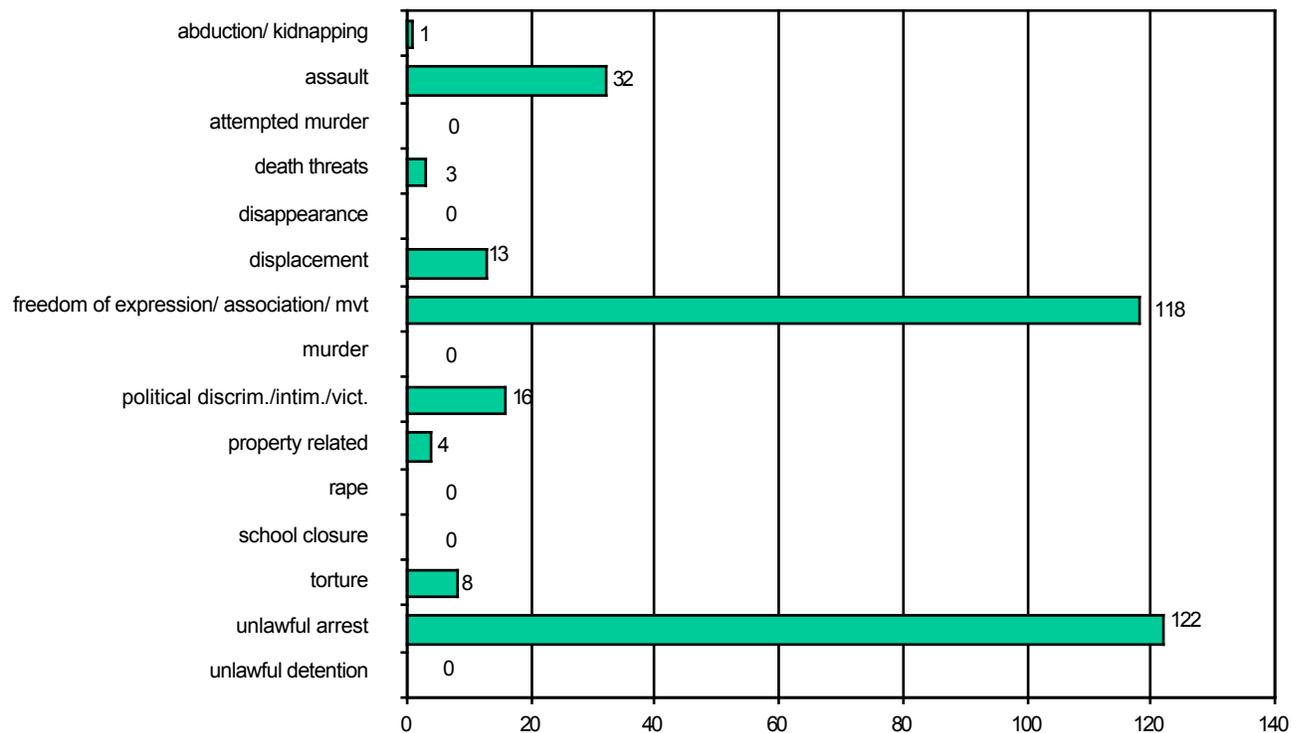
Much of the organised violence and torture recorded for the month of February in Mashonaland Central had violations ranging from displacement from work, farms, and homes; to death threats, assault, political intimidation, unlawful arrests, and property thefts. In Muzarabani constituency, APM, an MDC supporter, claims that ZANU PF youths threatened him with death, tied his legs together, thrashed him with logs and rubber sticks, because he supports the opposition MDC.

In Bindura, TT, a former employee at Trojan Mine, purports that he was displaced from work together with other employees on suspicion that he was a supporter of the opposition MDC. He claims that he lost his clothes and blankets when the youth militia harassed him, looted property from his home and destroyed his house. Michael Ncube, Amos Nyakurwa, Ruben Mafigu and Lovemore Chamunorwa (war veterans) of Mt. Darwin, are alleged to have assaulted MTK at their

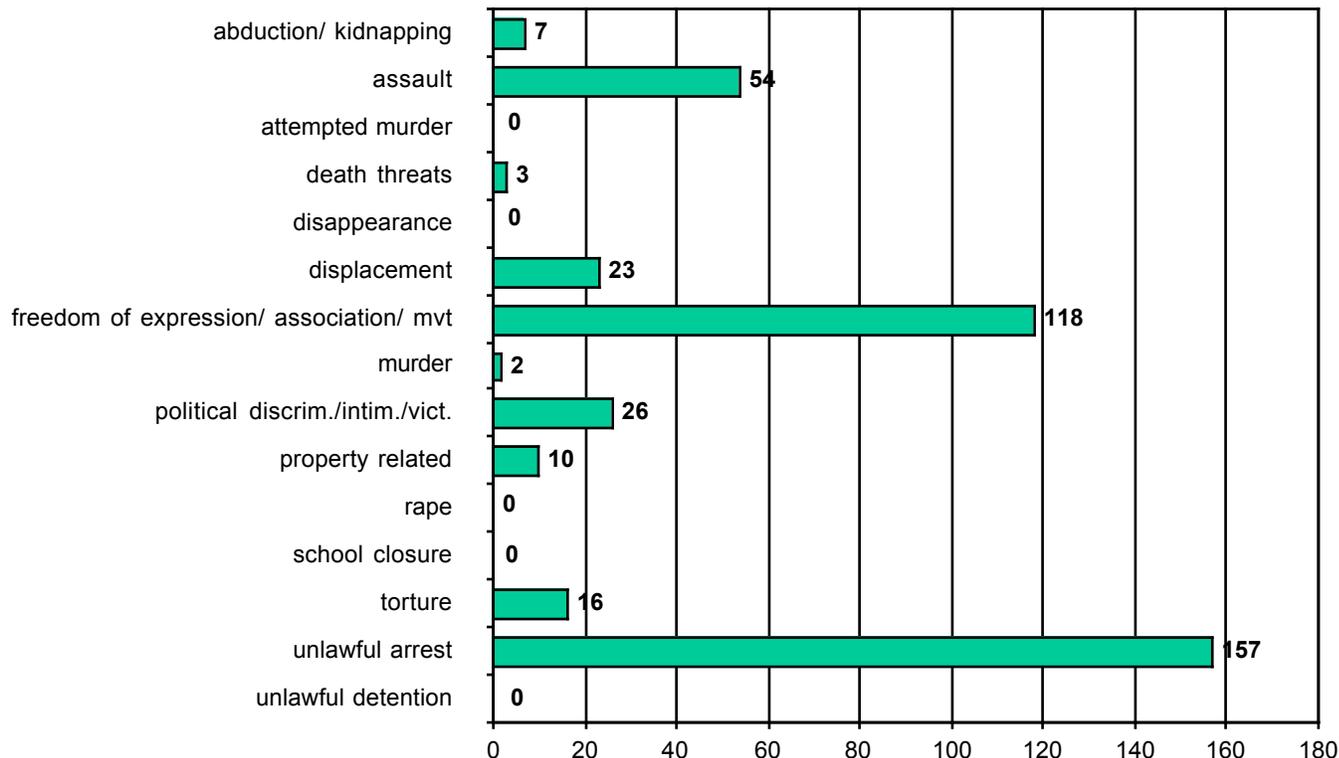
base, because he campaigned for Benjamin Bendura in Ward 24 during the Mt. Darwin rural district and council elections on an MDC ticket.

With one hundred and twenty-two (122) unlawful arrests being recorded in February up from thirty-five (35) in January, The Human Rights Forum is concerned about the increased use of state agents to violate human rights. We underscore the importance of the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly and further deplore the torture of suspects in police custody, whether lawfully or unlawfully arrested. The political intimidation in the rural areas of Mashonaland Central, where there is no election immediately pending, is an additional cause for concern.

### Totals: 1 February 2003 –28 February 2003



## Cumulative Totals 1 January 2003 To 28 February 2003



**Sources:** The information contained in this report is derived from statements made to the Public Interest Unit of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Forum, CFU reports, newspaper reports, and statements taken by the member organisations of the Human Rights Forum. *(See last page for list of member organisations)*

**Notes to the tables:****Torture:**

All cases of torture fall under the definition of torture according to the general definition given in the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment and Punishment.

The four elements of torture are:

- 1 **Severe** pain and suffering, whether physical or mental
- 2 **Intentionally** inflicted
- 3 With a **purpose**
- 4 By a state official or another individual acting with the **acquiescence of the State**.

Those individuals referred to in point # 4 include the ZRP, ZNA, ZPS and the ZNLWVA (as a reserve force of the ZNA) and by any other grouping when directly sanctioned by the state.

**Unlawful arrest and detention:**

Arrest by the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) with no reasonable suspicion that an offence has been committed. Detention thereafter for a period exceeding 48 hours without access to redress through the courts or subsequent release without charge.

**Abduction/kidnapping:**

A kidnapping by a member(s) of an organised group that is not the ZRP organisation. political party, ZNLWVA, ZNA, MDC, Zanu PF etc

**Disappearance:**

Kidnapped persons whose whereabouts remained unknown at the time of reporting. Their whereabouts have still to be ascertained through follow –up reports or further investigation.

**Property related**

These are incidents in which property rights have been violated. This includes arson, property damage and destruction and theft.

**Key Abbreviations**

CIO – Central Intelligence Organisation

MDC – Movement for Democratic Change

MP – Member of Parliament

NCA – National Constitutional Assembly

POSA – Public Order and Security Act

PTUZ – Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe

UMP – Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe

Zanu PF – Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front

ZNA – Zimbabwe National Army

ZNLWVA – Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association

ZRP – Zimbabwe Republic Police

ZIMTA – Zimbabwe Teachers Association

## **Cases of Political Violence**

**Note: The identities of victims that have not been published in the press and are not public officials are protected by the use of initials.**

### **BULAWAYO**

#### ***Makokoba***

*14 February 2003*

- Seventeen individuals, (fifteen women and two men) were reportedly arrested on allegations of taking part in an illegal demonstration. The group claim that they had received permission from the police to hold a peaceful march on Valentines Day march in order to promote love in favour of violence in all its forms. However, the permission was apparently withdrawn the morning of the demonstration, and as such, the organizers of the demonstration had no time to notify the women and other demonstrators not to come for the march. A police Defender vehicle is reported to have trailed the group during the procession, picked them up, and taken them to police cells. A priest filming the march, Father Nigel Johnson, was reportedly roughly manhandled, strangled, thrown into the police vehicle, and taken into police custody at Bulawayo Central Police Station. An officer in plain clothes is said to have confiscated of all their valuables. They claim that they were then forced to walk barefooted, braless, and detained in abysmal conditions (in small cells, with very little air coming in through a small square in the door). They were detained overnight and released the following morning without charge. A similar march took place in Harare at which fifty-four persons were arrested and there was another similar protest march in Victoria Falls, where no arrests or incidents were reported.<sup>1</sup>
- Sithembile Mandisodza claims that riot police officers threatened to assault her because she participated in the march for peace and love among Zimbabweans organised by WOZA. Fully geared riot police reportedly dispersed the gathering, while one of the officers is said to have pushed her to the ground with force, and threatened to assault her if she did not join the group that had already been arrested during the same procession. The march was organised by WOZA (Women of Zimbabwe Arise), a group that lobbies for the recognition of women's rights.

#### ***Bulawayo North East***

*24 February 2003*

- 15 persons were arrested for holding up banners criticizing the government during the cricket match between Zimbabwe and Australia at the Bulawayo Queens Sports Club. Others were reportedly arrested because they were seen waving red cards, chanting anti-government slogans. They were arrested on allegations of raising up banners, which had messages derogatory to the person of the President. All those arrested were later released without charge, however, five of them were reportedly subjected to torture in police custody:

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<sup>1</sup> For more details on this march and subsequent arrests please see the statement in Appendix 1.

- SKN reported extensive beating on his back with a sjambok and baton stick, and on the top of his feet. He further reported being kicked in the ribs and being severely slapped on the sides of his face.
- FT reported that he was beaten with a blunt instrument in addition to punches and kicks on his upper body.
- NN also reported being beaten on the top of his head with an instrument. He further reported beatings on his buttocks.
- NZ claims that in the same incident, the police beat him, and crushed his toe with police boots.
- SM purported that he was assaulted, and was beaten on his head and buttocks with an instrument. He then reported having a severe headache and restless sleep.

#### *26 February 2003*

- Two Dutch journalists Raymond Bouuman and Pim Hauinkels were reportedly arrested in the city for filming a bread queue. The two work for Dutch TV Journal IFL5. They allege that they were approached by the police, taken to the back of Holiday Inn hotel where they were staying, questioned as to why they were taking the films and ordered to stop doing so. They were then released in about an hour. The two claim that they were filming the film to give their viewers a general understanding and impression of the life in the city that was hosting the cricket match. The two were reportedly accredited to cover the match.

#### *28 February 2003*

- Two girls are said to have been arrested at Queens Sports Club when they were caught up in a cross fire which erupted between the police and some demonstrators. This occurred at the Cricket World Cup match between Zimbabwe and Holland. They claim that they were taken into police custody, tortured, and then released without being charged, although they had not engaged in any unlawful acts. They allege that they were kept in inhuman and degrading conditions, and they were not given any food during their stay there.
- SP, a student in the area, was purportedly arrested near the Queens Sports Club for allegedly picking up a red card near the cricket stadium some time after the match had ended. The red cards were strewn all over the vicinity of Queens Sports Club after the police arrested the persons who had been spotted flagging them. Over the years, the red cards have apparently come to be associated with anti-government connotations. He was reportedly extensively beaten on his back with a sjambok and baton stick. He claimed that during his arrest, he was kept in inhuman and degrading conditions without any food.

## **HARARE**

### ***Chitungwiza***

#### *1 February 2003*

- Fifteen scholars claim that ZANU PF youth militia assaulted them with open hands, threatened them with unspecified action, and chased them away from their homes, on allegations of intending to interrupt the cricket match in Harare.

## **Harare Central**

*3 February 2003*

- Pedzisai Ruhanya (Daily News - deputy news editor) and Ish Mufundikwa, (freelance journalist) who intended to cover the proceedings at Tsvangirai's treason trial, were reportedly unlawfully arrested by ZRP officers under POSA, for querying the barring of reporters from covering the trial at the High Court in Harare. They were released the following morning without charge.

*14 February 2003*

- Jenny Williams, leader of WOZA, forty-six women, and seven journalists were reportedly arrested on allegations of holding an unlawful meeting. The group had gathered at a building that houses the United Nations representative to Zimbabwe, to deliver a letter to the Secretary General Kofi Annan, to inform him of his selection as their Valentine for 2003. The journalists were apparently searched for in the parkade opposite to where the procession was being held and arrested. Williams's eighteen-year-old son, who was in the parkade watching the proceedings, was also arrested with the male journalists. The women claim that they were told not to read their letter to Kofi Annan, were ordered to sit down, and told that they were under arrest. They were all released without charge with the exception of Williams who was charged under POSA, on allegations of organising the unlawful meeting. Those arrested were participating in a Valentines Day march organised by the group WOZA (Women of Zimbabwe Arise) in order to promote love in favour of violence in all its forms. A similar march took place in Bulawayo at which seventeen persons were arrested. There was another similar protest march in Victoria Falls, but no arrests or incidents were reported there.<sup>2</sup>

*28 February 2003*

- Reverend Timothy Niell, Pastor Joseph Munemo, Reverend Charles Chiriseri and twenty other pastors and clergy were reportedly arrested while marching to the Police General Headquarters to present a petition to Police Commissioner Augustine Chihuri, against the misuse of police power to violate the freedom of expression and the right to assemble. They were allegedly detained from their time of arrest in the morning until evening, but were all released without charge. The march was organised by the Zimbabwe National Pastors Conference (ZNPC), the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) and Ecumenical Support Services. Deputy Commissioner Mandeya is said to have granted the pastors permission to march to Police General Headquarters and hand over the petition to him.<sup>3</sup>

## **Harare North**

*13 February 2003*

- Brian Kagoro (Coordinator: Crisis In Zimbabwe Coalition), Dr. John Makumbe (University of Zimbabwe lecturer and chairperson of Transparency International (Zimbabwe), Bishop Trevor Manhanga (President of The Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe) and Ian Makoni (a Harare business man) were arrested by ZRP officers on allegations of holding an unlawful meeting, but were all released later without charge. Dr. Makumbe was assaulted, sustained facial

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<sup>2</sup> For more details on this march and subsequent arrests please see the statement in Appendix 1.

<sup>3</sup> See statement in appendix 2 for more detail.

injuries, and was later treated at a medical centre. The Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition had scheduled a public meeting for Thursday, 13 February 2003, at Northside Community Church, Borrowdale at which the topic of the meeting was, "The Church: Resolving or Worsening the Zimbabwe Crisis." The police were purportedly notified about the meeting on 4 February 2003. When Assistant Inspector Shoko arrived, the gathering was instructed to disperse. Unprovoked, the police allegedly became aggressive and assaulted several people. All the people on site complied with the order to disperse.

### ***Hatfield***

*5 February 2003*

- TN of Overspill in Epworth Farm alleges that she was accused of supporting the opposition MDC by ZANU PF youths and ZANU PF branch authorities in the area, because she receives aid to fend for her two children from a white lady personally known to her. The white lady is apparently a well-wisher. TN was then reportedly evicted from her home and told not to come back.

### ***Kuwadzana***

*16 February 2003*

- S and his four friends had gone beer drinking when a group of ZANU PF youths numbering about five confronted them, saying that MDC youths 'think that they are special and that they are proud for nothing'. S claims that when they tried to respond, they were attacked with clenched fists. They were only rescued when one policeman arrived at the scene and dispersed the two gangs. The MDC youths had their clothing torn badly and had scratches inflicted on their bodies. Threats of a fresh attack that they would attack later were made by the ZANU PF youths.

*20 February 2003*

- Keresenzia Musonza (MDC Branch Chairperson for Kuwadzana 3) claims that she was attacked by three ZANU PF youths while on her way to her maize field, on allegations that she was Tsvangirai's prostitute. They allegedly stripped her naked, assaulted her, and left her unconscious. Musonza alleges that she then got assistance from a colleague after she walked to her house on regaining consciousness. She did not make a police report as she claims that they are Zanu PF supporters.

### ***Mabvuku***

*8 February 2003*

- Tendai Biti, (MDC MP, Harare East); Paul Madzore, (MDC MP, Glen View) and twelve other MDC supporters were reportedly arrested for addressing an illegal meeting. They were charged under POSA, but were all released without charge after the state failed to find valid grounds on which to place them on remand. The two Members of Parliament claim that they were in the process of dispersing a crowd in Mabvuku after permission from the police for holding a rally was withdrawn; they were arrested while they were in the process of dispersing the crowd.

## **MANICALAND**

### ***Buhera North/ South***

*4 February 2003*

- Emanuel Ndlovhu, (VIDCO 2 chairman); Denford Mukwati; and Samuel Masungu (ZANU PF youth commander), are said to have forced BC and other villagers to pay Z\$300 for the ZANU PF victory celebrations in the rural district and council elections held in September 2002. He claims that the assailants warned him that failure to pay would result in unspecified action as well as failure to buy food. The perpetrators are alleged to have said that this would help them identify those who are affiliated to the MDC in the area. The money was reportedly being deposited into an unknown account.

### ***Chimanimani***

*5 February 2003*

- George Kanasu, a ZNA member based at 3 Brigade in Mutare, is alleged to have intimidated farm workers from Charleswood Farm. Kanasu is said to have ordered those who were wearing MDC t-shirts to remove them. He is also said to have fired a shot at the workers when they refused to comply.

## **MASHONALAND CENTRAL**

### ***Bindura***

*24 February 2003*

- TT purports that he was displaced from work at Trojan Mine together with other employees on suspicion that he was a supporter of the opposition MDC. He claims that he lost his clothes and blankets when the ZANU PF youth militia harassed him, looted property from his home and destroyed his house. It is alleged that authorities at the mine then called upon one Manyika, a ZANU PF activist, following the assault of the workers, asking him why the youth militia had attacked the victims. The authorities were then ordered to fire the employees from work and evict them from the company houses. TT and the other victims reportedly left clothes at the mine, as they had no transport to ferry them from the mine. He also claims that ZANU PF youths stole his blankets, clothes, and shoes, all worth about Z\$88 000 at that time.

### ***Mazowe East***

*19 February 2003*

- The complainant (unnamed) alleges that her husband was coming from an MDC rally in Mvurwi when he was accosted and assaulted with sticks by ZANU PF supporters, for allegedly supporting the opposition MDC. He was then forced to leave his home. The wife claims that at present, she is not sure where the husband is, and that she has also been forced to vacate her home because of political violence and threats on her life if she does not reveal where her husband is.

**Mazowe West**

7 February 2003

- WC claims that her husband was arrested while he was on his way to an MDC demonstration in Harare. She alleges that the perpetrators are now after her, demanding that she produces her husband's MDC documents. They have also reportedly made unspecified threats on her life, because they suspect that she is also an MDC activist. She fled to Harare.

**Mazowe East/ West**

3 February 2003

- RR alleges that he was approached at home by ZANU PF youths singing revolutionary songs, forced to chant the ZANU PF slogan, and displaced from his home on accusations of wanting to disrupt the cricket match and for being an MDC supporter. He claims that he was assaulted with fists and sticks, and that he fractured one leg in the attack. He then hid in the maize field and the perpetrators left. However, they came back for him in the evening, burnt his house, and threatened to kill him the moment they saw him.

**Mount Darwin North/ South**

5 February 2003

- BC of Nembire Primary School reported that Godfrey Gode and Taurayi Mafigu, ZANU PF activists, displaced him from his home, burnt his house, and beat him up with fists because he is an active member of the opposition MDC.

10 February 2003

- SC reported that he left his rural home because of political violence that started in his kraal after he was accused of beating up Chief Chiweshe. He claims that people in the area then labelled him the most dangerous person in the constituency and thereafter, Daniel Nyangoni; Tawanda Hofisi; Mugute Marvet; (ZANU PF supporters); Gomwe M; Kanengoni; Albert Chinema; and Jack Pairoso (CID officers), came to his home and accused him of organising demonstrations to disrupt the World Cup Cricket match in Harare. He claims that he and his family were threatened with murder. SC managed to flee to Harare with his wife and children.

15 February 2003

- Michael Ncube, Amos Nyakurwa, Ruben Mafigu and Lovemore Chamunorwa (war veterans), are alleged to have assaulted MTK at their base, because he campaigned for Benjamin Bendura, the MDC candidate in Ward 24 during the Mt. Darwin Rural District Council elections. MTK claims that he was told to vacate the area and go and stay with Morgan Tsvangirai, the president for the opposition MDC. It is reported that he was accused of knowing the whereabouts of the other MDC supporters, and he was assaulted into confessing their whereabouts. He then fled to Harare because of the continued intimidation.

21 February 2003

- CT claims that Marvellous Mfungu, Thompson Karifuwe, Gift Mtunda, and Temba Chirambwe of the ZANU PF party forcibly evicted him from Muzarabani, on allegations of supporting the opposition MDC. He alleges that, having left home because of violence following the Rural

District and Council elections in September 2002, he was going back home back to fix his home, which had been burnt. However, the ZANU PF supporters attacked him with fists and booted feet, accusing him of being a being a traitor. He was allegedly told to turn back and return to where he had come from.

### ***Muzarabani***

*6 February 2003*

- APM, an MDC supporter, claims that ZANU PF youths approached him and asked him why he was in the area, which was apparently not an MDC zone. He was then told that his escape from Mvurwi when ZANU PF youth militia burnt up his house was in itself pointless, as he had walked right into his grave by migrating to Muzarabani. The youths allegedly threatened him with death, tied his legs together and thrashed him with logs and rubber sticks, chanting ZANU PF slogans. They reportedly went to his home, beat up wife and left her for dead. Passers by later picked him and his wife up and took them to hospital for treatment.

*13 February 2003*

- Gift Muparamoto; Starford Reza; Ganizo Gidion and Joseph Mashiri, ZANU PF supporters, are said to have forcibly evicted MS from his home area and told him to go and stay in Britain because he supports the MDC. They allegedly took his property, threw it away, and assaulted him with heavy logs. MS managed to flee to Harare.

### ***Shamva***

*14 February 2003*

- MN and CM, labourers on Richardson's farm, were entrusted to look after the farm as the owner was away, following its invasion by ZANU PF militia from Nicholas Goche's farm. Nicholas Goche is the Minister of State for National Security in the President's office. The youth militia are said to have assaulted them and other farm workers, accusing them of being MDC supporters. The assailants alleged they were acting on the instruction of Goche, and that Goche wanted the farm, as the two farms are adjacent to each other.

## **MASHONALAND EAST**

### ***Marondera East***

*1 February 2003*

- PM claimed that members of the ruling party want to kill him because he supports the opposition MDC. Phillip Tichayana, Mashingaidze Benhure Masaka, and Emmanuel Mukatami, have been implicated in this case. The victim managed to escape.

## **MASVINGO**

### ***Chiredzi South***

*25 February 2003*

- Gerald Whitehead, a commercial farmer at Whitro Eng Farm, claims that he was intimidated and threatened by the Provincial Governor for Masvingo, Josiah Hungwe, Chief Inspector

Ncube, CIO agents and ZRP officers. He also claims that he was told to leave the country. Ncube is said to have told Whitehead that 'it was better for him to leave the country now'. Hungwe allegedly accused Whitehead of "illegally storing his fellow farmers' equipment" and of being racist after Whitehead had walked away from the meeting with Hungwe

### ***Masvingo Rural/ Urban***

*1 February 2003*

- AM, RM and EM are MDC supporters. They claim that they were chased, beaten and victimised by youths from the Border Gezi National Service Training Centre for refusing to join the youth brigade. They allege that they were labelled sell-outs who sided with the opposition MDC.

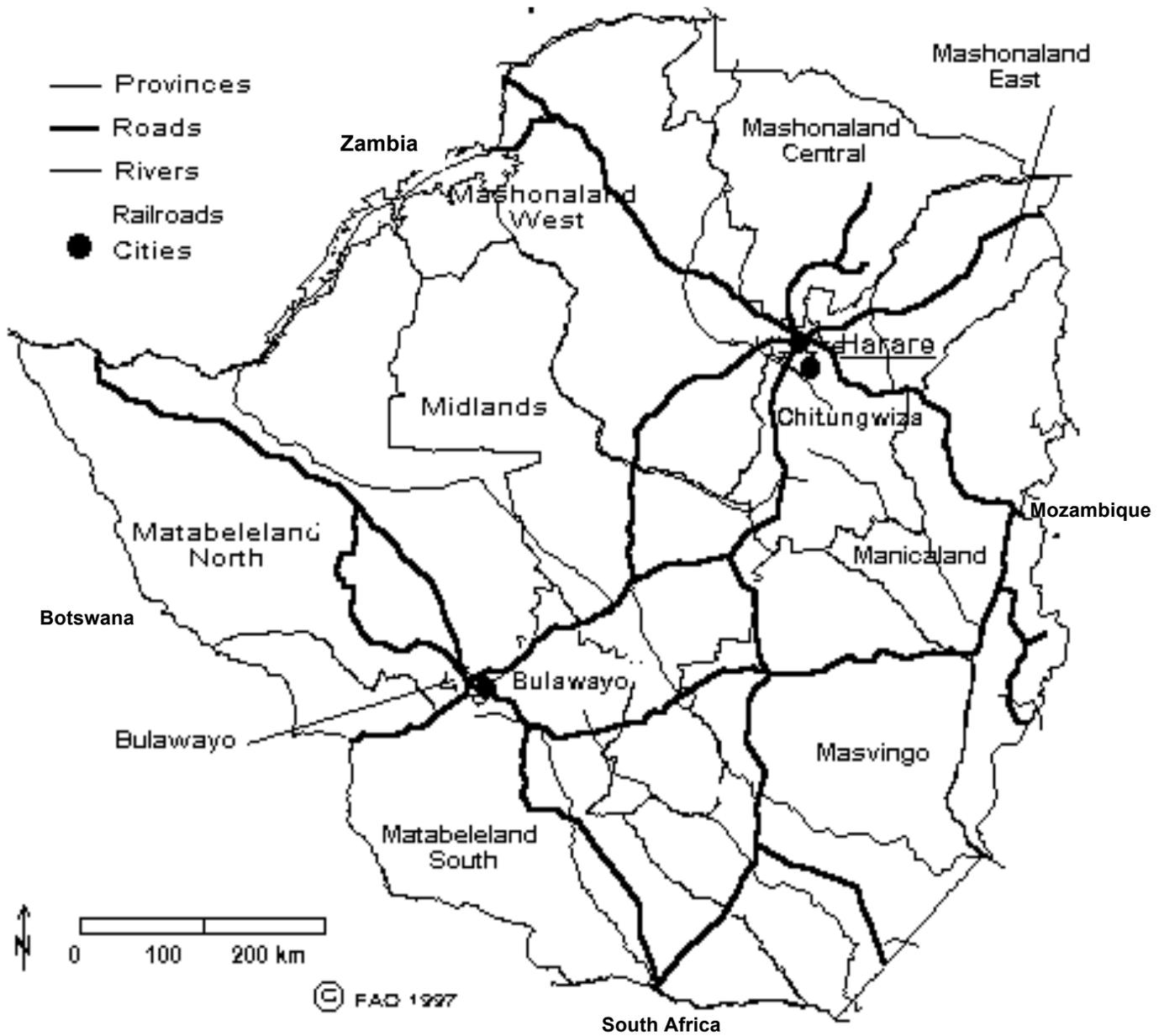
## **MATABELAND NORTH**

### ***Hwange***

*8 February 2003*

- Gabriel Chaibva, (MDC MP, Harare South) and four other MDC party officials were reportedly arrested on allegations of holding an illegal meeting. The five claim that they were conducting a workshop on local government for councillors in the confines of the MDC premises and thus the meeting did not require police permission.

### ADMINISTRATIVE MAP OF ZIMBABWE



The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (also known as the “Human Rights Forum”) has been in existence since January 1998 when 9 non-governmental organisations working in the field of human rights joined together to provide legal and psychosocial assistance to the victims of the Food Riots of January 1998. The coalitions membership has since increased to 14, with 13 core members and 1 associate member.

The Human Rights Forum has now expanded its objectives to assist victims of organised violence, using the following definition:

**“Organised violence” means the inter-human infliction of significant avoidable pain and suffering by an organised group according to a declared or implied strategy and/or system of ideas and attitudes. It comprises any violent action, which is unacceptable by general human standards, and relates to the victims’ mental and physical well-being.”**

The Human Rights Forum operates a Research and Documentation Unit and offers legal services through the Public Interest Unit of the Legal Resources Foundation (formerly the Legal Unit of the ZHRF.)

Core member organisations of the Human Rights Forum are:

- Amani Trust
- Amnesty International (Zimbabwe) (AI (Z))
- Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP)
- Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)
- Legal Resources Foundation (LRF)
- Transparency International (Zimbabwe) (TI (Z))
- University of Zimbabwe Legal Aid and Advice Scheme
- Zimbabwe Association for Crime Prevention and the Rehabilitation of the Offender (ZACRO)
- Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights (ZADHR)
- Zimbabwe Civic Education Trust (ZIMCET)
- Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights)
- Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR)
- Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association (ZWLA)

Associate Member:

- Nonviolent Action and Strategies for Social Change (NOVASC)

The Human Rights Forum can be contacted through any member organisation or through:

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The London Liaison Office, 33 Islington High Street, London N1 9LH – email: [zimbabwe@article19.org](mailto:zimbabwe@article19.org);

Telephone: +44 (0)20-7239.1194

Website: [www.hrforumzim.com](http://www.hrforumzim.com)

Previous reports of the Human Rights Forum can be found on our website.

## **Appendix 1 – Statement by Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) on the 14 February Arrests**

### **WOMEN OF ZIMBABWE ARISE (WOZA)**

Press Release  
February 15 2003

All Valentine Day Walkers released

Women of Zimbabwe Arise wish to advise that all 17 Bulawayo participants who spent the night in Police custody have been released without being charged. Police may proceed by way of summons.

The group of 15 women included Sheba Dube-Phiri, one of the WOZA founders, Father Nigel Johnson and Ricardo Caprez who was accompanying the walk, playing a drum. Father Johnson was taking a video of the procession and Police manhandled him to confiscate his camera. They were released at 10:30am Saturday.

In celebration of the release of the group, women who had gathered in solidarity placed red roses on the pavement in front of the Police Station.

The noon walks were organised to spread the following message: “Zimbabweans: learn to love again! Say no to hate and violence in all its forms and yes to love. Love us, respect us and allow us to be women. Love us today and everyday.” The walk was conducted in Bulawayo, Harare and Victoria Falls, although many supported the move in spirit, locally, regionally and internationally.

The founding members of WOZA condemn the arrest of 71 Zimbabweans whose business on the day was to send a message of love and peace. Those arrested included two founding members of WOZA, Jenni Williams and prominent human rights activist and Chairperson of the League of Women Voters, Sheba Dube-Phiri.

WOZA founding members offer heartfelt thanks to Zimbabweans who answered their call to stand up for love on Valentines Day. To the hundreds who received flowers from participants, we remind them that in receiving the rose, they were requested to end the hate and violence in Zimbabwe.

“We would also like to recognise those of you who did not manage to connect up with the body of Walkers, due to changes to the route for security reasons. To those who conducted prayer vigils to ensure that the spirit of love prevailed. We thank the almighty that the unnecessary assault on Farther Nigel by Zimbabwe Republic Police Riot Squad was not serious and he has recovered. The struggle for love and peace continues on undeterred. There were also many organisations that sent delegates and we recognise their commitment”. A spokesperson for WOZA said.

WOZA thank the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) and their members for their support. In both Bulawayo and Harare several lawyers were quickly on hand to support.

In Victoria Falls, a group of 11 were escorted by 8 policewoman and they successfully delivered the message of love to residents of the border town. The backdrop to their walk was the smoke-that-thunders. The procession went on peacefully with no arrests.

Despite the refusal by the Police to escort the Bulawayo and Harare processions, women decided to gather and deliver their message and all the events were peaceful.

In Harare the group gathered at Takura House in Kwame Nkrumah Avenue, a building that houses the United Nations representative to Zimbabwe. The business there was to deliver a letter to Secretary General Kofi Annan to inform him of his selection as their Valentine for 2003. Fortunately this was done before the group was arrested. Women of Zimbabwe await acceptance of the honour from the Secretary General.

Riot Police ordered the group to disperse but they argued that they were peaceful and withdrew onto the pavement where women sat down to demonstrate their peacefulness. They proceeded to sing the national anthem before attempting to read the letter to Annan. A female officer did not allow the reading of the letter although promises were made that the group would then disperse. She instead told the seated contingent that they were under arrest and radioed for vehicles to uplift the group.

The group, who included two 83 year old women and a Dominican Nun Sister Catherine, were transported to Harare Central Police Station where they remained until released at about 4pm. Williams was released separately after signing a warned and cautioned statement.

Seven journalists of the print and electronic media were searched for in the Parkade opposite and they were also arrested. Williams's 18-year-old son, Christopher, who was in the Parkade watching proceedings, was arrested with the male journalists. They were all released without charge.

WOZA abhor the outright lies in The Herald that the group walked along Samora Machel chanting political slogans and waving red roses and request the Police spokesman, Bothwell Mugariri recheck his information sources. Even the Law and Order officers made no mention of this fabricated information when Williams was charged.

In the Bulawayo procession, Dube-Phiri received several threatening calls from persons identified as police officers warning her not to proceed with the Walk.

She said, "We consulted our constituency and they made the decision to proceed. As a leader, I would not shirk my responsibility to lead the walk for the love of love and peace so we proceeded. I believe that they kept us in overnight as an unfortunate form of discipline but we know our constitutional rights."

The group in Bulawayo was able to get mobile and traversed many city blocks before Dube-Phiri and the others were arrested. As the group proceeded the numbers of participants swelled to almost 300. As they walked they sang and a couple of people who had pots beat them with cooking sticks to show up the food shortages.

Eyewitnesses said that Police moved amongst the group-selecting people to arrest, targeting white women and searching for the Movement for Democratic Change Vice President's wife, Zodwa Sibanda. The women spent the night in a holding cell with 7 other women arrested on other charges.

On the WOZA platform, women are being united around issues and not personalities. Colour, creed, religion, or political loyalties are irrelevant as women join together to say enough is enough and to take their position in lobbying for a return to a democratic dispensation where they can adequately provide for their families.

Williams and Dube-Phiri, acknowledge the role of the 9 men who stood beside the women as they were arrested. "You are true men, we love you! Your names will lead the list of Valentine Men of Men".

ENDS

For more information, please email [wozazimbabwe@yahoo.com](mailto:wozazimbabwe@yahoo.com)

List of those arrested - all now released

#### **Bulawayo – 17 persons**

1. Sheba Dube-Phiri
2. Linda Palmieri
3. Margaret Morrison
4. Zodwa Sibanda
5. Joey Arrowsmith
6. Avril Patel
7. Verity Mundy
8. Diana Charsley

9. Sue Bonnet
10. Tracy Lowe
11. Fiona Farmer
12. Debbie York
13. Jeanette Cross
14. Zeytoun Ferrero
15. Gabi Watson
16. Ricardo Caprez
17. Father Nigel Johnson

#### **Harare – 54 persons, 6 names withheld**

1. Jenni Williams
2. Gertrude Hambira
3. Rosemary Muriva
4. Benhilda Parewa
5. Mai Sismai
6. Riana Olivier
7. Annette Olivier
8. Gill Thornhill
9. Lin Sheperd
10. Evelyn Masaiti
11. Mrs L. Nelson
12. Mrs Gibson
13. Sister Catherine Jackson
14. Judith Chinyama
15. Caroline Elliot
16. Jenny Brian
17. Jennifar Muduzu
18. Lillian Muduzu
19. Lillian Chinyerere
20. Dadirai Bikita
21. Enia Dovi
22. Jackie Yasiri
23. Auxillia Shoniwa
24. Elizabeth Masila
25. Apolonia Chiriwa
26. Gean George

27. Florence Mapfumo
28. Precious Nyandoro
29. Patience Chinyangwa
30. Shimmer M
31. Maria Nanyiwa
32. Judith Chinyama
33. Ana Goragada
34. Lillian Chinyerere
35. Linda de Bourbon
36. Penny Beattie
37. Kerry Kay
38. Colinaline Lewis
39. Maureen Trigg
40. June Klasen

#### **Journalists**

1. Lloyd Mudiwa The Daily News
2. Aaron Ufumeli The Daily News
3. Brian Hungwe South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) correspondent
4. Davies Sidube SABC correspondent
5. Maria Nyanyiwa of the Voice of the People
6. Cyrus Nhara freelancer
7. Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi freelancer
8. Christopher Williams - arrested with journalists but actually son to Jenni Williams

**Appendix 2–Statement by Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe on the 28 February Arrests****Arrest And Detention Of 23 Pastors And Clergy**

The Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) strongly condemns and is deeply saddened by the arrest and detention of 23 pastors and clergy, one of them blind, on Friday 28th February 2003 at the entrance to the Police General Headquarters in Harare.

The 23 pastors and clergy were walking peacefully towards the Police H.Q. to present a petition to the Commissioner of Police, Augustine Chihuri. In addition to protesting against incidents of forceful and unjust arrests and detentions of the clergy, including that of EFZ President Bishop Trevor Manhanga and four other civic leaders on Thursday 13th February, 2003, the petition also lamented the misuse of Police power to violate and criminalize with impunity, the freedom of expression and the right to assemble. The Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Ecumenical Support Services, Zimbabwe National Pastors, Conference and the Peace-building Sub-committee of the Crisis Coalition jointly organized the peaceful march.

Although the Police Commissioner was not in his office, Deputy Commissioner Mandeya had told the pastors that he would receive their petition on behalf of the Commissioner. Before the pastors could see Deputy Commissioner Mandeya, riot police appeared at the police H.Q. chanting derisive songs and swiftly arrested the pastors. They were taken to Harare Central Police Station, where they were held from morning until evening without food.

The EFZ fully supports and encourages the bravery, faith and conviction of these men of God in making a firm stand against injustice, violence and the violation of fundamental human rights and freedoms. The peaceful walk was not in any way a threat to public order and security: if anything, it was the rowdy and uncivil riot police who actually violated POSA by disrupting a peaceful democratic process and causing unnecessary alarm.

Zimbabweans have suffered enough political violence to continue to be subjected to arbitrary arrests and detentions. We believe it is now time to heal and to rebuild. It is also time to stop violence by the police in pursuit of peace and justice.

EFZ demands an immediate repeal of POSA, which is a reincarnation of the colonial politics of repression and coercion. Zimbabweans deserve human dignity, freedoms and rights in keeping with their democratic aspirations and values.

For more information contact the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe, Phone 750949 *Email:*

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