

# Food war

- *‘Opposition supporters denied aid, forced to starve’*
- *Civil society, rights commission condemn govt*

HARARE—Opposition supporters in some parts of the country are being forced to starve, as the ruling party turns food aid into a political weapon.

Section 77 (b) of the Constitution reads: “Every person has the right to...sufficient food; and the State must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within the limits of the resources available to it, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right.”

For thousands of people in rural areas, this right remains a pipedream. According to the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC), government funded food aid is being distributed along political lines in several parts of the country.

At least 4 million people, or a third of the population, are in dire need of food aid.

Civic society organisations in the country have come out strongly in support of the recent “bold and timely intervention” by the ZHRC, which released a damning report exposing how the ruling party was using government funded food aid to punish opposition supporters and reward party loyalists. The ZHRC is a Constitutional body mandated with investigating human rights violations as well as promoting a culture of respect for human rights. (Please see ZHRC’s full report on page 2)

One of the country’s leading civil society groups, The Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP), said the findings by ZHRC confirmed what the organisation has been reporting for about 10 years.

“Since 2006, ZPP has been monitoring food distribution across Zimbabwe and would like to publicly concur with the findings made by ZHRC, which indicate that food meant for Zimbabweans most affected by the El Nino induced drought and those under privileged wallowing in poverty is distributed on partisan grounds,” said ZPP in a statement.

The organisation said it “has empirical evidence” from across the country on the discrimination and flagrant denial in the distribution of food and other aid.

“Distribution of food and other aid using political affiliation is a deep-seated problem in this country, which has affected many known to belong to the MDC-T and recently those affiliated to Zimbabwe People First,” said ZPP, in a statement to show solidarity with ZHRC Chairperson Elasto Mugwadi, who has since come under attack from President Robert Mugabe.

“And the information, which some stupid people and stupid spokesman of is it Human Rights (Commission) put out, say grain is being distributed along party lines, is completely false, absolutely false,” said the 92-year-old leader, adding that Commissioner Mugwadi had been influenced by Western countries.

Minister of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare Hon. Priscah Mupfumira weighed in as well, condemning Commissioner Mugwadi’s statement.

But Oxfam - a leading aid agency - has called for an investigation into ZHRC’s disturbing findings.

“Oxfam is deeply concerned with these findings and calls for humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, to be upheld in order to effectively deliver much needed assistance to the 4, 2 million people affected by the drought. Every person has a right to receive the help they need, regardless of their political views,” said Oxfam director in Zimbabwe, Machinda Marongwe, adding that: “The government should empower existing structures in the communities such as the Drought Relief Committees to better deal with such occurrences and ensure food assistance reaches all who need it, in a fair manner.”

Zimbabwe is one of the southern African countries that have been hard hit by El Nino induced drought, a situation now being exploited for political gain by those with power over the government purse.

The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (the Forum) applauded ZHRC for raising the issue of partisan food aid distribution “at the right time” as the hunger situation worsens.

“As the Forum stands by the Commission on this issue (of condemning partisan food aid distribution),

we call upon all the relevant authorities to be restrained from manipulating food aid as a way of gaining political support.

“We also implore both the Public Service Commission and the Zimbabwe Republic Police to take necessary steps towards those partisan officials found wanting in executing their duties. Every person who is in need of food should be fed by the State since the Constitution places a duty on the same under section 77 of the Constitution to make sure that every person has access to sufficient food,” added the grouping of more than 20 civic organisations in Zimbabwe.

In June this year Ngoni Masoka, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare, while before Parliamentary Thematic Committee on Human Rights, admitted that his ministry had received complaints on politicisation of government funded food aid.

During that hearing, most members of the committee expressed deep concern over partisan distribution of food aid.



Tough times...Children scrounge for maize grain that might have slipped off a harvester at a seed research farm in Mt Hampden, west of Harare. The Right to Food is enshrined in the Constitution but many people are still battling with starvation following a devastating drought. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission said in some areas, government funded food aid is being used as a political weapon

## Know Your Rights

### Section 56 of the Constitution: Equality and non-discrimination

(3) Every person has the right not to be treated in an unfairly discriminatory manner on such grounds as their nationality, race, colour, tribe, place of birth, ethnic or social origin, language, class, religious belief, political affiliation, opinion, custom, culture, sex, gender, marital status, age, pregnancy, disability or economic or social status, or whether they were born in or out of wedlock.

### Section 77 of the Constitution: Right to food and water

Every person has the right to -  
(a) safe, clean and potable water; and

(b) sufficient food; and the State must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within the limits of the resources available to it, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right.

## ZHRC Chairperson Commissioner Elasto Hilarious Mugwadi's statement on reported food aid cases at a press conference held in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor boardroom on 7 September 2016

### Background

You are all aware ladies and gentlemen that government rolled out a plausible ongoing food aid programme to alleviate poverty and hunger on the part of the communities affected by the current drought. The implementation of this programme has however, caused some displeasure within certain communities resulting in a flood of complaints to the Commission which has the Constitutional mandate to protect, promote and enforce human rights.

In discharge of its Constitutional mandate the ZHRC is among other responsibilities empowered to carry out the following functions in terms of Section 243 of the Constitution:

- to promote awareness of and respect for human rights and freedoms at all levels of society;
- to promote the protection, development and attainment of human rights and freedoms;
- to monitor, assess and ensure observance of human rights and freedoms;
- to receive and consider complaints from the public and to take such action in regard to the complaints as it considers appropriate.

It is in light of the aforesaid that the Commission proceeded to investigate complaints of alleged discrimination in the distribution of agricultural inputs and food aid in some constituencies that include Bikita East, Buhera North, Mazoe Central and Muzarabani North and South as well as Zvimba South.

The complaints were submitted and investigations conducted between the periods May to August 2016.

The long and short of the findings or outcomes of the investigations was that there was unbridled maladministration on the part of some public officials who were allegedly performing their duties partially and with bias against persons of particular political affiliations in contravention of the provisions of the Public Service Regulations SI 1/2000 which requires public officials to be apolitical and discharge their duties impartially and objectively.

There were also allegations of criminal violation of human rights by some public officials who were said to be stealing trust property in the form of food aid entrusted to them for distribution as well as Criminal violation of alleged assault perpetrated by some ruling party members on the Buhera North Ward 7 MDC-T councillor.

### Key findings

In all the five districts covered by the investigations, community leaders such as Village Heads, Headmen, Village Secretaries and District Administrators and in the case of Bikita East the Councillors who are all members of the ruling party were alleged to be

### Know Your Rights

### 243. Functions of Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission

1. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission has the following functions -
  - a. to promote awareness of and respect for human rights and freedoms at all levels of society;
  - b. to promote the protection, development and attainment of human rights and freedoms;
  - c. to monitor, assess and ensure observance of human rights and freedoms;
  - d. to receive and consider complaints from the public and to take such action in regard to the complaints as it considers appropriate;
  - e. to protect the public against abuse of power and maladministration by State and public institutions and by officers of those institutions;
  - f. to investigate the conduct of any authority or person, where it is alleged that any of the human rights and freedoms set out in the Declaration of Rights has been violated by that authority or person;
  - g. to secure appropriate redress, including recommending the prosecution of offenders, where human rights or freedoms have been violated;
  - h. to direct the Commissioner-General of Police to investigate cases of suspected criminal violations of human rights or freedoms and to report to the Commission on the results of any such investigation;
  - i. to recommend to Parliament effective measures to promote human rights and freedoms;
  - j. to conduct research into issues relating to human rights and freedoms and social justice; and
  - k. to visit and inspect -
    - i. prisons, places of detention, refugee camps and related facilities; and
    - ii. places where mentally disordered or intellectually handicapped persons are detained; in order to ascertain the conditions under which persons are kept there, and to make recommendations regarding those conditions to the Minister responsible for administering the law relating to those places.
2. The Commissioner-General of Police must comply with any directive given to him or her by the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission under subsection (1) (h).

biased in favour of members of their own party and against members of the opposition whom they told openly that those affiliated to the opposition would never get food aid.

The investigating officers were informed that in both Bikita East and Mazowe Central Constituencies, youths from the ruling party who are not even part of the distribution committees are involved in the distribution of food aid and agricultural inputs. Furthermore, the investigators were informed that in the two districts in question, older persons who are not politically active but have family members such as children and grandchildren who are affiliated to the opposition parties are also being denied food aid.

In both Bikita East and Buhera North Constituencies, persons affiliated to the opposition parties were also being excluded from food for work programmes. From the interviews conducted, it was noted that complainants from Buhera North Constituency were not conversant with the criteria of food aid distribution as stipulated in the National Policy on Drought Management. The lack of this vital knowledge exposes them to manipulation due to lack of transparency and accountability compounded by their ignorance of grievance procedures that may be available to them.

Besides being negatively affected in their food production efforts by the El Nino induced drought, villagers in the Dewure Resettlement Area in Bikita East had their crops and livestock falling prey to and ravaged by wildlife such as elephants, buffaloes and hyenas hibernating in the neighbouring Save Valley Wildlife Conservancy.

The complainants in Mazowe district reported that they were aware of the grievance procedures or appeal processes against the conduct of the ward food distribution committee. However, when they approached the District Administrator for remedy, their complaints could not receive attention at all.

In Muzarabani North and South, in particular Wards 6 and 17, investigators found that food distribution was on partisan basis and that politicians were interfering in the distribution process for their own personal political gain.

### Conclusion

Although the Respondents or alleged perpetrators denied the allegations, the Commission on the basis of evidence gathered, came to the conclusion that there was indeed discrimination and exclusion of certain citizens in the distribution of food aid in Bikita East, Mazowe Central, Muzarabani North and South and Buhera North Constituencies. These findings were replicated in the outcomes of similar investigations carried out in Zvimba South District. The ruling party members were the major perpetrators in violations linked to distribution of food, agricultural inputs and other forms of aid.

In some instances, community members are not aware of the food distribution criteria resulting in their exposure to manipulation by those responsible for food distribution. For those who are aware of the grievance procedures, there has been no remedy even though they followed the proper channels. The practice therefore is a violation of UN Principles on fundamental Human Rights to Food which guarantee freedom from hunger and access to safe and nutritious food by

way of Availability, Accessibility, Sustainability and Non-Discrimination.

The rights that the ZHRC found to have been violated are Right to equality and non-discrimination (section 56 of the Constitution), Right to sufficient food (section 77(b) of the Constitution) and Right of older persons to receive reasonable care and assistance from their families and the State (section 82 (a) and (c) of the Constitution).

### Recommendations

From the aforementioned facts of this report, the ZHRC makes the following recommendations:

- That as already clearly enunciated by His Excellency the President and Head of State and Government, Cde R.G Mugabe, food aid should not be distributed on partisan lines.
- The Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare should strengthen its mechanisms for addressing complaints arising out of food aid or agricultural inputs distribution or any other programme that is intended to assist vulnerable households to ensure that there is equity and public confidence in the system.
- The Ministry should also ensure that public officials act in their official capacity and desist from using political affiliations as yardsticks and guarantee impartiality in any food aid or distribution of inputs or any other programme that is meant to assist those in dire need.
- Relevant Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved in the food aid distribution should also ensure that it is done in a non-partisan manner.
- The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) should at all times act impartially in investigating criminal violations of human rights, for instance, the assault perpetrated by ZANU-PF members on MDC-T Buhera North Ward 7 councillor should have been criminally investigated without fear or favour and timeously.
- The Parks and Wildlife Authority should erect a durable fence around the Save Valley Wildlife Conservancy so as to curb destruction of crops and killing of livestock by wildlife.
- All political parties with members who are elected into public office (e.g. Members of Parliament and Councillors) should in their public duties strive to accommodate everyone despite political affiliation. In other words a human rights based approach should be adopted in implementing ZIM-ASSET and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2030).

A complete report is available from the Commission.

I thank you.

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# Demos dilemma

## ...Cops say No. Courts say Yes.

BULAWAYO-Courts have, once again, rubbished attempts by the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) to ban citizens from exercising their right to demonstrate and hold public meetings.

Magistrate Sheunesu Matova last week on Tuesday said the police were offside when they banned the Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights) from holding a public meeting in Victoria Falls, Matabeleland North province.

The case is the latest in a string of cases which the courts have ruled against police attempts to muzzle citizens.

Now the police are in a fix over the demonstrations being rolled out across the country, especially because the country's courts continue ruling against their attempts to stop citizens from exercising their rights.

Due to frustrations over the deteriorating economic situation and human rights violations, Zimbabweans have been demonstrating almost daily since early July.

While this is in line with their rights enshrined in the country's Constitution, police have sought to ban most of the demonstrations. Where demonstrators have defied such illegal bans, the Zimbabwe Republic Police has used water cannons, tear gas and brute violence.

On the other hand, the courts have consistently ruled on the side of citizens by overturning the demonstration bans imposed by the police.

In Bulawayo, Magistrate Sheunesu Matova ruled that the police actions to ban the Zimrights meeting were unlawful.

Human rights lawyers were forced to approach the court after ZRP Officer Commanding Victoria Falls District, Chief Superintendent Jairos Chiwona, issued a prohibition order banning ZimRights from convening a meeting intended to discuss the state of enjoyment of socio-economic rights through effective service delivery.

Lizwe Jamela of Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) represented ZimRights.

Chief Superintendent Chiwona had on 8 September 2016 served ZimRights with a "prohibition order" banning the meeting after claiming that such meetings were being used as a "prelude" to "centralised" violent demonstrations.



Victory...ZLHR's Lizwe Jamela forced the police to reconsider a ban on a public meeting planned by ZimRights

Chief Superintendent Chiwona justified his actions as lawful under the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) Chapter 11:17 and also claimed that intelligence reports gathered by ZRP showed that the ZimRights meeting could be used to mobilise for violent demonstrations.

Magistrate Matova ruled that Chief Superintendent Chiwona's actions did not depict any cogent grounds to ban the meeting and therefore his prohibition order was unlawful.

Some hours before the hearing of the ZimRights application, Chief Superintendent Chiwona had balked at the litigation processes instituted by Jamela by withdrawing the prohibition order.

In his letter to ZimRights, Chief Superintendent Chiwona said he had withdrawn the prohibition order and invited Celia Mafu, ZimRights' Provincial Coordinator for Matabeleland North and South to attend a meeting, where he wanted the human rights organisation to furnish ZRP with "particulars" of the Convenor and the deputy Convenor of the meeting.

This represented a significant climb down from his earlier order banning the ZimRights meeting. However, the court proceeded to hear the case.

In setting aside the prohibition order, Magistrate Matova said its issuance was not compliant with Section 26 of the Public Order and Security Act Chapter 11:17, which Chief Superintendent Chiwona had cited in banning the ZimRights meeting.

The Magistrate also interdicted Chief Superintendent Chiwona and his agents from disturbing or interfering in any way with the ZimRights meeting.

Meanwhile, in Harare, the ZRP has proposed to ban demonstrations in the central business district and its environs, a week after High Court judge Justice Priscilla Chigumba ruled an earlier ban as unconstitutional.

A notice issued by Chief Superintendent Newbert Saunyama last week proposed to ban demonstrations for a month, without citing any reasons.

On 1 September, Saunyama issued a two-week ban that was later ruled illegal by Justice Chigumba.

The courts in Harare have repeatedly overturned several of Saunyama's purported bans, yet he doesn't seem to give up.

In Manicaland, Police intensified the assault on citizens' freedoms by issuing prohibition orders against demonstrations organised by the National Electoral Reforms Agenda scheduled for 17 September 2016 in Mutare, Mutasa and Nyanga North. ZLHR lawyers, led by Peggy Tavagadza, vowed to challenge the prohibition orders.

# Trial drags on as Linda endures jail

HARARE-A mother of five, Linda Masarira, continues to suffer in remand prison, as her case drags on.

Magistrate Stan Mambanje last week presided over the trial of Masarira and 10 others who were arrested over a successful stayaway called #SHUTDOWNZIM2016 on 6 July 2016.

They are being charged with obstructing the free flow of traffic.

The 11 are being represented by Kudzayi Kadzere, a Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights member. Masarira has been languishing in prison ever since her arrest on 6 July 2016, but the other accused persons are remanded out of custody.

The trial of the 11, who are denying the charges, began on the 25<sup>th</sup> of August 2016.

Meanwhile, #Tajamuka national spokesperson Promise Mkwanzani, who was arrested and charged with public violence in connection with an antipolice brutality demonstration which took place end of last month, has been freed on bail.

Mkwanzani had been denied bail at the Magistrates Court, forcing him to approach the High Court.

High Court judge Happias Zhou freed Mkwanzani on \$100 bail last week.



Jailed...Linda Masarira, wrapped in Zimbabwean flag, has been in remand prison since July 6 for her pro-democracy campaigns. Picture Credit: Linda Masarira Facebook page



#Tajamuka spokesperson Promise Mkwanzani stepping out of the prisons vehicle in handcuffs. Mkwanzani was granted bail by the High Court last week. Picture Credit: Thelma Chikwanha

## Know Your Rights

### 58. Freedom of assembly and association

1. Every person has the right to freedom of assembly and association, and the right not to assemble or associate with others.
2. No person may be compelled to belong to an association or to attend a meeting or gathering.

### 59. Freedom to demonstrate and petition

Every person has the right to demonstrate and to present petitions, but these rights must be exercised peacefully.

# Journalist languishes in prison

## ...as MISA seeks meeting with police boss over 'deepening conflict'

HARARE-A journalist arrested while conducting his professional duties continues languishing in remand prison, with media freedom watchdogs raising alarm over the harassment of media personnel.

Freelance journalist Tendai Mandimika was arrested in Harare on 24 August 2016 as he covered a demonstration. He is now being charged with public violence. A Harare magistrate last week further remanded him in custody to next Monday.

He has since appealed against the denial of bail at the High Court. The unprecedented wave of protests calling on President Robert Mugabe to respect human rights and fix the ailing economy has seen journalists becoming a target of police harassment.

Besides arrests, some have been assaulted, while others had their equipment destroyed or confiscated by the police. The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA)-Zimbabwe has since asked for a meeting with police Commissioner-General Augustine Chihuri to discuss the

"deepening conflict" between his organisation and media practitioners.

"It is indeed the duty of journalists to cover and report issues and all events in the country, including demonstrations," reads part of the letter signed by Cris Chinaka and Kelvin Jakachira, MISA-Zimbabwe's Trustees' chairperson and acting chairperson of the MISA board respectively.

"While we do not seek to teach the police on how to do their job in maintaining law and order, we believe that that responsibility also includes ensuring the safety and security of journalists who will be dutifully executing their mandate," MISA-Zimbabwe said in the letter to the police.

MISA-Zimbabwe said, given the critical role of journalists and the police, there is need for a cordial working relationship between the police and journalists to ensure the two essential sectors execute their duties effectively in the interest of the country.

"In fact, it is the same call of duty that the police find themselves answering to during protests that



Freelance journalist James Jemwa does the peace out sign as he disembarks from a prison vehicle at Harare Magistrates Court. Jemwa spent nearly a week in remand prison before he was released on \$50 bail after he was arrested covering protests in Harare. Picture Credit: Thelma Chikwanha

journalists also have to respond to. This is why they find themselves in the streets, precisely to cover the protests as they unravel," MISA-Zimbabwe said in the letter.

"Nothing else drives them, but to get the story for the benefit of the general public and indeed policy makers who also use news reports to make

informed decisions in the formulation of policies," MISA-Zimbabwe said.

The proposed meeting – whose date is yet to be set – is aimed at ensuring the police and journalists conduct their work without fear and suspicion of each other.

# ERC wants public assessment of ZEC performance

HARARE-The Election Resource Centre (ERC) has called on Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) to treat the public and Civil Society Organisations and political parties as key stakeholders in electoral processes.

Zimbabwe has a long history of disputed elections, resulting in the country constantly battling political and economic instability.

"However, as ZEC rolls out its engagement plan, it is recommended to ensure equality, sharing of information on time, sincerity in conversation and inclusion of the broader public," said ERC last week.

The organisation said it plans to launch a public assessment programme of ZEC performance in the form of a report card. The report card would be based on international principles guiding the administration of electoral processes.

These principles are independence, transparency, efficiency, impartiality, integrity, professionalism and service-mindedness.

"Adhering to these and other principles guiding the conduct of Election Management Bodies will go a long way in ensuring credibility of electoral processes in Zimbabwe," said ERC.

The elections watchdog asked ZEC to push for alignment of the Electoral Act with the Constitution of Zimbabwe adopted in May 2013.

"This will not only enable ZEC to constitutionally undertake its mandate but will allow for credible and inclusive electoral processes," the organisation said.

"The ERC reiterates that ZEC must conduct itself in a non-partisan, professional and independent manner and avail itself for public scrutiny. The public will also participate in assessing ZEC performance through a Report Card that the ERC will be launching," said ERC.

ZEC has been under pressure from civil society organisations for its slow pace on embarking on sweeping electoral reforms.

The organisation has previously said lack of funds has, in part, hindered its plans.

However, ERC said ZEC should carry out its mandate without excuses.

"We continue to emphasize the importance of public involvement in legislative and other processes as it boosts confidence in electoral processes. On 22 September 2015, the ERC and 14 other civil society organisations successfully filed a petition to Parliament, urging the legislature's intervention in the alignment of the Electoral Act with the Constitution of Zimbabwe on the basis of Section 141 of the Constitution. However, to date, no progress has been registered regarding the petition and follow up communication has also been ignored by Parliament, which has proceeded to conduct at least five Public Hearings, one on a petition that came afterwards," the organisation said.

# Sentencing postponed in Glen View murder case

HARARE-High Court Judge Justice Chinembiri Bhunu on September 8 postponed indefinitely the sentencing of four opposition officials found guilty of the 2011 murder of Zimbabwe Republic Police Inspector Petros Mutedzi.

Tungamirai Madzokere (41), Yvonne Musarurwa (29) and Last Maengahama (40) were early September found guilty of murder with actual intent and have been in custody since then.

Phineas Nhatarikwa (50), a former MDC-T driver, was convicted of being an accessory to the crime.

Justice Bhunu granted the 50-year-old Nhatarikwa bail on the same conditions that he was on before the conviction. The four are part of over two dozen Glen View residents who were arrested in 2011 and charged with contravening section 47 of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act.

Twenty-two of the accused persons were found not guilty and released at the close of the State case in 2013, while one of the MDC-T activists, Rebecca Mafikeni, succumbed to ill-health while at Chikurubi Maximum Prison.



Yvonne Musarurwa endured harsh conditions for two years in remand prison. Her colleague, Rebecca Mafikeni, died after succumbing to the jail conditions. Musarurwa is back in remand prison awaiting sentence after she was convicted of murder. The political activist argues that the charges are politically motivated

The other three were acquitted when they appeared before Justice Bhunu on 6 September 2016.

ZLHR Board Chairperson, Beatrice Mtetwa, who is leading the team of lawyers representing the MDC-T officials, submitted in mitigation that her clients had already endured a lengthy pre-trial incarceration period of about 32 months. She said the court should consider this when coming up with a sentence.

She prayed for community service sentences because there was no evidence connecting her clients to the murder.

She said the MDC-T officials had been convicted based on the doctrine of common purpose, which was not only archaic but was discredited as it had been used in the pre-colonial era in Zimbabwe and Apartheid era in neighbouring South Africa to punish political activists.

The State claims that on 29 May 2011, the Glen View residents chanted MDC-T party slogans denouncing police officers while throwing stones and empty beer bottles at them, resulting in the death of Inspector Mutedzi.

# War vets leaders await ruling

HARARE-A Harare Magistrate will on 21 September rule on an application for refusal of further remand filed by lawyers representing several war veterans' leaders.

Douglas Mahiya, Francis Nhando, Victor Matamadanda, Hoyini Samuel Bhila and Headman Moyo are facing charges of undermining the authority of, or insulting President Robert Mugabe, in contravention of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform Act).

The five war veterans were arrested in July on allegations of circulating a communiqué which was critical of the leadership of President Mugabe.

The President, who was described as "dictatorial" in the communiqué, is the Patron of the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association. The association's members were once fiercely loyal to the ruling ZANU-PF party before the fallout and subsequent arrest of their leaders.

In their application, the war veterans' leaders said they were subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment during their arrest and detention.

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights members Beatrice Mtetwa, Harrison Nkomo and David Drury are representing the war veterans' leaders.



No fear...Kukhanyakwenkosi Mkandla recently staged a one-man demonstration in Gwanda, Matabeleland South. Mkandla was protesting against the deteriorating economic situation, corruption and worsening human rights violations. Carrying a placard written "Mugabe Must Go" and "Bob Must Go", Mkandla refused to be intimidated by the recent violence unleashed on protestors by the police in other parts of the country. However, he was arrested and subsequently released following the intervention of Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights Regional Manager for Matabeleland Midlands provinces