



1. Is there any country information about attacks on farmers in the in Bikita in the district of Masvingo, in April 2008?

Sources indicate that attacks took place on farmers in the Masvingo district during April 2008. These attacks coincided with national elections when tension between government and opposition supporters was extremely high. According to a *Times Online* report from 8 April 2008, “[t]he farm invasions began on Saturday in Masvingo province, about 160 miles south of the capital, Harare. Five farmers were forced to flee or were trapped inside their homes by drunken mobs. A game lodge was also seized.”¹ The same report stated that two farm owners had been forced from their land for voting for the MDC, and farmers and their staff were beaten and threatened with further violence.²

The MDC claimed on 18 April 2008 that the violence started almost immediately after the elections on March 29, and claimed some of its supporters in remote rural areas were homeless after their homes were looted and burnt down by the suspected ZANU PF (Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front) activists.³ The US Ambassador to Zimbabwe James McGee on 18 April commented on the violence taking place through Zimbabwe:

There is growing evidence that rural communities are being punished for their support for opposition candidates. We have disturbing and confirmed reports of threats, beatings, abductions, burning of homes and even murder, from many parts of the country.⁴

These activities formed part of Operation *Mavhoterapapi* (who/where did you vote), a campaign designed to intimidate MDC supporters, and centred on rural areas of Zimbabwe. These events took place between the parliamentary and first-round presidential elections on 29 March 2008 and the second-round presidential election held 27 June 2008. Operation *Mavhoterapapi* was undertaken by ZANU-PF affiliates including ‘war veterans’, ZANU-PF youth, and regular Zimbabwean Army troops.⁵ Southern Africa Documentation and Cooperation Centre (SADOCC) claimed that the scope of these attacks extended to the

¹ ‘Mugabe is using army in assault on white-owned farms’ 2008, *Times Online*, 8 April http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/apr9_2008.html - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 1.

² ‘Mugabe is using army in assault on white-owned farms’ 2008, *Times Online*, 8 April http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/apr9_2008.html - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 1.

³ Mpofu P. 2008, ‘Hundreds of MDC supporters injured in post election violence’, *ZimOnline website*, 18 April <http://www.zimonline.co.za/Article.aspx?ArticleId=3054> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 2

⁴ Mpofu P. 2008, ‘Hundreds of MDC supporters injured in post election violence’, *ZimOnline website*, 18 April <http://www.zimonline.co.za/Article.aspx?ArticleId=3054> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 2

⁵ ‘Zimbabwe: Humanitarian operations curtailed by violence’ 2008, *IRIN (a service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs)*, 21 April <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=77848> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 3.

destruction of houses and the killing of livestock.⁶ According to an article in *The Zimbabwean* on 30 April, Operation *Mavhoterapapi* ended in late April, apparently due to a lack of funds⁷, nonetheless, the harassment and intimidation of farm owners continued beyond this point.

2. Is there country information about farmers/land owners in Bikita in the district of Masvingo being targeted by ZANU-PF supporters?

Sources provide a number of examples of farm owners in Masvingo province being targeted by ZANU-PF supporters. These events continued after the violence referred to in Question 1 when farm owners were targeted for their support of the MDC as part of Operation *Mavhoterapapi*. These activities included attack by armed groups and gangs, and the seizure of property by ZANU-PF MPs.

News sites reported the perpetrators of the violent attacks on farmers and land owners were undertaken by ZANU-PF supporters or ZANU-PF backed 'war veterans'. Even though Operation *Mavhoterapapi*, a campaign of violence designed to intimidate MDC supporters had officially concluded in April 2008, the harassment of farmers continued after the 2008 elections. SW Radio Africa⁸, in March 2009, reported that a Masvingo farmer had been taken hostage and assaulted for several hours by suspected ZANU-PF supporters. The report noted that following the attack, a local magistrate issued a warrant for the arrest of the injured farmer.⁹

Sources indicate that the harassment of farmers and landowners in Masvingo continues to take place, in particular by a group of 'war veterans' led by Jabulani Sibanda who are active in the Masvingo province, including Bikita. In January 2011, SW Radio Africa reported that Sibanda's group was accused by the MDC and un-named NGOs of being responsible for attacks on landowners in Bikita in late 2010.¹⁰

In March 2011, SW Radio Africa reported that attacks on farmers in Zimbabwe were on the rise despite the sharp decline in the number of farmers due to migration.¹¹ A spokesman for JAG (Justice for Agriculture), a group representing farm owners and workers, commented that fewer than 100 original title owners remained on their land.¹² The spokesman also claimed that the seizure of farms was a common tactic by ZANU-PF before elections. Sources noted that new 'black' farm owners faced similar harassment to the white farmers who had vacated their properties.¹³ A report in *The Zimbabwean* in March 2011 stated that

⁶ 'Operation Mavhoterapapi' 2008, *Southern Africa Documentation and Cooperation Centre*, 9 May <http://www.sadocc.at/news/2008/2008-076.shtml> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 4.

⁷ 'Operation Mavhoterapapi goes broke' 2008, *The Zimbabwean*, 30 April http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=12436:operation-mavhoterapapi-goes-broke-&catid=31:weekday-top-stories&Itemid=30 - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 5.

⁸ An independent news service reporting on Zimbabwe through short wave radio <http://www.swradioafrica.com/pages/mission020609.htm>

⁹ Bell A. 2009, 'Masvingo Farmer in Hiding After Assault And Threat of Arrest', *SW Radio Africa (London)*, 17 March, allAfrica.com website <http://allafrica.com/stories/200903170919.html> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 6.

¹⁰ Karimakwenda T. 2011, 'War Veteran Sibanda Threatens 2000 At Masvingo Rally', 12 January, allAfrica.com website <http://allafrica.com/stories/201101130144.html> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 7.

¹¹ Bell A. 2011, 'Farm Attacks On the Rise Again', *SW Radio Africa (London)*, 24 March, allAfrica.com website <http://allafrica.com/stories/201103250179.html> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 8.

¹² Bell A. 2011, 'Farm Attacks On the Rise Again', *SW Radio Africa (London)*, 24 March, allAfrica.com website <http://allafrica.com/stories/201103250179.html> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 8.

¹³ Sithole Z. 2011, 'New farmers harassed', *The Zimbabwean*, 6 March http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=37825:new-farmers-harassed&catid=70:sunday-issue - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 9.

ZANU-PF officials and 'war veterans' have visited the properties of farmers recently granted land and accused them of not participating in ZANU-PF rallies and of being agents of white farmers. The report quoted a farmer saying that ZANU-PF had come to his property and told him that "all the people who got land through the land reform programme are supposed to support Zanu (PF)."¹⁴ Another farmer noted "[w]e have serious problems with Zanu (PF) youths and war veterans here. They are after us."¹⁵

Sources indicated that in addition to these violent gangs, ZANU-PF officials were directly involved in the harassment of farmers including the seizure of property. A September 2010 SW Radio Africa report stated that ZANU-PF MPs were involved in efforts to force farm owners to leave their property. The report claimed that a couple in Somabhula (located in the neighbouring province west of Masvingo) had their farm seized and occupied by Jabulani Mangena, the ZANU-PF member for the Mberengwa North Constituency.¹⁶ The couple had lost the last portion of the farm they owned despite giving up the majority of their land in an attempt to prevent being evicted.¹⁷ Sources indicated the direct involvement of ZANU-PF MPs in the seizure of property has been widespread since the 2008 elections.¹⁸

3. Is there any information about clashes between ZANU-PF supporters and MDC supporters in Bikita in the district of Masvingo?

Sources indicate that clashes between ZANU-PF and MDC supporters continue to take place in Bikita and other parts of Masvingo province. The majority of these clashes in the last two years have taken place between MDC supporters and a group identifying themselves as veterans of the 1970s war in then Rhodesia. Although this group is not formally allied to the ZANU-PF, the main focus appears to be to intimidate supporters of the MDC.

Considerable tension has existed in the Masvingo district since the March 2008 parliamentary elections where the MDC won a majority of seats in the region, including all three electorates based in the Bikita area.¹⁹ Following these results, a campaign of violence and intimidation code named Operation *Mavhoterapapi* was implemented in order to 're-educate' voters ahead of the June 2008 presidential runoff election.²⁰ As part of this operation, MDC supporters nationally were assaulted for attending rallies or prevented from taking part.²¹ The NGO

¹⁴ Sithole Z. 2011, 'New farmers harassed', *The Zimbabwean*, 6 March http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=37825:new-farmers-harassed&catid=70:sunday-issue - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 9.

¹⁵ Sithole Z. 2011, 'New farmers harassed', *The Zimbabwean*, 6 March http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=37825:new-farmers-harassed&catid=70:sunday-issue - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 9.

¹⁶ People Record 2008, Jabulani Mangena profile, *AfDevInfo*, 22 August http://www.afdevinfo.com/htmlreports/peo/peo_48357.html - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 10.

¹⁷ Bell A. 2010, 'MP Still Refusing to Leave Invaded Farm', *SW Radio Africa (London)*, 1 September, allAfrica.com website <http://allafrica.com/stories/201009020035.html> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 11.

¹⁸ 'Zimbabwe Inclusive Government Watch : Issue 7 2009', *Sokwanele website*, 4 August <http://www.sokwanele.com/thisiszimbabwe/archives/4501> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 12.

¹⁹ House of Assembly Election Results 2008, Zimbabwe Metro website, <http://www.zimbabwemetro.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/house-of-assembly-candidates.pdf> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 13.

²⁰ Crane D., De Silva D., Zwart, T. 2009, 'Seeking Justice for Zimbabwe A Case for Accountability Against Robert Mugabe and Others 1981–2008' *Enough Project website*, 9 July http://www.enoughproject.org/files/reports/july_zim_2.pdf - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 14.

²¹ Crane D., De Silva D., Zwart, T. 2009, 'Seeking Justice for Zimbabwe A Case for Accountability Against Robert Mugabe and Others 1981–2008' *Enough Project website*, 9 July http://www.enoughproject.org/files/reports/july_zim_2.pdf - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 14.

Genocide Watch noted that, with the support of the Zimbabwean military, gangs of ZANU-PF marauders swept through villages at night, killing, torturing and raping MDC supporters.²²

Violence by ZANU-PF supporters against MDC supporters continued beyond 2008 in Masvingo Province. The *Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum*, in a May 2009 report, stated that on 1 January soldiers had assaulted people and looted property in Masvingo.²³ These attacks continued on an ad hoc basis throughout 2009 and peaked in September 2009 when ZANU-PF youths attacked MDC supporters and, according to the MDC, killed an MDC supporter named Joseph Munyuki, in Masvingo.²⁴ Also in September 2009, SW Radio reported that MDC supporting teachers had been attacked by ZANU-PF youth and that militia had established terror camps in Masvingo Province.²⁵

Sources state that in 2010 and 2011, attacks on MDC supporters have been carried out on a more organised basis. During this period, a group led by self-proclaimed 'war vet leader' Jabulani Sibanda, has been involved in a campaign to intimidate MDC supporters in Masvingo Province. In August 2010, Sibanda attempted to hold a rally in Bikita where, according to SW Radio Africa, the attendees dispersed when Sibanda began to shout anti-MDC and anti-Tsvangirai slogans.²⁶ Shortly afterwards, seven Masvingo province MDC MPs were arrested for allegedly disrupting the meeting. As of March 2011, these proceedings were still ongoing.²⁷ In January 2011, SW Radio Africa reported that Sibanda and him had forced 2,000 people in Triangle, Masvingo (approximately 100km south of Bikita) to attend a rally where they were threatened with violence if they voted for the MDC.²⁸ The same report noted that Sibanda and his people were believed to have committed assaults in other nearby cities, including Bikita.

The tension caused by the harassment and intimidation of MDC supporters in Bikita and Masvingo appears to be having a detrimental impact on support for ZANU-PF. In April 2011 Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe asked youth supporters of ZANU-PF not to attack MDC supporters in Bikita, as he believed that violence scared away supporters from the ZANU-PF.²⁹ Mugabe added:

Please don't beat people from opposition parties here; there is nothing which we can get from being violent. We grow and live in the same area so there is no point why we should beat our neighbours for holding a different political thinking. Those whom we

²² Genocide Watch 2008, *Politicide Warning: Zimbabwe*, 19 June, Sokwanele website <http://www.sokwanele.com/node/639> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 15.

²³ Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum 2009, Political violence report, May <http://www.hrforumzim.com/monthly/May2009MPVR.pdf> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 16.

²⁴ Gonda V. 2009, 'Another MDC activist murdered', *SW Radio Africa*, 8 September, The Zimbabwe Situation website <http://www.zimbabwesituation.org/?p=457> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 17.

²⁵ 'Zimbabwe Inclusive Government Watch : Issue 7 2009', *Sokwanele website*, 4 August <http://www.sokwanele.com/thisiszimbabwe/archives/4501> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 12.

²⁶ Sibanda T. 2011, 'COPAC co-chairman Mwonzora arrested outside Parliament', *SW Radio Africa news*, 15 February <http://www.swradioafrica.com/news150211/copac150211.htm> - Accessed 3 May 2011 - Attachment 18.

²⁷ Chitagu T. 2011, 'Magistrate-shortage stalls MDC-T officials' trial', *News Day*, 28 March <http://www.newsday.co.zw/article/2011-03-28-magistrateshortage-stalls-mdct-officials-trial> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 19.

²⁸ Karimakwenda T. 2011, 'War Veteran Sibanda Threatens 2000 At Masvingo Rally', 12 January, allAfrica.com website <http://allafrica.com/stories/201101130144.html> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 7.

²⁹ 'Catholic Bishops Liars And Puppets – Mugabe' 2011, *The Zimbabwe Mail*, 22 April <http://www.thezimbabwemail.com/zimbabwe/7895-catholic-bishops-liars-and-puppets-mugabe.html> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 20.

beat will never support us so the best strategy to lure our opponents is to love them and live with them in peace. Please I beg you to live peacefully with others.³⁰

As noted in Question 1, the elections of 2008 led to a rise in violence, including an organised campaign designed to intimidate MDC supporters in rural areas (Operation *Mavhoterapapi*). According to one survey, the majority of people interviewed last October said memories of previous elections contributed to their fears of ZANU-PF violence in any upcoming poll.³¹ Parliamentary and presidential elections are due to take place midyear although the form and date of the poll are yet to be announced.³²

1. Deleted.

³⁰ ‘Catholic Bishops Liars And Puppets – Mugabe’ 2011, *The Zimbabwe Mail*, 22 April <http://www.thezimbabwemail.com/zimbabwe/7895-catholic-bishops-liars-and-puppets-mugabe.html> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 20.

³¹ Thornycroft P. 2011, ‘ZANU-PF Military Forces Farmers to Attend Election Rallies’, *Voice of America News*, 5 January <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/africa/ZANU-PF-Military-Forces-Farmers-to-Attend-Election-Rallies-112945094.html> - Accessed 3 May 2011– Attachment 21.

³² Nkomo N., Kandemiiri J., Chiripasi T. 2011, ‘Zimbabwe Governing Parties Divided on Elections Schedule as 2011 Opens’, *Voice of America News*, 3 January <http://www.voanews.com/zimbabwe/news/Zimbabwe-Governing-Parties-Divided-on-2011-Elections-Schedule-112816214.html> - Accessed 3 May 2011 – Attachment 22.

Attachments

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