



Australian Government
Refugee Review Tribunal

Country Advice

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe – ZWE38529 – Treatment of
MDC Members by ZANU-PF– Election-
related Violence, Masvingo West–
MDC History
27 April 2011

1. Please provide an update on current information on the treatment on MDC members in Zimbabwe (and especially in Masvingo West) by ZANU-PF supporters.

Political violence in Zimbabwe appears to be largely tied to the election cycle. During election campaigns, low ranking members and supporters are vulnerable to intimidation and harm. Such harm may not necessarily be targeted or coordinated by the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), but rather by militants allied to ZANU-PF who may act independently and opportunistically on the basis that they have a sense of greater impunity.^{1 2} ZANU-PF and Robert Mugabe have expressed a strong desire to push ahead with elections in 2011.³ However, no election date had been set at the time of writing.

Between March (when the initial round of elections was held) and the end of 2008, some 6,300 individual victims of torture and assault were recorded in Zimbabwe.⁴ The number of reported victims of political violence fell dramatically after the signing of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in September 2008 and the formation of the Government of National Unity in February 2009. Nevertheless, the statistics remained high; the USDOS reported that in 2009 that “at least 3,316 victims of torture and assault received medical treatment”.⁵

In 2010, the MDC-Tsvangirai faction (MDC-T)⁶ reported that between the March 2008 election and May 2010, more than 500 of its members and supporters were murdered by ZANU-PF militants and Zimbabwean state security agents.⁷

In late 2010, reports of attacks on MDC organisers continued to be published. Many of these attacks involved assaults on activists involved in the Constitutional Outreach Program (COP).^{8 9}

¹ Human Rights Watch 2009, *False Dawn: The Zimbabwe Power-Sharing Government's Failure to Deliver Human Rights Improvements*, 31 August p. 1 – Attachment 1

² Aids Free World 2009, *Electing to Rape: Sexual Terror in Mugabe's Zimbabwe*, December, p. 11 <http://www.aidsfreeworld.org/Our-Issues/Legal-Work/~media/0435F634DD3A44A08B14348CC1878F2B.pdf> – Accessed 28 January 2010 – Attachment 2

³ ‘Mugabe wins endorsement for Zimbabwe's 2011 vote’ 2010, *ABC News*, source: *AFP* 19 December <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/12/19/3097004.htm?site=news> – Accessed 9 February 2011 – Attachment 3

⁴ US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, 11 March, Section 1.b, 1.c – Attachment 4

⁵ US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, 11 March, Section 1.a – Attachment 4

⁶ Please refer to the response to Question 7 for general information on the MDC.

⁷ Zulu, B. 2010, ‘Zimbabwe's MDC Releases Report Naming Perpetrators of Political Violence’, *VOA News.com*, 6 July <http://www.voanews.com/zimbabwe/news/politics/Zimbabwes-MDC-Releases-Report-Naming-Perpetrators-of-Violence-97876909.html> – Accessed 28 September 2010 – Attachment 5

Human Rights Watch (HRW) states that since COP meetings began in June 2010, they have been frequently marred by violence and intimidation, mainly perpetrated by ZANU-PF youth militia and so-called 'War Veterans' who are allied to ZANU-PF. As a consequence, some 13 meetings in Harare were suspended in late 2010.¹⁰

Abductions of MDC organisers, particularly in provincial areas, remain common occurrences. Information by the USDOS indicates that most of these abductions are carried out by ZANU-PF youth militia, on the order of the local branches of the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO).¹¹

There are few reports of targeted harm directed towards Movement for Democratic Change – Mutambara faction (MDC-M) members and supporters. This could be ascribed to the fact that the 2005 MDC split has served the interests of ZANU-PF. It could also be ascribed to the fact that popular support for the MDC is overwhelmingly invested in the MDC-T faction.¹² Further information on the difference between MDC-M and MDC-T is included in the response to Question 7.

Masvingo Province

In Masvingo Province, "voters switched their support from ZANU-PF to the MDC in 2008."¹³ There are recent reports of MDC supporters in Masvingo experiencing harm such as intimidation and assault from ZANU-PF supporters and armed forces. In January 2011, *BBC News* reported that "[a]ccording to the MDC soldiers or people claiming to be soldiers have stepped up violence and intimidation against ZANU-PF's political opponents in Masvingo".¹⁴ In January 2011, MDC-T leader Morgan Tsvangirai reported that politically motivated violence against party members was on the rise, citing an incident where security forces assaulted dozens of people in Masvingo.¹⁵

IRIN News reports that Jabulani Sibanda, president of the ZANU-PF-aligned 'War Veterans', has set up a camp in Masvingo, which MDC members fear may be used to stage violence and intimidation in the lead-up to the next elections.¹⁶ Masvingo West Member of Parliament (MP) Tichaona Mharadze¹⁷ said in January 2010 that "ZANU-PF has set a base in my constituency at Mushandike. Soldiers are also seen at the base training the youths. The people in my area are not

⁸ Sebatha, L. & Manyuchi, T. 2010, 'Victims of violence arrested: MDC', ZimOnline, 22 September <http://www.zimonline.co.za/Article.aspx?ArticleId=6355> – Accessed 27 September 2010 – Attachment 6

⁹ Kwaramba, F. 2010, 'Family says police won't arrest murder suspects', *The Zimbabwean*, 25 September http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=34452:family-says-police-wont-arrest-murder-suspects&catid=69:sunday-top-stories&Itemid=30 – Accessed 27 September 2010 – Attachment 7

¹⁰ 'Zimbabwe: Violence, Intimidation Mar Constitutional Outreach', *Reuters AlertNet*, source: Human Rights Watch, 28 September <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/HRW/266c96d7fe14a532f9ba7a733dafa21b.htm> – Accessed 28 September 2010 – Attachment 8

¹¹ US Department of State 2010, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009 – Zimbabwe*, 11 March, Section I.b – Attachment 4

¹² RRT Country Advice – Melbourne. 2011, 'Issues Paper – Zimbabwe', April, p. 31 – Attachment 9.

¹³ 'Zimbabwe: Election call raises fears of more violence' 2010, UNHCR Refworld, source: *IRIN News*, 22 October <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4cc672ff1e.html> – Accessed 27 January 2011 – Attachment 10

¹⁴ 'Zimbabwe's MDC says Zuma's roadmap meaningless as ZANU-PF spreads violence' 2011, *BBC News*, 27 January – Attachment 11

¹⁵ Karimakwenda, T. 2011, 'Zimbabwe: MDC Says Violence, Arrests and Abductions on the Rise' *All Africa Global Media*, source: *SW Radio Africa*, 14 January <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/201101170278.html> – Accessed 14 April 2011 – Attachment 12

¹⁶ 'Zimbabwe: Election call raises fears of more violence' 2010, UNHCR Refworld, source: *IRIN News*, 22 October <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4cc672ff1e.html> – Accessed 27 January 2011 – Attachment 10

¹⁷ Further information on Tichaona Mharadze is included in the response to Question 4.

very sure of what will happen to them.”¹⁸ ZANU-PF has reportedly coerced young people in Masvingo into joining the armed forces¹⁹, although it is noted that this report does not exclusively relate to coercing young MDC reporters into joining.

Other reports of politically-motivated violence occurring in Masvingo Province from 2010 and 2011 include:

- In January 2011, a Masvingo MDC supporter was abducted at gunpoint. The police reportedly refused to look into the matter, stating that it was too political for them to be involved.²⁰
- The USDOS reports that ZANU-PF activists and allied ‘War Veterans’ beat a female informal trader in Masvingo Province after she failed to contribute a donation toward Independence Day festivities. Those who did not contribute donations were labelled as MDC supporters. The woman died from an extended injury.²¹
- Human Rights Watch reports that police arbitrarily arrested 48 people at MDC-organised constitutional reform meetings during 2010.²²
- In October 2010, MDC activists in Masvingo reportedly fled their homes after experiencing intimidation from ZANU-PF supporters. ZANU-PF supporters reportedly attempted to force villagers to support the party’s standpoints on constitutional reform during a public consultation program. One resident is quoted as stating that “Zanu PF is already in election mode and is intimidating and harassing MDC supporters.”²³
- Also in October 2010, *BBC News* reported that Masvingo West MDC MP Tichaona Mharadza had received death threats from soldiers after complaining about their presence in the area.²⁴
- In February 2010, at least 34 people were reportedly beaten by ZANU-PF supporters for attending an MDC rally in Masvingo West.²⁵ In March 2010, ZANU-PF youths reportedly went door to door, warning constituents in Masvingo West not to attend a different MDC rally.²⁶

2. Deleted.

¹⁸ ‘Zimbabwe: Zanu-PF Sets Up Torture Bases’ 2010, Corporate Foreign Policy website, 26 January <http://corporateforeignpolicy.com/africa/zimbabwe-zanu-pf-sets-up-torture-bases> – Accessed 14 April 2011 – Attachment 13

¹⁹ ‘Zimbabwe’s ZANU-PF reportedly “forcing youths” to join army in Masvingo’ 2010, *BBC News*, 17 December – Attachment 14.

²⁰ Langa, V. 2011, ‘Zimbabwe: Zanu Pf Still Abusing Security Forces’ *All Africa Global Media*, source: Zimbabwe Independent 13 January <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/201101140888.html> – Accessed 13 April 2011 – Attachment 15

²¹ US Department of State 2011, *Report on Human Rights Practices for 2010 – Zimbabwe*, 8 April, Section I – Attachment 16

²² Human Rights Watch 2011, *World Report – Zimbabwe*, 27 January – Attachment 17

²³ Mafirakurewa, M. 2010, ‘Zanu PF out to eliminate me: Ma’ *News Day*, 2 November <http://www.newsday.co.zw/article/2010-11-02-zanu-pf-out-to-eliminate-me-matutu> – Accessed 13 April 2011 – Attachment 18

²⁴ ‘Zimbabwe media update 11-16 October’ 2010, *BBC News*, 22 October – Attachment 19

²⁵ ‘Masvingo villagers get a hiding for attending MDC-T rally’ 2010, Zimbabwe Situation website, source: Radio Voice of the People (Radio VOP), 7 February – Attachment 20

²⁶ ‘Villagers Warned Against Attending Tsvangirai’s Rally’ 2010, *The Zimbabwe Mail*, 13 March <http://www.thezimbabwemail.com/zimbabwe/4771.html> – Accessed 13 April 2011 – Attachment 21

3. Please provide information on the level of MDC and ZANU-PF political activity/violence, in the most recent elections (2008) in Masvingo West in the Mudenge Kraal village in Zimbabwe.

No reports specifically describing election-related violence in Mudenge Kraal village were located. More generally, reports were located that describe significant levels of election-related violence in Masvingo Province during 2008. As noted in the response to Question 1, the election results saw a notable swing towards the MDC throughout Masvingo Province.²⁷

A report by the Zimbabwe Peace Project labels Masvingo province an area with “high levels of violence” in the 2008 post-election period, with the second highest number of recorded cases (622) in the country. The most common types of complaints recorded in Masvingo by the Zimbabwe Peace Project were harassment and intimidation, at 417 recorded cases. There were also 108 recorded assaults, 49 kidnappings and one murder.²⁸ The report continues with examples, stating that ZANU-PF youths reportedly attacked MDC supporters in Zaka, Masvingo during April 2008. One MDC supporter died as a result of this attack. ZANU-PF allied ‘war vetera also reportedly targeted a farm in Masvingo in a land grab after hearing that the owner was an MDC supporter.²⁹ The following table depicts recorded acts of 2008 election-related violence by type and province.

ACTS ANALYSIS BY PROVINCE

ACTS	Bulawayo	Mat. South	Mat. North	Midlands	Masvingo	Harare	Mash. East	Mash. West	Mash. Central	Manicaland	TOTAL
Murder	0	0	0	2	1	0	3	2	0	2	10
Rape	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	4
Kidnapping/Abduction	0	1	0	9	49	5	14	4	6	61	149
Assault	5	10	3	81	108	141	118	55	30	216	767
Theft/looting	0	0	0	5	16	8	35	6	0	10	80
Malicious Damage to Property (MDP)	0	0	0	6	11	5	54	7	11	251	345
Torture	1	0	0	4	11	33	41	0	3	64	157
Unlawful Detention	1	1	4	5	22	14	17	2	2	57	125
Harassment/Intimidation	47	22	10	125	417	114	188	32	90	439	1484
Displacement	0	1	2	10	27	7	63	99	187	823	1219
Discrimination	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	3	11	0	19
TOTAL	54	35	19	251	662	328	535	211	340	1924	4359

Table 1: Acts of 2008 Election-Related Violence in Zimbabwe.³⁰

The Sokwanele group has also mapped reports of 2008 election-related violence and cites 33 incidents in Masvingo. These incidents were assaults with weapons and abductions. Victims

²⁷ ‘Zimbabwe: Election call raises fears of more violence’ 2010, UNHCR Refworld, source: *IRIN News*, 22 October <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4cc672ff1e.html> – Accessed 27 January 2011 – Attachment 10

²⁸ Zimbabwe Peace Project 2008, *Post March 29th 2008 Elections Violence Report No. 1: “Beaten, wounded, bleeding and even lost life for exercising my right to vote”*, Sokwanele website, May, p. 4-5 http://www.sokwanele.com/system/files/zpp_post_elec_viol_report_1_0805.pdf – Accessed 22 July 2008 – Attachment 22

²⁹ Zimbabwe Peace Project 2008, *Post March 29th 2008 Elections Violence Report No. 1: “Beaten, wounded, bleeding and even lost life for exercising my right to vote”*, Sokwanele website, May, p. 26-7 http://www.sokwanele.com/system/files/zpp_post_elec_viol_report_1_0805.pdf – Accessed 22 July 2008 – Attachment 22

³⁰ Zimbabwe Peace Project 2008, *Post March 29th 2008 Elections Violence Report No. 1: “Beaten, wounded, bleeding and even lost life for exercising my right to vote”*, Sokwanele website, May, p. 4 http://www.sokwanele.com/system/files/zpp_post_elec_viol_report_1_0805.pdf – Accessed 22 July 2008 – Attachment 22

identified their assailants as ZANU-PF supporters, including youth militia.³¹ Human Rights Watch reported in 2008 that camps were established to torture opposition supporters in Masvingo.³² *The Zimbabwe Times* reports that political violence escalated in Masvingo in the lead up to the second round of the presidential election in June 2008.³³ During this time, ZANU-PF youth militia allegedly attacked MDC supporters, particularly in Masvingo's rural seats where ZANU-PF lost to the MDC. Over 100 MDC supporters from these areas, namely polling agents, fled their homes.³⁴

Please refer to the response to Question 1 for further and current information on the treatment of MDC supporters by ZANU-PF, in Masvingo Province and in Zimbabwe more widely.

4. Please provide information on parliamentary candidate Tachiona Mharadze (also spelt Mharadza) and his election campaigning.

Several reports refer to Tachiona Mharadze as a legislator or Member of Parliament (MP) for Masvingo West constituency.

Masvingo West was a new constituency in the 2008 elections, created out of an area previously included in Masvingo North constituency. Masvingo West contains around 21,470 registered voters.³⁵ Tachiona Mharadze, a member of the MDC-Tsvangirai group, was elected as member for Masvingo West in 2008. Official results show that Mharadze won 40.2% of the vote.³⁶ No sources were located to suggest that Mharadze was an MP in any other constituency previously; his name does not appear on the Zimbabwe Election Support Network's parliamentary results for 2005.³⁷ The MDC-T is reportedly split down factional lines in Masvingo. Mharadze's factional alignment saw him, along with other colleagues, call for the postponement of the MDC-T's provincial congress elections in April 2011.³⁸

Sources report that Mharadze and his supporters have gained adverse attention from ZANU-PF members and supporters. As noted in the response to Question 1, in February 2010, at least 34 people were reportedly beaten by ZANU-PF supporters for attending a MDC rally in Masvingo West. This was a rally which Mharadze had organised. Following the attacks, Mharadze stated:

“I am very disappointed with what is happening in my constituency. My supporters are always beaten and tortured. Last week there were armed police loitering in the area, they had no specific mission besides instilling fear in the public. We hope the

³¹ ‘Mapping Terror in Zimbabwe: Political Violence & Elections 2008’ 2008, Sokwanele website, 18 June – Attachment 23

³² Human Rights Watch 2008, “*Bullets for each of you*”: *State-sponsored violence since Zimbabwe's March 29 elections*, June, p. 30-33 <http://hrw.org/reports/2008/zimbabwe0608/zimbabwe0608webwcover.pdf> – Accessed 21 July 2008 – Attachment 24

³³ Chikari, O. 2008, ‘Five feared brutally killed in Masvingo’, *The Zimbabwe Times*, 13 June <http://www.thezimbabwetimes.com/?p=427> – Accessed 19 June 2008 – Attachment 25

³⁴ ‘Zimbabwe violence round-up’ 2008, *BBC News*, 23 April <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7361031.stm> – Accessed 12 June 2008 – Attachment 26

³⁵ Zimbabwe Election Support Network (Undated), ‘Masvingo Province’, *A Profile of Constituencies: Supporting Democratic Elections in Zimbabwe*, p. 117– Attachment 27

³⁶ ‘House of Assembly Election Results 2008’ (undated), Sokwanele website <http://www.sokwanele.com/election2008/results2008> – Accessed 26 August 2008 – Attachment 28

³⁷ Zimbabwe Election Support Network (Undated), ‘Final Parliamentary Election Results 2005’ Zimbabwe Election Support Network website http://www.zesn.org.zw/publications/publication_70.pdf – Accessed 14 April 2011 – Attachment 29

³⁸ ‘Delegates Cry Foul At Faction Riddled MDC-T Congress’ 2011, Radio Voice of the People (Radio VOP) website, 3 April <http://www.radiovop.com/national-news/5969-delegates-cry-foul-at-faction-riddled-mdc-t-congress.html> – Accessed 14 April 2011 – Attachment 30

perpetrators are going to be arrested but my worry is that MDC supporters will continue to suffer because the police have chosen to take sides.”³⁹

Mharadze himself was arrested in August 2010 on what the MDC claim were false charges of “waving a gun and disrupting a Zanu PF meeting”.⁴⁰ As noted in the response to Question 1, Mharadza reportedly received death threats from soldiers after complaining about their presence in the area.⁴¹

Mharadze has received media attention for alleged involvement in a fraud scandal related to the distribution of government subsidised goods, including seed and fertilizer.⁴² He has also publicly called for the government to act on non-payment of salaries to mine workers, and associated mine closures.⁴³ Masvingo West relies heavily on mining as a source of employment.⁴⁴

No further reports were located on Tachiona Mharadze’s campaign team or techniques.

5. Please provide information on Chief Fortune Charumbira.

Senator the Hon. Chief Fortune Charumbira is a Zimbabwean traditional chief and Member of Parliament. Chief Charumbira was appointed as a chief in 1991; elected as a councillor in Masvingo’s Rural District Council in 1993; first elected to parliament in 2000 to represent Masvingo province’s chiefs; and first appointed as President of the Chief’s Council and Senator in 2005. In 2008 he was re-elected to the same positions. Charumbira is a member of the parliamentary select committee on the new constitution (commonly known as the Constitution Select Committee or COPAC). Prior to his political career, Chief Charumbira worked for both government agencies and international private companies, including the World Bank and KPMG.

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Significantly, Chief Charumbira is a relative of President Robert Mugabe,⁴⁶ and a member of ZANU-PF.⁴⁷ *The Financial Gazette* and *The Zimbabwean* both report that at a Chiefs’ conference in October 2010, Chief Charumbira stated that traditional chiefs “should be commissars and

³⁹ ‘Masvingo villagers get a hiding for attending MDC-T rally’ 2010, Zimbabwe Situation website, source: Radio Voice of the People (Radio VOP), 7 February – Attachment 20

⁴⁰ ‘Masvingo MP arrested on trumped-up charge’ *The Zimbabwean*, source: MDC Information and Publicity Department, 17 August
http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=33512:masvingo-mp-arrested-on-trumped-up-charge&catid=31:weekday-top-stories&Itemid=30 – Accessed 14 April 2011 – Attachment 31

⁴¹ ‘Zimbabwe media update 11-16 October’ 2010, *BBC News*, 22 October – Attachment 19

⁴² ‘Zimbabwe: MP’s Trial Postponed’ 2009, *All Africa Global Media*, source: The Government of Zimbabwe, 20 November <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200911200033.html> – Accessed 14 April 2011 – Attachment 32

⁴³ Chigatu, T. 2011, ‘SMM workers sell off daughters to survive’ *News Day*, 22 February
<http://www.newsday.co.zw/article/2011-02-22-smm-workers-sell-off-daughters-to-survive> – Accessed 14 April 2011 – Attachment 33

⁴⁴ Zimbabwe Election Support Network (Undated), ‘Masvingo Province’, *A Profile of Constituencies: Supporting Democratic Elections in Zimbabwe*, p. 117– Attachment 27

⁴⁵ ‘Constitution Select Committee’ (Undated), Zimbabwe Constitution Select Committee (COPAC) website
<http://www.copac.org.zw/home/constitution-select-committee.html> – Accessed 14 April 2011 – Attachment 34

⁴⁶ Corcoran, B. 2010, ‘Farms destined for poor went to Mugabe loyalists’ *Irish Times*, 2 December
<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/world/2010/1202/1224284567125.html> – Accessed 14 April 2011 – Attachment 35

⁴⁷ ‘Constitution Select Committee’ (Undated), Zimbabwe Constitution Select Committee (COPAC) website
<http://www.copac.org.zw/home/constitution-select-committee.html> – Accessed 14 April 2011 – Attachment 34

political organisers of Zanu (PF)”.^{48 49} He is quoted in a Zimbabwean government news publication as stating that ZANU-PF stands for the traditional authority of chiefs:

“The reason why Zanu-PF was formed was because they said the land was taken away by whites. Once you say that you are saying the property of chiefs has gone and the chief immediately sets out to recover his land....We come here following a party, which supports the traditional leaders’ system. We are following people who did the work on behalf of chiefs. We are not ashamed to come here. I hope from today, chiefs will not be asked why they attend Zanu-PF meetings.”⁵⁰

In December 2010, the Chief reportedly ordered chiefs to get their constituencies to vote for ZANU-PF in the next round of elections. He is quoted as stating:

“I urge you chiefs to ensure that we do not have a repeat of the 2008 scenario here in Masvingo where we only won one seat. No, No, No. You should mend the people and educate them so that we do not lose to the MDC...people erred in the last elections, but guide them this time so that they will not lose focus.”⁵¹

Earlier in 2010, at least 34 people from an area under Chief Charumbira’s authority were reportedly beaten by ZANU-PF supporters for attending an MDC rally in Masvingo West. The victims’ village headman had reportedly called for a boycott on the rally, which was organised by MDC Masvingo West MP Tichaona Mharadze.⁵² Mharadze himself is further discussed in the response to Question 4.

Other instances occurring since the 2008 elections where Chief Fortune Charumbira has featured in the media include:

- March 2011: At a provincial launch of a petition against international sanctions,⁵³ the Chief instructed traditional leaders to order all villagers in rural areas to sign the document, or risk losing their positions, saying that “[t]hose who do not come with all the people in their areas will be dethroned as they will not be fit to hold such a position”. Leaders were instructed by another ZANU-PF official to collect signatures from known MDC supporters. An MDC spokesperson feared violence against its members if they were forced to sign.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Manyukwe, C. 2010, ‘Elections present political fix for Zim chiefs’ *The Financial Gazette*, 5 November <http://www.financialgazette.co.zw/top-stories/6185-elections-present-political-fix-for-zim-chiefs.html> – Accessed 13 April 2011 – Attachment 36

⁴⁹ ‘Chiefs, stop the hypocrisy’ 2010, *The Zimbabwean*, source: Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition, 13 November http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=35518:chiefs-stop-the-hypocrisy&catid=35:opinion-a-analysis&Itemid=31 – Accessed 15 April 2011 – Attachment 37

⁵⁰ Mavhumashava, K. 2010, ‘Zimbabwe: Sibanda Slams Dabengwa’ *All Africa Global Media*, source: *The Herald*, 20 December <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/201012201406.html> – Accessed 13 April 2011 – Attachment 38

⁵¹ ‘Soldiers have embarked on a door to door terror campaign in Gutu’ 2010, Metro Zimbabwe website, 30 December <http://www.zimbabwemetro.com/news/soldiers-have-embarked-on-a-door-to-door-terror-campaign-in-gutu/> – Accessed 13 April 2011 – Attachment 39

⁵² ‘Masvingo villagers get a hiding for attending MDC-T rally’ 2010, Zimbabwe Situation website, source: Radio Voice of the People (Radio VOP), 7 February – Attachment 20

⁵³ International sanctions from western countries such as the United States have targeted ZANU PF leaders. For details, see: Ploch, L. 2010, *Zimbabwe: Background*, Congressional Research Service, Federation of American Scientists website, 8 July, p. 36 <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL32723.pdf> – Accessed 24 September 2010 – Attachment 40

⁵⁴ Chitagu, T. 2011, ‘Charumbira threatens chiefs over anti-sanctions petition’ *News Day*, 21 March <http://www.newsday.co.zw/article/2011-03-21-charumbira-threatens-chiefs-over-antisancions-petition> – Accessed 13 April – Attachment 41

- November 2010: The Chief was reportedly implicated in calling for Mugabe to fire an MDC Deputy Minister from Masvingo for allegedly assaulting a chief. The Deputy Minister concerned denied the allegations.⁵⁵
- August 2010: Charumbira made statements that chiefs should be apolitical, and attacked MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai for reportedly criticising the way chiefs conducted business.⁵⁶
- January 2010: Charumbira was reported as criticising politicians' involvement in appointments of chiefs and in allocating land, and calling for the formation of an independent body to oversee chiefs' affairs. This article is both noteworthy and unusual as it reads as though Chief Charumbira is criticising ZANU PF.⁵⁷

The USDOS reports that in 2007 (prior to the last round of elections), Chief Charumbira “ordered traditional leaders to expel villagers who supported the opposition [MDC] and to withhold food aid from them.”⁵⁸ Also in 2007, and in relation to denying MDC supporters access to subsidised maize, the chief reportedly stated that “[w]e cannot continue to feed our enemies as they are sell outs”.⁵⁹ Charumbira reportedly owns four farms,⁶⁰ and has been quoted as supporting ZANU-PF’s controversial land acquisition policies.⁶¹ In February 2011, a travel-ban imposed on the Chief by the European Union was removed, along with 34 others, during diplomatic negotiations.⁶²

6. Deleted.

7. Please provide information on the history of the MDC, key events in its history, and key objectives.

According to the party’s official website, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) was formed “on the basis of carrying on the struggle of the people, the struggle for jobs, decency and democracy, equal distribution of resources, justice, transparency and equality of all Zimbabweans”.⁶³ The MDC’s core members and supporters include “workers, students, middle-

⁵⁵ Mafirakurewa, M. 2010, ‘Zanu PF out to eliminate me: Matutu’ *News Day*, 2 November <http://www.newsday.co.zw/article/2010-11-02-zanu-pf-out-to-eliminate-me-matutu> – Accessed 13 April 2011 – Attachment 18

⁵⁶ Bara, E. 2010, ‘Political parties abusing chiefs’ *Daily News*, 22 August <http://www.dailynews.co.zw/news/53-top-story/473-political-parties-abusing-chiefs.html> – Accessed 13 April 2011 – Attachment 42

⁵⁷ Chateta, G. 2010, ‘Chief Charumbira slams Zanu-Pf’ *ZimEye* website, 13 January <http://www.zimeye.org/?p=12030> – Accessed 13 April 2011 – Attachment 43

⁵⁸ US Department of State 2008, *Report on Human Rights Practices for 2007 – Zimbabwe* – Attachment 44

⁵⁹ Amnesty International 2007, ‘Zimbabwe: Between a rock and a hard place – women human rights defenders at risk’, Amnesty International website, 25 July <http://web.amnesty.org/library/print/ENGAFR460172007> – Accessed 25 July 2007 – Attachment 45

⁶⁰ Corcoran, B. 2010, ‘Farms destined for poor went to Mugabe loyalists’ *Irish Times*, 2 December <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/world/2010/12/02/1224284567125.html> – Accessed 14 April 2011 – Attachment 35

⁶¹ Mavhumashava, K. 2010, ‘Zimbabwe: Sibanda Slams Dabengwa’ *All Africa Global Media*, source: *The Herald*, 20 December <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/201012201406.html> – Accessed 13 April 2011 – Attachment 38

⁶² ‘Zimbabwe: Zanu-Pf, MDC Unite Against Sanctions Renewal’ 2011, *All Africa Global Media*, source: *The Herald*, 16 Feb <http://allafrica.com/stories/201102170236.html> – Accessed 13 April 2011 – Attachment 46

⁶³ ‘Our History’ 2009, Movement for Democratic Change website, 19 November http://www.mdc.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=116&Itemid=107 – Accessed 6 August 2010 – Attachment 48

class intellectuals, civil rights activists, and white corporate executives opposed to the perceived corruption of the ZANU-PF government as well as its management of the economy”.⁶⁴

The party’s inaugural congress was held in January 2000, at which Morgan Tsvangirai was announced as the party’s President. In its first election in June 2000, the MDC won 57 out of the 120 elected seats.⁶⁵

In October 2005, the MDC party split into two factions. Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai remains in charge of the larger faction: the Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai (MDC-T). Arthur Mutambara was appointed leader of the smaller Movement for Democratic Change –Mutambara (MDC-M). Despite being commonly referred to as the two factions of the MDC, it would be more accurate to describe the MDC-T and MDC-M as separate political parties on the grounds that they issue separate membership cards, have separate leaders and hold separate congresses.⁶⁶ Despite the split, in July 2006 Tsvangirai and Mutambara agreed to work together against ZANU-PF.^{67 68}

The two factions of the MDC won a slight majority of seats in the legislative assembly in the March 2008 elections. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) also announced that Morgan Tsvangirai gained the largest vote in the presidential election, however not the required majority. As a consequence of the MDC victory in the legislative assembly, ZANU-PF militants unleashed a wave of violence and Tsvangirai vowed not to contest run-off elections for the Presidency. In the subsequent election Mugabe was declared the winner.⁶⁹ The violence, however, continued. As noted in the response to Question 1, the MDC-T reports that between the March 2008 election and May 2010 more than 500 of its members and supporters were murdered by ZANU-PF militants and Zimbabwean state security agents.⁷⁰

Six months after the March 2008 elections, Mugabe, Tsvangirai, and Arthur Mutambara signed the Global Political Agreement (GPA). It took a further five months before the new Government of National Unity (GNU) was sworn in in February 2009. Morgan Tsvangirai was appointed to the re-created position of Prime Minister.^{71 72} MDC-M leader Arthur Mutambara was sworn in as Deputy Prime Minister.⁷³

⁶⁴ ‘Zimbabwe’ 2010, *Political Handbook of the World Online Edition*, CQ Press Electronic Library website http://library.cqpress.com/phw/document.php?id=phw2010_Zimbabwe&type=hitlist&num=0 – Accessed 9 August 2010 – Attachment 49

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⁶⁶ RRT Country Advice – Melbourne. 2011, ‘Issues Paper – Zimbabwe’, April, p. 12 – Attachment 9.

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In 2010 Morgan Tsvangirai hinted that attempts were underway to re-unite MDC-T and MDC-M.⁷⁴ There were also reports in 2010 of a number of defections from the MDC-M to the MDC-T, prompting suggestions that reunification is likely given MDC-M members desire to remain relevant ahead of elections tentatively scheduled for May 2011.⁷⁵ The International Crisis Group reported in March 2010 that with its current level of support, “it is most likely that the MDC-M will eventually collapse, with some leaders re-joining the larger MDC-T, a revived ZAPU or ZANU-PF, depending on which faction gains control of the old ruling party”.⁷⁶

In February 2011 it was reported that party secretary Welshman Ncube ‘fired’ Arthur Mutambara as leader and expelled him from the party. According to *SW Radio Africa*, Mutambara made way for Ncube as the new MDC President last month and the party has been renamed the Movement for Democratic Change – Ncube (MDC-N).⁷⁷ In March 2011 the official MDC-M website displayed the name Movement for Democratic Change – Zimbabwe (MDC-Z).⁷⁸

Party Structure and Membership

The MDC-T party structure includes the Congress, the National Council, the National Standing Committee, Executive Committees and Assemblies at the national, provincial, district, ward and branch levels, a Youth Assembly and a Women’s Assembly. The Congress is described as “the supreme organ of the Party” and is comprised “of all members of the National Council, National Executive of Women, National Executive of Youth, Provincial Executive Committees, the Chairperson, Secretary, Organising Secretary and Treasurer from each District Executive Committee and Provincial and District levels of the National Assemblies of Women and Youth and external assemblies, the Chairperson of each Ward Executive Committee and all the party’s elected members of the house of Assembly, Mayors and chairpersons of local Authorities”.⁷⁹

The MDC-T does not have comprehensive centralised membership records of all current and past members, as its paper and computer-based membership records were seized in a raid in March 2007. However, the MDC-T does have well maintained membership records at the district level. A project to digitally centralise all records is underway. According to DFAT, the database “will draw on records sourced from local party structures and will, where possible, contain information

⁷² ‘Our History’ 2009, Movement for Democratic Change website, 19 November http://www.mdc.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=116&Itemid=107 – Accessed 6 August 2010 – Attachment 48

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⁷⁴ Guma, L. 2010, ‘Zimbabwe: Tsvangirai Hints at Re-Unification of MDC Factions’, *All Africa Global Media*, source: *SW Radio Africa*, 10 September <http://allafrica.com/stories/201009130106.html> – Accessed 23 September 2010 – Attachment 50

⁷⁵ Makumbe, J. 2010, ‘MDC-M chickens come home to roost’, *The Zimbabwean*, 17 August http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=33490:mdc-m-chickens-come-home-to-roost&catid=35:opinion-a-analysis&Itemid=31 – Accessed 24 September 2010 – Attachment 51

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about when individuals joined the party.”⁸⁰ The MDC-M/MDC-Z issues its own identity cards and maintains separate membership records to the MDC-T.⁸¹

Further reading:

For further information about the MDC, other political parties and contemporary issues in Zimbabwe please see: RRT Country Advice – Melbourne. 2011, ‘Issues Paper – Zimbabwe’, April – Attachment 9.

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