



Parents must join teachers' struggle for better remuneration

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## "Government insincere in addressing the plight of teachers"

By Crisis Report

THE stance being taken by the government of Zimbabwe on negotiations with teachers has proved beyond reasonable doubt that the so called 'new dispensation' has failed to walk the talk in as far as addressing the plight of educators and providing quality education is concerned.

Zimbabwean teachers continue to earn far below the Poverty Datum Line (PDL) in a highly inflationary environment and this has largely incapacitated them to report for duty.

On the other hand, the government continues to criminalise trade unionism within the education sector while labelling teacher unions as 'regime change agents and agents of the West'.

On several occasions, teacher unions' leaders have been abducted and arrested for demanding that the government pays them a living wage.

Recently, a senior government official, George Charamba threatened drastic action against teacher unions and labelled them as agents of the West in a development that could result in increased clampdown of teacher unions' leaders.

Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition (CiZC) Spokesperson, Marvelous Khumalo bemoaned that the gov-



Sleeping on duty...Primary and Secondary Education Minister Cain Mathema

ernment was prioritising politics at the expense of addressing issues within key sectors which include the education sector.

"What is surprising to the general populace is that the government committed in 2017 when they came into power that they were going to address all the problematic sectors including the education

sector and President Mnangagwa promised education for all yet the same government is failing and even not interested in addressing the plight of teachers. Teachers are saying they are not capacitated and they need at least a wage that is sustainable to their livelihoods and their demands in this highly inflationary economy.

"But when it comes to interests of politicians, they are easily addressed but when teachers invite the same politicians to the negotiating table, they are given all sorts of names. They are given names and labelled as regime change agents yet these teachers are patriotic citizens that want to see an education sector that is vibrant, sustainable and of quality," said Khumalo.

He implored the government to show sincerity and listen to the genuine concerns of the teachers rather than to politic.

Khumalo said the current stance by the government in addressing the plight of teachers can only serve to plunge the education sector into deeper crisis.

"We implore the government to make sure that they listen to the teachers and address their issues because the future of this nation lies in the hands of the teachers," said Khumalo.

## CiZC Chairperson scores for survivors of political violence

By Crisis Report



CiZC Chairperson Rashid Mahiya

CRISIS in Zimbabwe Coalition (CiZC) Chairperson, Rashid Mahiya, who is also the Director of Heal Zimbabwe Trust recently won a case in the Supreme Court which compelled the government to implement Section 210 of the Constitution which provides for an Independent Complaints Mechanism which will receive and investigate complaints from the public on the conduct of security forces and for rem-

ediating any harm caused.

The case was a joint application by Mahiya and a survivor of political violence, Hilton Chironga.

The Supreme Court ruling comes at a time there has been an upsurge in cases of abuse, torture and abduction of civic society and opposition activists by security forces as well as State Security Agents.

The cases have largely been ignored and victims have not been able to find justice while some have even chosen to suffer in silence.

Below, we capture Mahiya's comments on the Supreme Court ruling during a recent interview with 263 Chat;

"We think it's a victory for the citizens, a victory for constitutionalism. It's a victory for accountability because we want people to be held to account and institutions need to be held to account. Because of the militarisation of the State in Zimbabwe, we need to ensure that people can get justice and this mechanism should be able to provide for that.

"A number of events have taken place since our appeal to the court and the passing of the judgement. You look at the military coup of 2017, the events of 2018 and 2019 where civilians were shot in cold blood," said Mahiya.

Heal Zimbabwe Trust is set to mobilise survivors of past atrocities to participate in the Bill hearings for the Act providing for the Independent Complaints mechanism.

The security services in Zimbabwe have largely been behind human rights violations which include arbitrary arrests, rape, torture, abduction and shootings of civilians.

This has largely been attributed to the militarisation of key state institutions in Zimbabwe following the ouster of former leader, Robert Mugabe through a military coup in 2017.

The capture of the judiciary as well as complicit by the State media has also been an inhibiting factor in as far as justice for the victims of state brutality is concerned.

## Parents must join teachers' struggle for better remuneration

By Crisis Reporter

Of late, social media has been awash with videos of school children engaging in unbecoming behaviour such as sex orgies and drugs at learning institutions.

This is largely attributable to the fact that when the government announced opening dates for schools (September 28, 2020), the majority of teachers did not turn up citing incapacitation as a result of meagre salaries.

Resultantly, there is very limited monitoring of students who apparently have enough time to engage in all sorts of wild acts with very minimal or no monitoring.

At the same time, parents have had to part ways with their hard earned cash to send the children to school.

Due to the non-availability of teachers, learning institutions have ceased to be safe spaces for children who continue to engage in all sorts of wild acts.

*"Our education sector has collapsed. Underfunding, insincerity, negligence and incompetence are some of the key drivers of the collapse. Teacher salaries in Zimbabwe are at \$US45 when the regional average is at USD\$680.*

*"Zimbabwean teachers have been pushed into the pauper's bracket and rendered incapacitated to deliver. Resultantly, less than two percent of our teachers reported for duty from September 28 to date,"* said Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe President (ARTUZ), Obert Masaraure.

He also beamed the fact that the government had 'failed to fund the safe opening of schools' thus putting the lives of teachers and learners at high risk in light of the COVID 19 threat.

Masaraure said there are around 800 000 vulnerable children who are not receiving support from the government.

Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ) President, Takavafira Zhou said it was irresponsible for the government to threaten incapacitated teachers with replacements and withholding of salaries.

Zhou is of the firm view that parents and students need to join the teachers' struggle for a living wage.

*"To our students the time to confront the government to amplify your teachers' voices is now. Students in South Africa did it in Soweto in the 1970s and have gone down in the annals of history for fighting for their educational rights. You can also do it in Zimbabwe or else this year will be a wasted year for you.*

*"To parents; stop sending your children to school until teachers are capacitated. To be forewarned is to be forearmed as children engage in moral decay and social decadence in the absence of teachers. Schools are institutions of learning and teaching, yet they are fast becoming institutions of drug abuse, myriads sexual experimentation and misdemeanours,"* said Zhou.

CiZC position; *"Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition urges parents and students to join hands with teaching staff around the country in their calls for living wages. Government's insincerity in addressing the plight of teachers can only serve to spell doom for the future of students at government schools.*

*"It is high time parents and students join hands in confronting the government which has for so long failed to show seriousness in addressing the rot in the education sector. It is disturbing that instead of being alive to the rot in the education sector, the government has chosen to respond with threats to the genuine demands from the teachers. This has also led to arrests, torture and abduction of teacher unions leaders around the country"*

## CiZC documentary exposes rights violations in the midst of COVID 19

Crisis Report

Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition (CiZC) has launched the 'Terror Under the Cloak of Covid 19' documentary which exposes gross human rights violations being perpetrated by the security forces in the midst of the COVID 19 pandemic.

The documentary exposes the fact that the government of Zimbabwe has been perpetrating rights violations under the guise of enforcing COVID 19 regulations.

The deployment of the military (who have been the major perpetrators of rights violations) is also an issue of major concern highlighted in the documentary.

Zimbabwe's socio-economic and political crisis is also highlighted in the documentary which goes on to reveal how the law has been abused to persecute civic and opposition activists demanding respect for human rights.

The persecution of journalists for exposing corruption and nepotism is also captured in the CiZC documentary.

Other rights violations recorded in the documentary include the torture, abduction and rape of women activists in Zimbabwe and the Director of Women Academy for Leadership and Political Excellence (WALPE), Stabile Dewa said this is an issue of huge concern which requires urgent redress.

Renowned Journalist, Dumisani Muleya, who was part of the interviewees in the documentary said that the shootings and abductions recorded since November 2017 when President Emmerson Mn-



A soldier aims at civilians in the streets of Harare on 1 August 2018.

gagwa ascended to power reveal that the government relies on 'rule by force, repression and brutality'.

CiZC Director, Blessing Vava beamed the fact that Zimbabwe remains stuck in the dark past characterised by gross human rights violations.

"It's very worrying that a number of activists have been either jailed, abducted, arrested and tortured since November 2017. This is a trend that is happening when everyone thought Zimbabwe is now moving in a different path," said Vava.

CiZC Chairperson, Rashid Mahiya said that the Zimbabwean crisis requires a genuine all stakeholders dialogue.

"There is a need for an all stakeholder national dialogue that comes with a clear roadmap. We need a dialogue to renew the social contract between the State and the citizens and for this to take place, there has to be a mediation role played by SADC and guaranteed by the AU," said Mahiya. Panelists who spoke at the CiZC Third Annual Regional Conference hosted on September 29, 2020 said the Covid 19 pandemic, besides being a health crisis, has worsened the human rights crisis within SADC countries.

## CIZC stands in solidarity with the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions

By Crisis Reporter

ON October 2, 2020, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) sent a message to workers across the country to prepare for a general strike in light of the continued poor working conditions and meagre salaries that workers continue to receive in a highly inflationary environment.

The ZCTU contends that the 40 percent Cost of Living Adjustment announced by the government recently is insignificant and proves government's total lack of concern for the plight of workers.

Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition (CiZC) stands in solidarity with the ZCTU and we implore workers' unions around the country to heed this noble call to protest for living wages.

Unity among workers' unions around the country is key in ensuring that they speak with one voice and collectively push the government to address their genuine concerns for living wages.

We also implore the government to desist from criminalising trade unionism as well as persecution, abduction and arbitrary arrests of trade union leaders.

CiZC Spokesperson, Marvelous Khumalo said that it is disturbing that quite often, the government has responded with brute force to demands for living wages by workers.

It is foolhardy for the government to expect that workers calling for wages that can sustain their livelihoods are regime change agents, according to Khumalo.

CiZC contends that workers are entitled to freedom to demonstrate peacefully as enshrined under Section 59 of the country's constitution and we are concerned that almost on all occasions, the peaceful demonstrations by workers has led to beatings, arrests as well as abductions of trade union leaders.

We further implore the government to respect and uphold Section 65 of the country's constitution which states the following;

(1) Every person has the right to fair and safe labour practices and standards and to be paid a fair and reasonable wage.

(2) Except for members of the security services, every person has the right to form and join trade unions and employee or employers' organisations of their choice, and to participate in the lawful activities of those unions and organisations.

(3) Except for members of the security services, every employee has the right to participate in collective job action, including the right to strike, sit in, withdraw their labour and to take other similar concerted action, but a law may restrict the exercise of this right in order to maintain essential services.

(4) Every employee is entitled to just, equitable and satisfactory conditions of work.

(5) Except for members of the security services, every employee, employer, trade union, and employee or employer's organisation has the right to—  
(a) engage in collective bargaining;  
(b) organize; and

## Release ZINASU President now and Investigate Impala Car Rentals

By Crisis Report



ZINASU President Takudzwa Ngadziore...recently in remand prison

THE President of the Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU), Takudzwa Ngadziore, has been languishing in remand prison since he was abducted by state agents and subsequently locked up on September 18, 2020.

Ngadziore was arrested for addressing the media on the alleged involvement of Impala Car Rentals in the abduction of opposition and civic society activists.

On the day, the state agents also abused journalists who were covering the event. It is quite alarming that the State has chosen to pay a blind eye to Ngadziore's allegations and has instead turned him into an accused person.

CiZC maintains that the case of Ngadziore is a pure case of persecution by prosecution. We further demand an independent investigation into the alleged involvement of Impala Car Rentals in the abduction of opposition and civic society activists.

CiZC Spokesperson, Marvelous Khumalo said it was clear that the State had chosen to side with Impala Car Rentals in an apparent attempt to sweep issues under the carpet.

A car belonging to Impala Car Rentals was allegedly used in the abduction of Tawanda Muchehiwa ahead of the July 31 protests.

Muchehiwa was heavily tortured by state

agents who demanded to know the whereabouts of his uncle, Mduduzi Mathuthu who is also Editor of ZimLive.

"Instead of the law enforcement agents inviting Ngadziore to say furnish us with the details you have so that we carry out some investigations, that was not done. Instead the State arrested Ngadziore continues to incarcerate him.

"We have actually witnessed worse things in this so called new dispensation than the previous administration under Mugabe. We question whether this is a new dispensation or a perfection of the old order which was very hostile and not used to the rule of law, We call upon the Mnangagwa administration to sober up and we also call for investigations of Impala Car Rentals into their alleged involvement in abduction cases," said Khumalo.

