

# ZIMBABWE

## National Flag and Emblem



## Locator Map



TEXT HIGHLIGHTS:- Diaries updates, key events, brief analysis and relating news articles in timeline

## Overview

Present day Zimbabwe was the site of a large and complex African civilisation under Mwene Mutapa empire in the 13th and 14th centuries. Widely believed it was populated by descendants of the Bantu tribes, who had migrated from the north around the 10th century. Until the 19th century, the area covering modern day Zimbabwe was ruled by a succession of Shona kingdoms, including the builders of the famous Great Zimbabwe complex (from which the country takes its name). By the 1820s internal and external pressures had led to the collapse of the Shona polities, laying the country open to occupation. Nguni conquerors from South Africa occupied what is now Matabeleland, and in 1890 Cecil

Rhodes' British South Africa Company (BSAC) founded Salisbury (now Harare) and took control of the rest of the country by 1893. The BSAC's defeat of the 1896 Shona and Ndebele rebellion (the 'First Chimurenga') secured the country for widespread European settlement. In 1923, after a referendum which rejected union with South Africa, the country became a self-governing colony. In an attempt to pre-empt black majority rule the white-controlled Rhodesian parliament made a Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965, leading to a 15 year guerrilla war ('the Second Chimurenga'). After the Lancaster House agreement in 1979 the country returned briefly to direct British rule, and elections were held in 1980. The Shona-dominated Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) won a majority (57 out of 80) of seats available to blacks (20 seats had been reserved for a separate white election) in the new parliament, and its leader, Robert Mugabe, became Prime Minister. ZANU used its majority gradually to amend the constitution, introducing, for example, an executive presidency to which Mugabe was elected in 1987. In the same year, following several years of conflict in Matabeleland ('the gukurahundi'), ZANU and its Ndebele-dominated rivals, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) signed a Unity Accord which merged the two parties into the Zimbabwe African National Union-Popular Front. ZANU(PF) exercised a virtual monopoly on national politics until the emergence of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999.

Former UK colony: known as Southern Rhodesia. In 1923 it became a self-rule colony, known as then Southern Rhodesia, made part of the Central Africa Federation in 1953 to 1964 by the United Kingdom with Salisbury, now Harare it's capital. The Rhodesia/Nyasaland federation, mainly opposed in Nyasaland (now Malawi), then the federation terminated.

In 1961 the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) was founded by Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nyongolo Nkomo with the goal of eliminating white colonial rule in Southern Rhodesia (which would become, in 1965, Rhodesia and in 1979, Zimbabwe. The two would later become President and VP of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

In November, 1965, a person in the name of Ian Douglas Smith, whos ancestors were themselves white-settlers, declared his famous Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI), which that was considered illegal by the British colonial masters as well as the international community, condemning without the use of military force.

In early 1970 the government under Mr. Ian Smith declared southern Rhodesia a Republic. And he ruled Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) with an iron fist for over a decade.

In 1978 forced the white-dominated government under the rebel leader Ian Douglas Smith, to accept universal election principles, followed a fresh negotiations in London's Lancaster House. Mr. Ian Smith signed a cease-fire with three opposition figures on future of Zimbabwe.

In mid-1979 the rebel government under Ian Douglas Smith was forced to relinquish power to freedom fighters led by Robert Gabriel Mugabe, and other pro-armed struggle politicians and clergymen like rev. Ndabaningi Sithole, Herbert Chitepo and James Chikarema, who were then played significant role in the early nationalist movement in Zimbabwe.

In late 1979 according to the Lancaster-house agreement, a cease-fire monitored by the commonwealth of nations to end the war and led to an Interim process under Bishop Abel Muzerewa for a brief period of time. Bishop Abel Muzerewa, a Methodist bishop, who was seen by many as a moderate black leader at a time of extreme political change, opposed the armed struggle that was ultimately to lead Rhodesia to independence. The Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) which was under it's founder Joshua Nyongolo Nkomo and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) under Robert Gabriel Mugabe started rebel-fighting with a politico-military assistance from neighbouring Mozambique & Zambia.

Robert Gabriel Mugabe known in his clan name as "Gushungo" was arrested several times in 1970s by the security-police of Ian Smith after he allegedly involved in opposition, released in mid-1970s, shortly commits to be the commander for a rebel armed-group, known as ZANU.

On 18<sup>th</sup> April, 1980, Mr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, who's member of Shona tribe himself and a son of carpenter, who had obtained about six-University degrees during imprisonment, inaugurated into office as head of government when the symbolic presidency passed on to Mr. Cannan Bannana. South Rhodesia renamed "Zimbabwe" up on it's independence. Zimbabwe is heavily influenced by cultural impact of the British.

Headship since independence; Head of State

On 31st December, 1987, Mr. Robert Mugabe became Executive-president when the post of premiership avoided.

Zimbabwe experienced strong growth in it's first decades of independence, but in 2000, Robert Gabriel Mugabe launched a controversial land-reform programme, encourages the violent invasion of white-owned farms by seizing and handing them to native blacks, in the following years, farm production and the currency went into free fall, the economy began to decline, and the one-time food exporter country became dependent on foreign food-aid.

Origins of the name: Zimbabwe literally means "House of Stone". This name comes from the 800-year-old stone ruins left by the Shona people.

A Republic in southern Africa.

During the middle age, the first ever Bantu-speaking population reached into the area known as Zimbabwe now. A Bantu-civilization had transformed along the Limpopo river and it's environs, according to archaeologists. During the period trades were handled with phoenicians, Indians, who transported regularly around the area until the end of the

fifteenth century meaning until the fall of the great Shona dynasty. The Mutapa empire was on the rise until the Portuguese came to the area in following years. In 1834, the South African Zulu leader Shaka expelled the Ndebelles massively and they resettled at present Zimbabwe to found the present Matabeleland, then the Shonas controlled under the coming-Ndebelles pushed-away to the northern regions. In 1880 the British South Africa Company under the colonialist, first white governor-general namely, Lord Cecil Rhodes controlled and settled at present Zimbabwe in 1889, and called it Southern Rhodesia, b/n 1911 and 1923 the company has signed concessions with tribal leaders for mining and farmlands, and then the natives lost their ancestral lands, in 1923 it became a self-rule colony, known as then southern Rhodesia, made part of the central Africa federation in 1953 to 1964 by the United Kingdom with Salisbury, now Harare its capital. The Rhodesia/Nyasaland federation, mainly opposed in Nyasaland (now Malawi), then the federation terminated within a brief period of time. Revolts against white minority-rule in which at was then southern Rhodesia were intensifying, it turned to its former name "Zimbabwe" during independence onto the formation of its native government, its a new name derived from the wealthy Shona state of "Dzimba-Dzemabwe" Shona meaning for "great houses of stone". The colonial constitution of 1961 was formulated to favour-up then white-minorities on power.

In November, 1965, a person in the name of Ian Douglas Smith, whose ancestors were themselves white-settlers, declared his famous Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI), which that was considered illegal by the British colonial masters as well as the international community, condemning without the use of military force, with official recognition of apartheid-South Africa. In 1970 the government under Mr. Ian Smith declared southern Rhodesia a Republic in 1970. And he ruled Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) with an iron fist for over a decade until he was forced to relinquish power by ZANU freedom fighters led by Robert Gabriel Mugabe. In the late 1970s Bishop Abel Muzerwa, a Methodist bishop, who was seen by many as a moderate black leader at a time of extreme political change, opposed the armed struggle that was ultimately to lead to independence, the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) which under its Founder-leader Joshua Nkomo and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) under Robert Gabriel Mugabe started rebel-fighting with a politico-military assistance from the neighbouring Mozambique & Zambia. And there were other pro-armed struggle politicians, and clergymen like the late rev. Ndabaningi Sithole, Herbert Chitepo and James Chikarema, they played a significant role in the early nationalist movement in Zimbabwe. Formerly known as southern-Rhodesia, and waged a guerilla war, that forced white-dominated government under the rebel leader Ian Douglas Smith, to accept universal election principles, followed a fresh negotiations in London's Lancaster House, in 1978, the on-falling regime of Mr. Ian Smith signed a cease-fire with three opposition figures on future of Zimbabwe, with portfolios of civil services,

security, justice and one-third of the seats in the parliament remained with the whites-regime, in accordance with the Lusaka-agreement of the commonwealth" of states, and the UK facilitated a Lancaster-house conference onto re-write Zimbabwean-Constitution. The so called "Lancaster-house agreement" ended the war signed, a cease-fire monitored by the commonwealth of nations to end the war and led to an interim process for a brief period of time as white rule ended.

In 1979, elections were held a year later and the UNAC under Bishop Abel Muzerewa, won almost all seats in the parliament, elected prime minister of the Interim government existed from 1st of June, 1979 to 11th of December, 1979 when the country became known as Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, but the administration was short-lived. In accordance with the Lancaster House Agreement, a constitution document drawn-up, and an inclusive parliamentary elections were held in January, 1980, that led to Zimbabwe's independence, following a seven year conflict against ex-Rhodesia's white minority rule. Bishop Abel Muzerewa's moment in the political limelight was then over (he died at age of eighty four, on the 8th of April, 2010). The ZANU-PF party under Robert Gabriel Mugabe, gained victory over other native nationalist parties, then Zimbabwe founded officially on the 18th of February, 1980, with Mr. Cannan Banana it's founder-president, entitled "Republic of Zimbabwe" when political power left onto the head of government. A year later, a conflict rised b/n supporters of Mr. Joshua Nkomo & Robert Gabriel Mugabe in February, 1981 followed by the "Mathabeleland massacre of 1981" continued until 1985, estimated twenty thousand Ndebelles have been massacred while others persecuted, the two parties signed an agreement to cease bloodshed and united as ZANU-PF in 1988.

In 1980, Mr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, who's member of the Shona tribe himself and a son of carpenter, has obtained about six-University Degrees in various fields, inaugurated into office in April, 1980, he is usually known as, "Gushungo" in his clan name, had been arrested several times in 1970s by the security-police of Ian Smith after having involved in opposition, released in mid-1970s, shortly committed to be a commander for an armed-group, known as ZANU later. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, was apparently a polite ascetic as a young man, Mr. Mugabe a socialist-oriented is on-power unopposed since independence February, 1980, is a non-advocate of multi-party democracy, say his critics. Mr Mugabe then became Executive-president since the 31st of December, 1987, when the post of Zimbabwean premiership avoided. Zimbabwe experienced strong growth in it's first decades of independence, but in 2000, Robert Gabriel Mugabe launched a controversial land-reform programme, and encouraging the violent invasion of white-owned farms by seizing and handing them to native blacks, in the following years, farm production and the currency went into free fall, the economy began to decline, and the one-time food exporter country Zimbabwe, became dependent on aid. In 2001 US president George W. Bush having promulgated the

destructive Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 that imposed stringent economic sanctions on the country which largely led to the implosion of Zimbabwe's economy between 2005 and 2009.

The country had gained independence on a land reform platform enshrined in the Lancaster House Agreement. Commercial farms in Zimbabwe would be taken over and land distributed more equitably among small and medium scale farmers to improve the sharing of income and even, overtime, productivity and for a better land use. The white-farmers, most of them with higher education, finance and experience, would move to other sectors in the economy in Zimbabwe. So that the unfortunate white commercial farmers would get fair and adequate compensation for their investments. To be able to go forward on the matter, Robert Gabriel Mugabe announced that he would be willing to get foreign financial assistance to compensate the white Zimbabwean farmers more equitably if he got the financial support as promised by the former colonial masters in early 1980s, but apparently the subsequent UK governments refused to pay. The Government of Zimbabwe would have equitably distributed farmlands between blacks and the minority whites to avert the root cause of the social and economic crisis which Zimbabwe has now faced. Indeed, parliamentary elections were held in 2005 and 2008, the latter the opposition MDC won parliamentary majority, since its formation in September, 1999, which that the ruling party ZANU-PF claimed victory when the election itself was marred by intimidations. Zimbabwe's opposition MDC has agreed to join a unity government led by Robert Gabriel Mugabe, the country's president, putting into effect a power-sharing under which the opposition, MDC leader, Mr. Morgan Richard Tsvangirai, would become head of government, commenced on the 13th of February, 2009. An economic recovery and democratic reforms are central elements in Zimbabwe right now, as the 2011 elections are critical goal for the government and for the opposition coalition, Zimbabwean land reform programme has been in a total failure. The beneficiaries of Zimbabwean land reform have been largely political cronies. There is no investment in the new resettlements. Agriculture in Zimbabwe is in complete ruins, creating chronic food-insecurity. The rural economy has totally collapsed.

The controversial politician Robert Gabriel Mugabe, who has dominated Zimbabwean politics since coming to power through war of popular liberation over thirty years ago, continues to mesmerise the world as well as vex his political opponents with his ability has kept himself in power for over three decades. In reaction to losing the 2000 referendum on the constitution, a vengeful Robert Mugabe unleashed his supporters to commit his land reform programme, and in the process he destroyed Zimbabwe's agricultural sector, once the bedrock of the economy, facing with hyper-inflationary consequences of his ruinous fiscal policies and growing reliance on the money-printing to keep his government running, by launching operation slash-prices, this has once again given him a very

temporary boost in popularity among Zimbabweans at the cost of terrible damage to the country and its people. Many small groceries and shop owners, traders etc, will be wiped out of the business, Shelves are increasingly bare, hunger, fear and tension are growing, and fuel has disappeared. In Zimbabwe people are held back from taking to the streets by fears of the beatings and tortures to dissidents, while Robert Mugabe is sustained by the lack of criticism and even support demonstrated by other African leaders. Zimbabwean president Robert Gabriel Mugabe and his political rival PM Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC formed a power-sharing administration a year after the chaotic presidential elections in 2008. The deal stabilized the economy, which had been in terminal decline, and Zimbabwe's fortunes improved since the local currency abandoned in favour of the dollar. Zimbabwe's economic recovery programme will take time, and international donors must remain engaged to help the country back on its feet, especially in priority areas such as agriculture, healthcare, and water & sanitation. Robert Gabriel Mugabe who insists on reelection bid in Zimbabwe, said it would be an act of cowardice for him to retire ahead of elections expected to be held in March, 2012. Meantime, President Robert Mugabe wants to retire but he fears that if he leaves now, the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Peoples Front abbreviated as ZANU-PF will disintegrate and the country degenerate into a possible civil war, former confidant and comrade-in-arms, Enos Nkala said. Mr. Enos Nkala, a ZANU-PF founding member and former Defence, Finance and Home Affairs minister, met Robert Mugabe behind closed doors at Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Airport in Bulawayo, the second city. In an interview with "The Standard" at his home in Woodville suburb, the former nationalist divulged the details of their surprise meeting, saying the one hour-long conversation with Robert Mugabe touched mainly on ZANU-PF succession politics, the inclusive government and the future of the country. Nkala said Mugabe told him he wanted to retire but was too scared that ZANU-PF would collapse."From what we discussed, Mugabe said he is tired and wants to retire but he cannot do so now because ZANU-PF will die," he said. "He cannot leave when the party is in such a state. What is holding him now is managing and containing ZANU-PF to prevent it from disintegrating."

Side note: As an amazing news, a Harare thief asks for life in Zimbabwe jail - A man convicted of house-breaking in Zimbabwe has asked the judge to jail him for life, state media report. Lovemore Manyika, 22, wrote a note which was read out in the Harare court, saying: "Life in prison is better than life in the streets." The Herald newspaper reports that he was disappointed to be only sentenced to three years. Manyika was released from prison in April after a previous conviction, the paper says. He broke into two houses in central Harare in July, stealing two mobile phones, a plasma TV and \$1,800 (£1,150) in cash. Six months of his prison term were suspended if he repays \$1,956 by 30 September, the paper says.

Side note: In late September, 2012, millions of jobs at risk as tobacco sector struggles' About four million Zimbabweans could be directly and indirectly affected by recommendations to phase out tobacco production. Up to one million jobs could be lost in Zimbabwe's tobacco sectors, as an international lobby to ban the crop gathers momentum. Sales of the golden leaf were on the rebound after years of a downturn following the Zimbabwe's land reform, now fears are rising that the ban could have negative effects on the country's staggering economy. In the last marketing season this year, tobacco sales generated \$527 million from the sale of 144 million kilogrammes and exports are expected to generate \$700 million. In November, the World Health Organisation Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC), will meet for the fifth session of the Conference of Parties in Seoul, South Korea to discuss "economically sustainable alternatives to growing tobacco" Zimbabwe has not yet ratified the FCTC, which means that it cannot add its voice to the current processes that are likely to shake the core of the local economy. Local experts say about four million local people will be directly and indirectly affected by the adoption of new recommendations to phase out the production of tobacco. In a report, FCTC says tobacco is a cash crop that active industry intervention has made attractive to farmers. It is the largest non-food crop by monetary value in the world. However, several countries are taking steps to find alternatives to tobacco growing. "Parties should protect the formulation and implementation of public health policies for tobacco control from the tobacco industry to the greatest extent possible. "The tobacco industry should be held responsible for the health and environmental harms related to tobacco growing and all activities connected with tobacco growing and the supply chain, and for ensuring respect for human rights for those working in connection with tobacco growing and the supply chain" reads part of the report. However, for Zimbabwe this could spell doom for an economy that is still struggling to recover. There are more than 15 000 small-scale farmers and 300 large-scale farmers growing the crop, with over 12 companies. Zimbabwe Tobacco Association chief executive officer, Rodney Ambrose, said if the recommendations that have been made are adopted, more than four million people could be affected. "Close to 30 million tobacco farmers worldwide will be affected if these recommendations are adopted, this will include our 80,000 tobacco farmers in Zimbabwe and all the related industries. "These industries include transporters, auction and buying companies, research stations, processors, agro-chemical and fertiliser companies, farm equipment companies, fuel companies, coal mining, even down to the informal trader or vendor outside the tobacco floors who relies on income from the sale of tobacco by farmers," he said. Ambrose said a recent study shows at least four million people in Zimbabwe are dependent on tobacco production. "Tobacco contributes significantly to total agriculture earnings and national GDP," he said. Source: The Africa Report

Zimbabwe's coalition is in danger of collapse ahead of polls'

Updates: On 8 October, 2012 Zimbabwe Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai has threatened to pull out of the inclusive government with President Robert Mugabe, five months before the country holds general elections. Tsvangirai cited mounting violence against his supporters blamed on Mugabe's Zanu PF party's members and security forces. He told a weekend memorial service for his supporters killed in the 2008 elections that he would soon convene an urgent meeting of his Movement of Democratic Change (MDC) to consider the pull out. "I am pained. My message to Robert Mugabe is that we can't pretend to be working together when violence is taking place." Tsvangirai was quoted saying by the privately owned NewsDay newspaper. "I am going to call an emergency council meeting to see if it is worth it to continue in the government of national unity. Shall we continue to turn a blind eye when my supporters are being tortured, when diamonds are being looted?" he asked. On elections Mugabe wants held in March next year, Tsvangirai said he was worried they would be marred by violence. "I will not step on dead bodies to State House, as long as I am living and as long as I am MDC president I will not walk past burnt houses to State House," he said. He pledged to confront Mugabe and "look him in the eye to see if he still wants the unity government to continue. "We are sick and tired of hypocrites," he said. However, ZANU-PF dismissed Tsvangirai's threats as mere grandstanding. ZANU-PF legislator and former information minister Jonathan Moyo, said the MDC-T leader's threats were an indication that he was in the government for selfish interests. "Tsvangirai's threat to quit the inclusive government is an expression of his impatient desire to go and enjoy the juicy stuff he has collected during his stint in government," he told the state owned "Herald newspaper". "These include two wives, a host of abandoned girlfriends, a \$3,5 million mansion and a fleet of flashy cars among other goodies. "That is what he wants to go and enjoy because there is no way a rational leader of a serious political party would want to quit government five months before the elections unless that leader wants to have an early Christmas to enjoy the goodies he has collected at the expense of the people he claims to represent." Tsvangirai in 2009 temporarily pulled out of the coalition accusing Mugabe of failing to implement reforms promised in their power sharing agreement. He was persuaded to return by Southern African Development Community leaders who are the guarantors of Zimbabwe's power sharing deal. Source: The Africa Report

Zimbabwe's President Mugabe on deathbed?

Updates: Zimbabwe's long time ruler, President Robert Mugabe, who is reportedly battling ill health, may be running the country from an intensive care unit in Singapore. Mugabe, 88, flew to the Asian country on what was described as a "private visit" on March 31, but his absence has fuelled rumors that he might be on his deathbed. According to aides, the private visit was to superintend arrangements for his daughter, Bona, to begin post-graduate study. However, it has emerged that registration in

most universities only begins in September. Despite the raging rumors, the president's aides maintain their boss is well and will be back in the country, Wednesday. In his absence, Mugabe has issued statements from the South East Asian country, with observers saying this was akin to governing by remote control. On Saturday, after the death of Malawi leader, President Bingu wa Mutharika, Mugabe issued a statement describing Mutharika as a "great son" of Africa". Mutharika visited Zimbabwe early February and Mugabe said the two had "explored ways of defending our economies and countries against illegal sanctions imposed on us by the West". On Monday, in another dispatch, Mugabe sent a congratulatory message to Malawi's new President Joyce Hilda Mpila Banda. "On behalf of the government and the people of Zimbabwe, allow me to extend to you, [Mrs Banda]...the government and people of Malawi, our heartfelt congratulations on your appointment as the President of the Republic of Malawi," reads the statement. "Mugabe is effectively controlling Zimbabwe from a deathbed. This simple shows that he is prepared to rule till death" said Monica Mutasa, a political analyst. She added that Mugabe's health impacts entirely on Zimbabwe's political landscape, with everything revolving around his health and age. With Mugabe miles away, officials in Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's MDC party have publicly suggested Mugabe's absence was paralysing government. Two cabinet sessions have been cancelled. On Monday, Misheck Sibanda, the chief secretary to the cabinet, announced that Tuesday's cabinet meeting had been moved to Thursday when Mugabe is expected back in Harare. Mugabe missed a high profile visit by Chinese Premier, Hui Liang Yu and his deputy, and Joyce Mujuru had to cut short her trip to Asia to attend to some presidential duties. The other Vice-President John Nkomo is also in poor health. This has added to speculation that Mugabe might be unwell after all, as he would not normally have missed such a meeting. Mugabe's trips to the Far East have often raised speculation. Last year he visited Singapore eight times for medical checkups. His spokesman described the trips as necessitated by cataract surgery, or simply private visits, amid repeated media reports that he was suffering from cancer. The Africa Report April 10, 2012

Zimbabwe: New electoral law can be manipulated'

Updates: Zimbabwe's independent electoral commission says candidates in next year's polls will be required to produce authorisation certificates from their political parties to avoid a situation where parties field more than one candidate. The requirement contained in new amendments to the Electoral Act is seen as a way of dealing with factionalism rocking the country's major political parties. In the last elections in 2008, President Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) battled indiscipline after candidates who lost primary elections went on to stand against their party nominees. Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) acting chairperson Joyce Kazembe on said the new law would ensure that future polls were run in

an orderly manner. "If there is more than one candidate in one constituency and only one has the confirmation letter, then the other candidates will have to stand as independents because they cannot purport to represent a party that has not endorsed them," she said. Section 46 (2) of the Electoral Act says: "Where a nomination paper specifies the matters referred to in paragraph (c) of subsection (1), the nomination paper shall be countersigned by an office-bearer of the political party concerned with authority to certify that the candidate is to stand for or be sponsored by that political party." Candidates who fail to produce authorisation certificates would not be allowed to represent a party but can contest as independent candidates. However, analysts say the system can be manipulated by political parties to block some of their members from contesting. Both ZANU-PF and MDC lost some seats after their candidates contested each other splitting votes in the process. It also cost ZEC administratively as more paper work had to be done. ZANU-PF fielded more than one candidate in five constituencies while four candidates withdrew at the last minute. MDC had more than one candidate in nine constituencies in the House of Assembly. The new law comes as both ZANU-PF and MDC-T top officials are resisting traditional primary elections to select candidates for the general elections set for March next year. The sitting MPs want to ring fence their seats being eyed by internal rivals. Last week, ZANU-PF's decision making body - the politburo - rejected the primary elections proposal. On the other hand MDC - a party which claims to value democracy - would resort to a mixture of a method of mere confirmation for seating MPs and primary elections for constituencies where it does not hold seats. Source: The Africa Report October 16, 2012 Accession to power of president Robert Gabriel Mugabe - April, 1980, by war of liberation.

Boy, 8, 'marries' 61-year-old woman because his ancestors told him to do'

METRO NEWS: March 11, 2013 - The eight-year-old boy was apparently told by his ancestors to get married. This eight-year-old boy doesn't look too pleased even though it was apparently his idea to 'marry' a 61-year-old woman at the behest of his ancestors. Little Sanele Masilela got hitched to Helen Shabangu, who also didn't look too happy with her involvement in the ceremony. The older woman has five children and is already married but she is not in danger of breaking any polygamy laws because her latest union is just a ritual. 'I'm married and have five kids of my own, but I know that this is what the ancestors wanted - and now they are happy,' said Mrs Shabangu. 'It is a ritual. We are just playing now, but it is a sign that he will get married one day.' The pretend wedding, which cost a total of £1,500, has shocked locals but Sanele's family from Tshwane, South Africa, have defended the controversial nuptials. His 46-year-old mum, Patience, added: 'This is the first time this has happened in the family. Sanele is named after his grandfather, who was never had a white wedding before he died so asked Sanele to get married. He chose Helen because he loves her. 'By doing this we made

the ancestors happy. If we hadn't done what my son had asked then something bad would have happened in the family.' Although the eight-year-old was happy to have pleased his forefathers with the false union he did admit when he gets married for real he hopes to find someone his own age. Sanele added: 'I told my mother that I wanted to get married because I really did want to. 'I'm happy that I married Helen – but I will go to school and study hard. When I'm older I will marry a lady my own age.' METRO News:

### Heading Towards Elections Without Political Reforms'

Analysis: On the 16th March, the new constitution of Zimbabwe was approved by an overwhelming majority of voters. Ninety five percent voted 'Yes', and many, including the international community were encouraged by the relatively peaceful nature of the elections. The European Union (EU), without delay, proceeded to ease sanctions against targeted individuals, and organisations in Zimbabwe. This posture has been interpreted as a reward to the coalition government for reforming the political environment. Even the opposition, civic and human rights organisations expressed satisfaction with the election process. But is the peaceful nature of the referendum a reason to celebrate and believe that contestation for political power in the June election will be greeted by the same political environment? Certainly not. It is important to remind ourselves that the final draft constitution was never contested. Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU - PF); Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), and the smaller MDC party led by Ncube, were all in support of a 'Yes' vote. With the return to 'winner takes all' politics at the end of the coalition government, the political environment is likely to be different, the arbitrary arrest of prominent human rights lawyer, Beatrice Mutetwa and senior officials of the MDC, days after the referendum, is the most aggressive sign yet that the political environment during the general elections will be tense. It is also ZANU-PF's way of reminding voters, the opposition and the international community, that the party is not taking any chances in the upcoming elections. Misplaced optimism that elections might be free and fair reveals a tendency, when analysing elections, to discount or forget that violence has been at the heart of ZANU-PF dominated politics in Zimbabwe. Indeed, a cursory scrutiny of post-independence electoral history reveals that a common theme of repression and violence courses through almost all elections. In the run up to the first post-independence elections in 1985, fearing rebellion, the regime unleashed the 'Gukurahundi' policy against the supporters of Zimbabwe African People's Union - Patriotic Front (ZAPU-PF), resulting in the deaths of thousands.

In 1990, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), a party that provided the first serious challenge to ZANU-PF, claimed widespread intimidation and violence. In 1996, the two political parties that contested ZANU-PF in the presidential elections, Abel Muzorewa's United Parties (UP) and Ndabaningi Sithole's Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU - Ndonga),

withdrew from the election citing widespread irregularities, and intimidation of their supporters. The emergence of the MDC in 1999 saw an opposition political party that had genuine prospects of unseating ZANU-PF from power. ZANU-PF's response to this challenge was to unleash violence in 2002, and 2008, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of people. In other words, violence is pervasive in ZANU-PF's political practice, and it shouldn't therefore come as a surprise if this year's elections are shrouded in violence, intimidation and repression.

### Reforms off the Table'

In order to ensure that subsequent elections would not be a repeat of the 2008 political battle, the government of national unity tasked itself with implementing political and electoral reforms. However, from its inception, the coalition government partners squabbled over how much reform was necessary before a satisfactory election could take place. ZANU-PF insisted that there was no need for reform, and President Mugabe's party was entirely confident that state institutions were capable of delivering valid elections at any time. On the other hand, the opposition and the civic community's proposition was that there was need for extensive reforms as the minimum condition for holding elections.

Seeing no progress, the opposition gave up and concentrated on the constitution. As a result, many areas that badly needed reforms have been left virtually untouched. For example, there is still sporadic state-sponsored political violence upon civilians, journalists and political activists. In addition, state affiliated groups that were behind a lot of cases of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment of civilians in the run-up to the last two elections, such as war veterans and ZANU-PF youths are still intact.

Also, despite calls for reforms, the media in Zimbabwe remains muzzled, with only a handful of privately owned daily newspapers and radio stations. This has meant that public information remains under the firm control of ZANU-PF. On the other hand, the state media is still grotesquely unbalanced as ZANU-PF continues to use its control of state-owned print and electronic media to manipulate public opinion in its favour while using hate speech and other undermining language against the opposition. The coalition government has also failed to make any changes to repressive laws such as the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), and the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act. These laws have been used to severely curtail basic rights through vague defamation clauses and draconian penalties. But failure to make political reforms is a much smaller problem. The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and some analysts have called for reform of the military, police services, the state intelligence services and other critical arms of the security sector. This has been strongly resisted by ZANU-PF, which still retain full control of the security sector, the ultimate line of defence of its hegemony. For example,

at its December 2009 party congress, ZANU-PF insisted that it would not allow security forces to be subjected to reform. This is despite clear provisions in Article (xiii) of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) - a political arrangement that governs the business of the coalition government - stipulating that "state organs and institutions do not belong to any political party and should be impartial in the discharge of their duties." The fact that the security sector is still deeply embedded in the political affairs of the country, and that they still have a symbiotic relationship with ZANU - PF raises legitimate fears that this year's elections could lead to a repeat of 2008 where ZANU - PF, in partnership with the 'securocrats' thwarted a democratic transfer of power. The securocrats have vowed not to accept other contestants as president - even if they were to win - contravening the GPA, and the codes of conduct of their won establishments.

In few cases where there have been political reforms, the quality and extent of those reforms have been minimal. For example, the newly created Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission could help improve the human rights environment, but its mandate is limited to investigating and reporting on human rights abuses committed after the unity government was formed in February 2009, excluding the widespread electoral violence of 2008.

Why the coalition failed to effect political and electoral reforms?

The distribution of power within the unity government partly explains why there has been a lack of reform. Unlike under Kenya's transitional government, where executive power was shared between President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga, which enabled some key reforms to be undertaken, in Zimbabwe, President Mugabe never relinquished executive power, and as a result has been able to block required reforms. In addition 'securocrats' have used their positions and close relationship with ZANU-PF to veto reforms.

ZANU-PF's capacity to block reform is not solely due to its hegemonic status in the coalition, but has also been aided by the opposition's poor strategisation, coupled with a series of serious miscalculations. For example, the opposition walked into the coalition government without a strategy on how to coerce ZANU-PF into making necessary reforms. They also mistakenly counted on ZANU-PF to be a reliable political adversary with which they could do business. Moreover, President Mugabe also manipulated the issue of sanctions and propagandised it as part of his efforts to frustrate political reforms. In response to human rights and election-related abuses perpetrated between 2001 and 2008, the US and EU adopted a variety of measures designed to promote reform. President Mugabe and ZANU-PF argued that reform was contingent on the removal of sanctions and accused Prime Minister Tsvangirai's MDC-T of reneging on its GPA commitments to facilitate this. On the other hand, the MDC-T argued that it had no control over sanctions, and there would be a

stronger basis for their removal if GPA violations ended, and ZANU-PF was not blocking reforms. This cycle of squabbling scotched prospects for constructive compromise on political reform.

Having been unable to secure reforms in the last four years, the prospects of success within the next few months looks gloomy. Remarkably, the civic community and the opposition still feel impelled to insist on political reforms before the next election. Some have even argued that the government of national unity should be extended, in order to give the coalition partners adequate time to undertake necessary reforms. Political reforms are a large problem for ZANU-PF. They are unlikely to happen as they mean creating an environment that would force President Mugabe to abandon a sacred tradition that has aided his party's electoral 'victories' since 1980; violence and repression. Faced with such a Hobson's choice, the opposition needs to acknowledge that the electoral battleground in the coming elections will be uneven. Once they have accepted that, hopefully, the opposition will be liberated from complacency, forge an 'opposition coalition' and campaign very hard. Decisive electoral victory, which President Mugabe's ZANU-PF cannot manipulate, is the only way to power.

Zimbabwe - Upcoming Elections And The Political Reforms That Never Were - THINK AFRICA PRESS' Analysis: Without political and electoral reforms, it seems Zimbabwe's upcoming elections will be played out on an uneven political playing field once again. With the new constitution having been overwhelmingly approved in a popular referendum, Zimbabwe can start to prepare for fresh elections - the first since the fateful polls in 2008. Back then, Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-T) won the first round to set up a run-off against incumbent Robert Mugabe of the ruling ZANU-PF party. Citing violence and intimidation against supporters, however, Tsvangirai pulled out of the second round allowing Mugabe to emerge victorious. Amidst international condemnation and instability following the disputed elections, however, ZANU-PF held mediated talks with the MDC-T and MDC-M - a breakaway faction of the MDC then led by Arthur Mutambara - resulting in a power-sharing government under the provisions of the Global Political Agreement (GPA). Mugabe stayed as president, Tsvangirai became prime minister, and government ministries were shared out between the three main parties. Now, with the coalition government's mandate to end on 29 June - and elections to be held by 29 August 2013 according to the GPA - Zimbabwe faces the prospect of elections again. Yet crucial questions remain about whether it is ready. The European Union (EU), which recently eased sanctions purportedly as a reward for political progress, appears to think so. Many also appear to have been encouraged by the broadly peaceful referendum on the new constitution. But unfortunately, this optimism does not stand up to scrutiny.

A history of violence'

From its inception, the coalition government has squabbled over how much reform is necessary before satisfactory elections can take place. ZANU-PF has insisted that there is no need for reform - not surprising given its chances of retaining power rest on maintaining status quo - while opposition and civil society insist extensive reforms are crucial. Past Zimbabwean elections have often been characterised by ZANU-PF violence against opposition. Before the 1985 parliamentary elections, the Mugabe regime had been unleashing the infamous Gukurahundi policy against the supporters of Zimbabwe African People's Union-Patriotic Front (ZAPU-PF), resulting in the deaths of thousands; in 1990, Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), a party that provided a formidable challenge to ZANU-PF, faced widespread intimidation and violence; and in the 1996 elections, the two main opposition parties, Abel Muzorewa's United Parties (UP) and Ndabaningi Sithole's Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU-Ndonga), withdrew citing irregularities and intimidation of supporters. When the MDC emerged in 1999 and seemed to have a genuine chance of unseating ZANU-PF, the ruling party again resorted to physical force. The presidential elections of 2002 and 2008 in particular were marred by violence and the deaths of hundreds.

Will 2013 be any different?

Many are hoping that 2013's election will break with this history of violence. But despite a new constitution, the political landscape is far from reformed. Firstly, while there have been repeated calls for peace by government leaders, there is still widespread state-sponsored political violence directed at civil society, human rights defenders, journalists, and political activists. Indeed, there has been an upsurge in political violence and repression lately. Secondly, groups of liberation war veterans and ZANU-PF youths, who were responsible for much of the torture and abuse perpetrated against civilians in the run-up to the last two elections, remain intact. These groups also contributed to the infringement of rights to freedoms of expression, assembly and association. Thirdly, the media in Zimbabwe remains muzzled. There are very few privately-owned newspapers and radio stations. This has meant that public information remains under the firm grip of ZANU-PF, which continues to use state-owned media to manipulate public opinion. Fourthly, and most significantly, the security sector is still deeply involved in the political affairs of the country. Despite Article XIII of the GPA clearly stipulating that "state organs and institutions do not belong to any political party and should be impartial in the discharge of their duties", ZANU-PF has retained control of the security apparatus, the ultimate line of defence of its dominance.

This raises fears that this year's elections could lead to a repeat of 2008's when ZANU-PF, in partnership with the "securocrats", thwarted a democratic transfer of power. Senior military personnel have been quoted on several occasions openly supporting Mugabe and ZANU-PF, and vowing to enable it to stay in power, flouting the GPA and the codes of conduct of

their own establishments. Meanwhile, the Southern Africa Development Community's (SADC) calls to reform the military, police services, state intelligence services and other critical arms of the security sector have fallen on deaf ears. At its December 2009 party congress, ZANU-PF boasted that it would not allow security forces to be subject to reforms. Last but not least, it appears the coalition government has also failed to make any changes to repressive laws such as the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), and the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act. These laws have been used to severely curtail basic rights through vague defamation clauses and draconian penalties. In the few cases where there have been reforms, the quality and extent of those reforms have been minimal. For example, the newly created Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission could help improve the condition of human rights, but its mandate is limited to investigating and reporting on human rights abuses committed after the unity government was formed in February 2009, thus excluding the widespread electoral violence of 2008. The draft constitution has also been criticised as flawed and as not going far enough in its curbing of presidential powers and bolstering of human rights.

#### A not-so-united unity government'

The answer as to why the coalition has failed to put into effect political and electoral reforms lies partly in the distribution of power within the unity government. Unlike Kenya's transitional government in which executive power was shared between President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga, allowing some key reforms to be undertaken, in Zimbabwe, Mugabe never relinquished executive power and has thus been able to block required reforms. Additionally, securocrats have used their positions and symbiotic relationship with Mugabe to veto change. ZANU-PF's triumph has also been aided by the opposition's poor strategising and various miscalculations. For example, the opposition went into the coalition government without a plan to ensure reforms would be made. This was a product of their failure to calculate the limitations of their power within the power-sharing agreement. They also mistakenly counted on ZANU-PF as a reliable partner that they could do business with. Finally, President Mugabe has also shrewdly manipulated the issue of sanctions as a way of frustrating possible progress. In response to human rights and election-related abuses perpetrated between 2001 and 2008, the US and EU imposed targeted sanctions as a way to push reform. ZANU-PF, however, turned this pressure on its head - leading to a stalemate - by saying reforms would only be undertaken once the sanctions are removed.

#### Election without reforms'

When ZANU-PF went into the coalition government, its priority was to retain political power. Its strategy was to use the power-sharing agreement to entrench its hegemonic status without frightening those in the international community. The opposition meanwhile seemed to enter

Zimbabwe's brutal political scene without a strategy, but armed with unrealistic political notions, such as its preoccupation with legality. The result of these divergent interests has been perpetual political dispute that rendered the coalition government unable to introduce reforms that would have created a level political playing field. Having been unable to secure reforms in the last four years, it might be too late to expect any meaningful change before elections if they are indeed to be held in June. It thus appears the elections will have to be fought on an unequal battleground.

Though this might sound like bad news for the opposition, and worse for democracy-loving Zimbabweans, it does not have to be. Attaining democracy in Zimbabwe is still possible, but requires a new approach that has less to do with the currently impossible task of political reform. Once the opposition acknowledges the reality - that for the moment attaining political reforms is a dream - they can let go of the notion that the political playing field will be even come the elections. Once they have accepted this, they can be liberated from complacency and launch a harder and more direct campaign. As it is, resounding electoral victory, to the extent President Mugabe's ZANU-PF cannot cover it up, is now the only way to power. Simukai Tinhu has a background in International relations (London School of Economics) and African Politics (University of Oxford and University of Cambridge). His interests are risk analysis with a special focus on African countries. Simukai Tinhu recently graduated from the University of Cambridge with an Mphil in African Studies

Tentative election calendar-Presidential/Parliamentary-March.

Accession to power of president Robert Gabriel Mugabe by rebel fighting.

Zimbabwe – Timeline Diaries updates, and related key notes:

1200-1600s - Rise and decline of the Monomotapa domain, thought to have been associated with Great Zimbabwe and to have been involved in gold mining and international trade.

1830s - Ndebele people fleeing Zulu violence and Boer migration in present-day South Africa move north and settle in what becomes known as Matabeleland.

1830-1890s - European hunters, traders and missionaries explore the region from the south. They include Cecil John Rhodes.

1889 - Rhodes' British South Africa Company (BSA) gains a British mandate to colonise what becomes Southern Rhodesia.

1890 - Pioneer column of white settlers arrives from south at site of future capital Harare.

1893 - Ndebele uprising against BSA rule is crushed

1922 - BSA administration ends, the white minority opts for self-government.

1930 - Land Apportionment Act restricts black access to land, forcing many into wage labour.

1930-1960s - Black opposition to colonial rule grows. Emergence in the 1960s of nationalist groups - the Zimbabwe African People's Union (Zapu) and the Zimbabwe African National Union (Zanu).

1953 - Britain creates the Central African Federation, made up of Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi).

1963 - Central Africa Federation breaks up when Zambia and Malawi gain independence.

Ian Smith declares Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1964 - Ian Smith of the Rhodesian Front (RF) becomes prime minister, tries to persuade Britain to grant independence.

1965 - Ian Smith unilaterally declares independence under white minority rule, sparking international outrage and economic sanctions.

1972 - A Guerrilla war against white rule intensifies, with rivals ZANU and ZAPU operating out of Zambia and Mozambique.

1978 - Ian Smith yields to pressure for negotiated settlement. Elections for transitional legislature boycotted by Patriotic Front made up of ZANU and ZAPU. New government of Zimbabwe Rhodesia, led by Bishop Abel Muzorewa, fails to gain international recognition. Civil war continues.

1979 - British-brokered all-party talks at Lancaster House in London lead to a peace agreement and new constitution, which guarantees minority rights.

Independence: In 18 April 1980, Robert Gabriel Mugabe was sworn in as prime minister, after white minority rule ended in Rhodesia. The veteran pro-independence leader Robert Gabriel Mugabe and his ZANU party win British-supervised independence elections. Robert Mugabe is named prime minister and includes ZAPU leader Joshua Nyongolo Nkomo in his cabinet. Independence is internationally recognised.

1982 - Robert Gabriel Mugabe sacks Joshua Nkomo, accusing him of preparing to overthrow the government.

North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade deployed to crush rebellion by pro-Nkomo ex-guerrillas in Midlands and Matabeleland provinces. Government forces are accused of killing thousands of civilians over next few years.

1987 - Robert Gabriel Mugabe, Joshua Nkomo merge their parties to form ZANU-PF, ending the violence in southern areas.

1987 – Robert Mugabe changes constitution, becomes executive president, position of prime minister avoided.

1991 - The Commonwealth adopts the Harare Declaration at its summit in Zimbabwe, reaffirming its aims of fostering international peace and security, democracy, freedom of the individual and equal rights for all.

1998 - Economic crisis accompanied by riots and strikes followed.

1999 - Economic crisis persists, Zimbabwe's military involvement in DR Congo's civil war becomes increasingly unpopular.

Opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) led by Morgan Tsvangirai formed.

February 2000 - President Mugabe suffers defeat in referendum on draft constitution.

Squatters seize hundreds of white-owned farms in an ongoing and violent campaign to reclaim what they say was stolen by settlers.

June 2000 - Parliamentary elections: Zanu-PF narrowly fights off a challenge from the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) led by Morgan Tsvangirai, but loses its power to change the constitution.

May 2001 - Defence Minister Moven Mahachi killed in a car crash - the second minister to die in that way in a month.

July 2001 - Finance Minister Simba Makoni publicly acknowledges economic crisis, saying foreign reserves have run out and warning of serious food shortages. Most western donors, including the World Bank and the IMF, have cut aid because of President Mugabe's land seizure programme.

February 2002 - Parliament passes a law limiting media freedom. The European Union imposes sanctions on Zimbabwe and pulls out its election observers after the EU team leader is expelled.

March 2002 – Robert Mugabe re-elected in presidential elections condemned as seriously flawed by the opposition and foreign observers. Commonwealth suspends Zimbabwe from its councils for a year after concluding that elections were marred by high levels of violence.

April 2002 - State of disaster declared as worsening food shortages threaten famine.

June 2002 - 45-day countdown for some 2,900 white farmers to leave their land begins, under terms of a land-acquisition law passed in May.

March 2003 - Widely-observed general strike is followed by arrests and beatings.

June 2003 - Opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) leader Morgan Tsvangirai is arrested twice during a week of opposition protests.

He is charged with treason, adding to an existing treason charge from 2002 over an alleged plot to kill President Mugabe.

November 2003 – Founder president Canaan Banana, Zimbabwe's first black president, dies at age 67.

December 2003 - Zimbabwe pulls out of The Commonwealth after organisation decides to extend suspension of country indefinitely.

March 2004 - A group of mercenaries allegedly on the way to Equatorial Guinea to stage a coup is intercepted after landing at Harare airport. Their leader, British national Simon Mann, is sentenced to seven years in prison for attempting to buy guns.

October 2004 - Opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai is acquitted of treason charges relating to an alleged plot to kill President Mugabe. He faces a separate treason charge.

January 2005 - The US labels Zimbabwe as one of the world's six "outposts of tyranny". Zimbabwe rejects the statement.

March 2005 – The ruling ZANU-PF party wins two-thirds of the votes in parliamentary polls. Main opposition party says election was rigged against it.

May-July 2005 - Tens of thousands of shanty dwellings and illegal street stalls are destroyed as part of a "clean-up" programme. The UN estimates that the drive has left about 700,000 people homeless.

August 2005 - Prosecutors drop remaining treason charges against opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai.

November 2005 – The ruling ZANU-PF party wins an overwhelming majority of seats in a newly-created upper house of parliament, the Senate.

The opposition MDC splits over its leader's decision to boycott the poll.

December 2005 – Norwegian UN humanitarian chief Jan Egeland says Zimbabwe is in "meltdown".

May 2006 - Year-on-year inflation exceeds 1,000%. New banknotes, with three noughts deleted from their values, are introduced in August.

September 2006 - Riot police disrupt a planned demonstration against the government's handling of the economic crisis. Union leaders are taken into custody and later hospitalised, allegedly after being tortured.

December 2006 - Ruling ZANU-PF party approves a plan to move presidential polls from 2008 to 2010, effectively extending Mr Mugabe's rule by two years.

February 2007 - Rallies, demonstrations banned for three months. The ban is extended in May.

March 2007 - Opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai is hospitalised after his arrest at a rally. One man is shot dead as riot police move to disperse the gathering.

May 2007 - Warnings of power cuts for up to 20 hours a day while electricity is diverted towards agriculture.

June 2007 - Ruling ZANU-PF and opposition MDC hold preliminary talks in South Africa.

March 2008 - Presidential and parliamentary elections. Opposition MDC claims victory.

May 2008 - Electoral body says Morgan Tsvangirai won most votes in presidential poll, but not enough to avoid a run-off against Mugabe.

June 2008 - Run-off goes ahead. Robert Mugabe declared winner. Tsvangirai pulled out days before poll, complaining of intimidation.

Russia, China veto a Western-backed UN Security Council resolution to impose sanctions.

July 2008 - EU, US widen sanctions against Zimbabwe's leaders.

September 2008 - Robert Mugabe, Tsvangirai sign power-sharing agreement. Implementation stalls over who gets top ministerial jobs.

December 2008 - Zimbabwe declares national emergency over a cholera epidemic and the collapse of its health care system.

January 2009 - Government allows use of foreign currencies to try stem hyperinflation.

February 2009 - Morgan Tsvangirai is sworn in as prime minister, after protracted talks over formation of government.

March 2009 - Morgan Tsvangirai's wife is killed in a car crash. He is injured.

Retail prices fall for the first time after years of hyperinflation.

June 2009 - Constitutional review begins.

Tsvangirai tours Europe and US to drum up donor support.

September 2009 - One year after power-sharing deal, MDC remains frustrated and alleges persecution and violence against members.

Arrival of EU and US delegations seen as signs of thaw in foreign relations. Both maintain stance on targeted sanctions.

IMF provides \$400 million support as part of G20 agreement to help member states.

October 2009 - Robert Mugabe calls for new start to relations with West.

January 2010 - Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai urges the easing of targeted sanctions, saying the unity government's progress should be rewarded.

Zimbabwe's High Court rejects a regional court ruling against President Mugabe's land-reform programme.

March 2010 - New rule forces foreign-owned businesses to sell majority stake to locals.

June 2010 - Commercial farmers say they are under a renewed wave of attacks.

August 2010 - Zimbabwe resumes official diamond sales, amid controversy over reported rights abuses at the Marange diamond fields.

September 2010 - Premier Tsvangirai alleges ruling party instigating violence at public consultations on new constitution.

December 2010 - Ruling ZANU-PF party nominates President Mugabe as candidate for next presidential race.

Mugabe's wife Grace takes legal action over claims released by WikiLeaks that she profited from illegal diamond trading.

February 2011 - European Union eases sanctions on Zimbabwe by removing the names of 35 of President Mugabe's supporters from a list of people whose assets had been frozen.

March 2011- Prime Minister Tsvangirai says unity government rendered impotent by ZANU-PF violence and disregard for power-sharing deal.

August 2011 - General Solomon Mujuru, one of the country's most senior politicians, dies in a mysterious house fire.

November 2011 - The Kimberly Process, which regulates the global diamond industry, lifts a ban on the export of diamonds from two of Zimbabwe's Marange fields.

December 2011 - President Mugabe says he will run in the next elections. He condemns the current power-sharing government as a monster.

February 2012 - European Union lifts sanctions on some prominent Zimbabweans, while retaining the travel restrictions and the freeze on the assets of President Mugabe.

Constitutional Select Committee completes draft of new constitution, but ZANU-PF and MDC continue to quarrel about the details.

April 2012 - Political violence reportedly on the rise, with MDC complaining that its rallies have repeatedly been shut down.

October 2012 - Rights activists say repressive structures instrumental in 2008 electoral violence are being reactivated.

Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai threatens to pull out of unity government, citing violence against his party's members.

January 2013 - Talks involving President Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai reach a deal over a new draft constitution.

February 2013 - The government announces that it is to hold a referendum on a new constitution, with 16 March set as a "tentative" date for the vote. New elections will be held after the referendum.

August 6, 2013: Robert Mugabe Blasted Nelson Mandela as a 'coward' during Victory Speech'

Daily Current POLITICS REUTERS/By Philimon Bulawayo

Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe blasted Nelson Mandela as a "coward" and "idiot" during a rally today to celebrate Mugabe's record seventh term in office following his victory in the country's disputed elections last week. Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe greets crowds during his 88th birthday rally in Mutare about 265km (165miles) east of the capital Harare, February 25, 2012. Mugabe turned 88 on Tuesday.

In one of his trademark fiery speeches, the 89-year-old Mugabe — who has led the southern African country since 1980 — claimed that he should be hailed as an African hero instead of Mandela, the anti-apartheid icon and former president of neighboring South Africa. "My huge victory in these elections prove I am the greatest leader in the history of Africa," Mugabe told supporters in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare. "I have spent my whole life fighting for the Zimbabwean people and they continue to elect me." Mugabe tightened his iron grip on power in last week's elections after he received 61 percent of the vote while his ZANU-PF party won a two-thirds majority in parliament, though there are allegations of widespread fraud and violence against the opposition.

"I am the greatest African who has ever lived," Mugabe said. "The world should love me more than the idiot Nelson Mandela. F\*\*k Nelson Mandela. As I waged war against colonialism, that coward sat on his ass in prison for 27 years. He's a coward. "I have been leader for 33 years. Mandela was president for five years. What kind of idiot gives up political power? Great leaders like me know how to stay in power. "While Mandela sits comfortably in a hospital, I stand before you fit and healthy, ready to lead this country and the Zimbabwean people for at least another 25 years," Mugabe added, referring to the 95-year-old Mandela's ongoing treatment for a lung condition.

Mugabe also mocked South Africa's multicultural "rainbow nation" in his speech, claiming that Mandela didn't care about the interests of black Africans. "There is only one color allowed in Zimbabwe, and it is black," he said. "I banned the color white in my country. Nelson Mandela told all the white people to stay in his ridiculous rainbow nation. He should have

thrown all of the whites and homosexuals out of his country like I did. South Africa would be so much better off.”

The Lord of Misrule: Mandela served as South Africa’s president from 1994 to 1999 and is highly regarded at home and worldwide for his role in ending apartheid and becoming the country’s first democratically elected leader. Similar to Mandela, Mugabe played a pivotal role in the struggle for black-majority rule against the white minority-controlled Rhodesia, which became Zimbabwe. In recent years, however, Mugabe and his government have plunged the country into diplomatic and economic isolation due to corruption, authoritarian rule, political violence and human rights abuses. Mugabe drew international condemnation in particular over his land redistribution policies, in which prosperous commercial farmers were chased off their land by violent mobs. South Africa, which borders Zimbabwe, has pursued a policy of silent diplomacy with Mugabe, appeasing him in public while supposedly criticizing him in private. South Africa’s President Jacob Zuma, who congratulated Mugabe on his presidential victory, said he would review Mugabe’s remarks before making an official statement.

August 11, 2013: Unfree and Unfair Elections in Zimbabwe - Dishonor Among African Elections Thieves’ Analysis: By Professor Alemayehu Guebre Mariam:

Zimbabwe had its presidential elections last week. Elections as in rigged. Robert Mugabe, the senile octogenarian and the only president since Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980, “won” for the seventh time by 61 percent of the vote. His Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) clinched a supermajority in parliament that will allow it to change the constitution. This past May, Mugabe signed a new constitution which sets a term limit of two five-year terms for president (not retroactively applicable to Mugabe) and eliminated the post of prime minister. In 2009, following a violent election aftermath, a coalition government of national unity was formed designating opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai as Prime Minister. Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, the former president of Nigeria, who led the 69 members African Union Election Observer team in Zimbabwe certified the election as valid declaring, “I have never seen an election that is perfect. The point has always been and will always be, how much the infractions, imperfections have affected the reflection of the will of the people and up to the point of the close of the polls our observation was that there were incidents that could have been avoided. In fact, up to the close of the polls we do not believe that those incidents will amount to the result not to reflect the will of the people.” Bernard Membe of Tanzania who led the Southern African Development Community (SADC) election observer mission (442 observers) chimed in declaring that the election was “free and peaceful”. The observer mission from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) likewise gave its approval and urged all parties to accept the election result. None of the observer missions used

the phrase "free and fair" to describe the elections outcomes. The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) (7,000 certified domestic monitors) declared the elections were "seriously compromised" and pointed out a number of serious irregularities. Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai called the election "a huge farce" and a "sham that does not reflect the will of the people."

Botswana only the southern African state to call for an electoral fraud investigation'

Botswana's observer team did not buy Mugabe's election victory or the AU/SADC's affirmation of it. After reviewing the preliminary report of its 80-member election observer team led by former Botswanan vice-president Mompoti Merafhe, the government of Botswana issued an official statement advising that "there is a need for an independent audit of the just concluded electoral process in Zimbabwe. Such an audit will shed light on the conduct of the just ended election and indicate any shortcomings and irregularities that could have affected its result, as well as the way forward." This is in sharp contrast to the conclusions of the 60-person African Union (AU) observer team led by former Botswana president Ketumile Masire which concluded that the 2010 "election" in which the ruling regime in Ethiopia claimed a 99.6 percent victory was "free and fair".

K.T Masire said his team found no evidence of intimidation and misuse of state resources for ruling party campaigns in Ethiopia and proclaimed, "The [elections] were largely consistent with the African Union regulations and standards and reflect the will of the people ... The AU were unable to observe the pre-election period. The participating parties expressed dissatisfaction with the pre-election period. They did not have freedom to campaign. We had no way of verifying the allegations." Masire's report was a travesty of election observation. At the time, I took issue with Masire's findings and challenged his conclusions:

With all due respect to Masire, it seems that he made his declaration clueless of the observation standards he is required to follow in the AU Elections Observation and Monitoring Guidelines. If he had done so, he would have known that there is no logical, factual or documentary basis for him to declare the 'elections were largely consistent with the African Union regulations and standards'. For instance, pursuant to Section III 9 (e) of the guidelines ('MANDATES, RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE OBSERVERS'), Masire's team had a mandatory duty to 'observe the political parties and groups as well as the population at large in the exercise of their political rights, and the conditions in which such rights are to be exercised'. Masire by his own admission made no such observation: 'The AU were unable to observe the pre-election period'. Under Section V (13), the guidelines mandate that 'AU Observers should ascertain that: ... (b) all competing political parties have equal access to both the print and the electronic media (radio, T.V.).' Masire said his team

'had no way of verifying' pre-election complaints, including complaints of unequal access to state-controlled media.

Under Section V (B) (d), the AU observers had a mandatory duty to ascertain 'the campaign process is conducted in conditions of serenity, and that there are no acts of provocation or intimidation capable of compromising'. Masire's team failed to make such inquiries. Under Section B (24), the guidelines mandate: 'The atmosphere during the campaign should be carefully observed, and among the factors to consider in this regard include ... (iv) persistent or reported cases of human rights violations.' Masire's team does not appear to be aware of such a requirement, let alone actually make the observation. It is truly regrettable to say of a former African leader that he showed no evidence of having read or understood the numerous mandatory election observation duties set forth in minute detail in the AU guidelines before shamelessly and pathetically declaring the elections 'were largely consistent with African Union regulations and standards.'

I am gratified that vice president Mompoti Merafhe's observer team in Zimbabwe made its recommendation for an audit investigation based not only on observed election irregularities but also because the "various incidents and circumstances [that] were revealed call into question whether the entire electoral process, and thus its final result, can be recognised as having been fair, transparent and credible in the context of the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections within the Community." I would like to underscore that the Zimbabwe election also fails to meet the AU Elections Observation and Monitoring Guidelines.

"Let The Games Begin"

Robert Gabriel Mugabe declares that no British origin Zimbabwean whites will be allowed to own land in Zimbabwe, nullified 220, 000 A1 model offer letters and launches a new tenure permit system, whilst South African President Jacob Zuma has signed the Land bill decree into a law.....Watching the two land programmes run parallel to each other should certainly give the world an insight into the African mindset and one only hopes South Africa will learn from Zimbabwe's mistakes and achieves a world class, enviable and to the people 'black empowerment' programme that does not destabilise the economy, unites the people and fosters peace and prosperity, and maintains good relations with the international community. Jacob Zuma's action has forced Mugabe's hand at taking firm steps to finally address the ownership issue.

In Zimbabwe, political crisis turns violent'

A senior opposition official was assaulted by members of his own party, further fraying the only group capable of challenging President Mugabe. Meanwhile, a former US congressman was arrested in Harare on suspicion of possessing pornography.

By Mxolisi Ncube, Correspondent (February 18, 2014)

Johannesburg — Factionalism within Zimbabwe's ailing opposition party has taken a violent turn with an assault on a senior official who is challenging the leadership of Morgan Tsvangirai, the party founder. The attack came at a meeting of provincial party chiefs in Harare.

Opposition members described as youths loyal to Mr. Tsvangirai, the long-time face of Zimbabwe's opposition who was prime minister until last summer, apparently assaulted party deputy treasurer Elton Mangoma for allegedly trying to replace Tsvangirai at a meeting first called to address the problem of emotional divides in the party.

Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change has been known more for tolerance and for enduring physical attacks by various forces of Zimbabwe's autocratic President Robert Mugabe. Yet since Mr. Mugabe trounced the opposition last July, the MDC has been riven by factionalism and discontent. Tsvangirai and numerous national and international observers claim the July elections were rigged and stolen, even though a body of southern African nations called them "relatively" free and fair. But since Tsvangirai and his brain trust had claimed for most of last spring to be far ahead in the polls, the election loss came as a shock inside party ranks. The MDC suddenly found itself out of government after being in a power-sharing coalition with Mugabe for five years after scoring better than Mugabe in the previous 2008 national elections.

Days after the July loss, senior MDC officials, including Mr. Mangoma and party treasurer Roy Bennet, called for a change of leadership. They said Tsvangirai and his allies failed in four successive elections to "deliver change" in a nation that has been often harshly ruled by Mugabe since the 1980s. Tsvangirai's MDC is widely seen as the only real alternative to Mugabe's rule, and the possibility of implosion in its ranks is seen by political analysts as quite negative for the political health of the nation. "Surely this is not the democracy that they purport to champion," says Pedzisai Ruhanya, the director of the Zimbabwe Democracy Institute. "It depicts the MDC as democratic charlatans not different from [Mugabe's ruling] ZANU PF.

Meanwhile, an unusual story developed Tuesday in a nation with few headlines and restricted press access when former US Illinois congressman Mel Reynolds was arrested by Zimbabwean authorities. The charges related to pornography and unspecified immigration violations. Mr. Reynolds, who once challenged the seat of Jesse Jackson Jr. in Chicago, had resigned from Congress in 1995 after a conviction for child pornography and statutory rape of a 16-year-old. In Zimbabwe, he has been involved in brokering a hotel complex worth \$145 million, according to the Associated Press in Harare, which also reports that Reynolds was detained after photographing models in his hotel room, of which he also has an unpaid bill of \$24,500, according to the state-run newspaper, The Herald.

As the MDC violence story developed further Tuesday, Tsvangirai condemned the assault on Mangoma. The attack took place outside Harvest House, the party headquarters, located in the capital Harare. Mangoma was roughed up by a crowd and one of his colleagues was held hostage for a brief period at the end of the day as the delegates were leaving. Some analysts worry the tensions in the party could break out more widely among disaffected loyalists. "I unreservedly condemn that behavior," said Tsvangirai in a statement that said the party was founded on principles of tolerance. "As a party, we do not believe in 'mobocracy' but I know that some people will be angry and emotional," Tsvangirai said.

Outside Harare House during the meeting, crowds of youths had been waving placards saying "Mangoma rova pasi nhasi" (Mangoma go today). They went after Mangoma and a youth leader named Promise Mkwanzani. The president of the party youth assembly, Solomon Madzore, was held hostage in the building but later escaped unhurt. They are said to belong to a faction led by party secretary-general Tendai Biti, who is rumored to be trying to upend Tsvangirai. "The attack happened after the meeting had ended, and that was at about 5 p.m.," said Mangoma. "We could feel that violence would break out soon after the meeting, so we agreed that I would come out of the building walking with Tsvangirai and leave in his vehicle."

Mangoma said the MDC should not be a "fighting party," and characterized Tsvangirai backers as "desperate ... and dangerous people who cannot respond to ideas with ideas.... We should be tolerant and accepting of criticism and divergent views. You can't turn violent mobs against your own colleagues." MDC national spokesman Douglas Mwonzora promised remedial action. "The MDC does not condone any form of violence against anyone. To that end anybody found to be on the wrong side of the law and either perpetrating or inciting violence in the party will be brought to book in terms of the party's constitution," he said on Sunday. (Text ends)

ZIMBABWE: Keep your 'dirty hands' off Africa - Mugabe'

Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe has launched a scathing attack on Europe for trying to keep its "dirty hands" on Africa. The Herald quoted Mugabe as saying Africa should avoid entering "horse and rider" economic arrangements that only benefited other nations while "leaving the continent poorer". The veteran leader was speaking during an interview with journalists at the just ended Africa Union summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Mugabe who was appointed first deputy chair of the AU executive council criticised Europe for seeking to dictate to Africa what it should do, saying the Westerners should keep their "dirty hands" off the continent, said the report. He said Europe and America would always regard Africa as "inferior" as they did not want to "recognise that we are a free people that can run our own affairs without them". Mugabe said Africa was a master of its own destiny and that the continent's resources were

not "resources for Europe anymore". He added, "we've kicked you out of Africa. Take care of your own countries and leave us to take care of our Africa". (Text ends)

Zimbabwe broke but Mugabe charges taxpayers \$5 mln for daughter's wedding'

In past month, autocrat tallies \$16 million on birthday party, wedding, bronze statues of himself even as state is too poor to aid recent flood victims.

By Mxosili Ncube (March 12, 2014) Johannesburg — Zimbabwe is \$11 billion in loan arrears, it just lost a hoped-for bailout from China, and the southern-tier African nation is now grappling with the fallout of floods and the breach of a dam weeks ago that left 60,000 people marooned.

Since it no longer qualifies for World Bank and IMF loans, the Mugabe regime is pleading around the world for \$20 million in emergency funds to cover the disaster. Yet it also now unfolds that President Mugabe used \$16 million in taxpayer funds in recent weeks to cover his birthday party, his daughter's wedding, and for giant statues of himself to be built by North Korea that commemorate his uninterrupted rule since 1980, and his status as father of the nation.

The Mugabe spending list, which dribbled out in recent days -- has shocked many, since public spending on the president's family is larger than the immediate cost to rescue and aid the flood victims, not to mention a widening number of homeless and hungry in a country that used to be a breadbasket. The appearance of excess has brought a new grassroots grumbling at the gap between the original liberation ideology of Mugabe and his behavior today. The spending surfaced at a time when reports of Mugabe ministers salaries, some of which top \$40,000 a month, are in contrast with the average salary of Zimbabweans, at \$285-\$300 a month, and just after a plan to raise teacher's pay by \$79 a month fell through.

ZIMBABWE (True Story): Read the controversial speech of President Robert Mugabe...

1. Racism will never end as long as white cars are still using black tyres.
2. Racism Will never end as long w...e still wash first white clothes, then other colours later.
3. Racism will never end if people still use black to symbolise bad luck and WHITE for peace!
4. Racism will never end if people still wear white clothes to weddings and black clothes to the funerals.
5. Racism will never end as long as those who don't pay their bills are

blacklisted not White listed. Even when playing the pool (snooker), you haven't won until you sink the black ball, and the white ball must remain on the field.

BUT I don't CARE, SO LONG AS I'M STILL USING THE WHITE TOILET PAPER TO WIPE MY BLACK

A\*S, I 'M STILL What do you think about this speech ?

Robert Gabriel Mugabe's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday bash on Feb. 23, for example, where the president cut a cake in front of 10,000 people at a stadium in Harare, and where 90 beasts were killed and grilled for the occasion, cost more than \$1 million. The cost of Bona Mugabe's wedding on March 1, attended by the heads of state of South Africa, Zambia, and Equatorial Guinea at Mugabe's private home in Harare's plush Borrowdale suburb, cost \$5 million. Just after the wedding, plans leaked out that Mugabe's Zanu (PF) government clandestinely signed North Korea, one of its old friends, to build two statues of Mugabe at an estimated cost of \$5 million.

The statues were commissioned by Zimbabwe's minister of local government, Ignatius Chombo. One is a nearly 30-foot high bronze image worth \$3.5 million to be placed in Harare; the other is a \$1.5 million version to be placed in a \$3.8 million museum to be built in Mugabe's rural Zvimba home, in Mashonaland West. Building statues of leaders is something North Korea has considerable experience doing.

"Mugabe and his government have lost it and all they care about now is the accumulation of wealth and strengthening their hold on power," says Simba Makoni, Mugabe's former finance minister who now leads the small opposition Mavambo-Kusile-Dawn party. "I do not think that Mugabe and the people who surround him now care about the country's economy anymore. Their actions show a lack of willpower to make the country better. They are no longer the same people who fought for and delivered independence [from Great Britain] in 1980."

Back in November, the Mugabe government said it had an inside track on a \$30 billion bailout from China. The amount is whopping, considering that Zimbabwe's annual budget is now some \$4.5 billion a year. Yet the anticipated Chinese bailout has since been steadily reduced in Harare's telling: to \$10 billion, then \$3 billion, \$400 million – and then zero, according to China's ambassador to Harare in recent days.

Meanwhile, in an odd backdrop to the spending, Mugabe's wife, Grace Mugabe, has added to her takeover of a citrus farm owned by Zimbabwe Stock Exchange-listed Interfresh Holdings. Mugabe's first lady helped herself to some 4,000 acres of the Mazoe Citrus Estate farm last year, leaving 50 families homeless and then at the turn of this year added another 2,000 acres. The corporate write off of assets is figured at \$6 million. Ms. Mugabe told reporters the added takeover of acres was needed to expand a nearby orphanage. (Text ends)

## ECONOMY: Mugabe's Zimbabwe: Broke and broker'

With six failed banks and runaway corruption, most places in Africa would be looking at a military coup. But the dictator's grip remains strong and he may simply print more money.

By Robert Rotberg, Guest blogger June 9, 2014

But this is Zimbabwe, where President Robert Mugabe has ruled despotically for 34 long years. Mr. Mugabe's ZANU-PF party won presidential and parliamentary elections last July by cleverly packing voter lists, rejigging constituencies and constituency boundaries, and ensuring that shack-dwellers and villagers knew precisely for whom they should vote, and how often. Since the ZANU-PF victory, the national economy, having successfully recovered from a previous total collapse (the recovery came during opposition management) has once again melted down.

The Mugabe government has been unable to pay full civil service, police and army wages since the beginning of 2014.

Local experts believe that the government will be providing just a small part of what is owed later this month and will then absolutely run out of cash by August, depriving even soldiers of their normal wages. Six banks have failed and 11 more are operating precariously. Cash flows are limited, liquidity nonexistent. Businesses are failing daily, with scores of large firms going bust since the beginning of the year. Government revenues are only 30 percent of daily expenditures. Lack of confidence in the Mugabe government accelerated massive capital flight, which is continuing. (Zimbabwe has used the US dollar as its major currency since printing local dollars led to a 250 million per cent inflation and huge shortages of fuel and consumer goods.) That crisis of confidence continues, so the economy inexorably slides backward.

The slide has not been arrested by a confiscatory attempt to transfer or "indigenize" non-African-owned businesses and to harass successful mining companies and foreign-owned sugar mills. As a result, incoming foreign investment is no more; domestic entrepreneurial activity has halted. This absence of economic drive has been accentuated by the smuggling of locally mined gold into South Africa and the drying up of the country's alluvial diamond-harvesting bonanza. The remaining abundant diamond trove is encased in a long ridge of rocky conglomerate that requires the kind of technological expertise unavailable in a weak Zimbabwe.

The \$11 billion worth of diamonds that were plundered from 2010 largely was appropriated by Mugabe, his wife, cronies, security forces and a Chinese company. Very little revenue from diamonds ever reached state coffers. This week, Zimbabwe may well be broke, and growing economically at a low or even a negative level. One remedy that the ruling party – but no sane economist – is considering is the printing again of local dollars, thus allowing the government to pay soldiers and others. But

the result would be inflation, confidence levels would ebb further, and petrol and many consumer goods would vanish.

A prominent banker told me that the government lacked funds with which to print local dollars, and he had seen no preparatory signs. But, by August, when the army and air force become restive, Mugabe might possess no other way to placate the troops. In most African countries with so much dysfunctionality and widespread theft by cabinet ministers, officials, police, army and almost every person with access to a permit or a franchise, a military coup would be likely. In Zimbabwe's case, however, junior officer ranks have carefully been weeded and senior officers have for long fed themselves at the trough of corruption. They are so much a part of a venal system of enrichment that little can be expected from such quarters.

Moreover, Mugabe, now 90, has so successfully created a climate of fear – and patronage rewards – that key politicians and "securocrats" are careful to stay obedient, the better to enrich themselves. And the followers are immensely wealthy, with dollar accounts offshore.

Mugabe is frail, but still strong enough to review troops at parades (his police chief recently collapsed at one) and occasionally to preside over cabinet and central committee meetings. Almost everyone in Zimbabwe muses concernedly about the leadership succession. Before its disastrous showing in last year's elections, experts assumed that the Movement for Democratic Change would play a major role in the country's future. But now the MDC has fewer than 90 seats in a 210-seat parliament. It has also split into two, with most members staying with former prime minister Morgan Tsvangirai and a rump group seceding with former finance minister Tendai Biti.

ZANU-PF will determine Zimbabwe's future both constitutionally and in terms of power. Vice-President Joice Mujuru is in line to preside when Mugabe goes, but only temporarily, until parliament votes. But there are less clear provisions if Mugabe becomes incompetent in office. In either event, the Mujuru faction within the ruling party may not be able to prevent Emmerson Mnangagwa – now minister of justice, chair of the joint operations command, a leading securocrat and ambitious pretender to the throne – from pushing Ms. Mujuru aside and taking power with military support. Foreign diplomats now view Mr. Mnangagwa as the only politician capable of maintaining stability and returning Zimbabwe to international respectability.

Mnangagwa is very canny, determined, corrupt, and ruthless. At 64, he is also younger than many of his rivals and enemies. Recently, he pushed aside another minister to take control of a large petroleum distribution complex capable of greatly rewarding him and his close associates for years to come. Unfortunately, other than a soft coup on behalf of Mnangagwa, or South African intervention to persuade Mugabe to relinquish office or to cede day-to-day power to Mnangagwa (or a weaker

Mujuru), there are few alternatives. South Africa could attempt to bully Mugabe to install an interim cabinet of technocrats, as in Greece, but South Africa's appetite for meddling is reduced by its own economic weaknesses and internal political problems.

What is more certain is that Zimbabwe's economy will continue to crumble, and that Mugabe will retain enough control to cow Mujuru, Mnangagwa and others. The MDC will weaken still further. Only when the ZANU-PF holds its national congress in December will Mnangagwa try to move decisively against Mujuru – assuming Mugabe lives that long. By then, however, there may be little left economically of Zimbabwe. Metaphorically, it will remain for some last politician to turn off the light. (Text ends)

Robert Mugabe says no whites may own land in Zimbabwe'

Kicking out the last white farmers may be a ploy to divert attention from an economic catastrophe.

Harare, Zimbabwe (July 3, 2014) — Zimbabwe president Robert Mugabe has ordered the nation's remaining white farmers to be booted off their farms in order that the land be given to black Zimbabweans. In the harshest official policy on race and land reform in a country that has been close to bankruptcy, the 90-year old autocrat said Wednesday that whites may no longer own any land in Zimbabwe. Whites would still be allowed to own businesses and urban apartments.

Speaking to farmers in Mhangura, a small mining town about 120 miles north of the capital Harare, Mr. Mugabe said all remaining white farmers should leave – and closed the door even on white families renting farms from black owners, as some several hundred have been doing since most were violently chased away a decade ago. "I have been given a list of 35 white farmers in Mashonaland West alone," Mr. Mugabe told an emotional crowd in what was billed a patriotic speech. "We say no to whites owning our land and they should go. ... They can own companies and apartments...but not the soil. It is ours and that message should ring loud and clear in Britain and the United States."

The policy seemed chilling to many here. Barnabas Thondlana, editor of "The Observer," a weekly, told the Monitor that, "I strongly and vigorously denounce someone who expects me to hate someone because of the color of their skin. I think what the president is doing is out of order because the problem with our country at the moment is not whites." Mugabe, reelected last summer to his fifth consecutive term, also fingered his own associates who make lucrative profits owning farm land and renting it to whites. Mugabe characterized this practice as unpatriotic under his notions of indigenous black African nationalism. "There are white farmers who are still on the land and have the protection of some cabinet ministers and politicians as well as traditional leaders. That should never happen. They

[whites] were living like kings and queens on our land and we chucked them out. Now we want all of it."

War veterans: At the turn of the century Mugabe, a former guerrilla leader, unleashed waves of violent land acquisition by war veterans aligned to his political party. Thousands of white commercial farmers were forced out under a so-called "indigenization" land reform policy. Mugabe's land seizure was widely seen as a means of strengthening his grip on power after the emergence in 1999 of a robust opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change led by Morgan Tsvangirai – whom Mugabe defeated in the election last July. The policy gave Mugabe a means to pacify a black rural population that for years had worked the least productive land, a legacy of British colonial era.

Since then, Zimbabwe has been in an economic tailspin, with banks collapsing and with the government unable to pay the wages of many in the civil sector. Much of the land previously taken by those in the Mugabe regime has benefited the security, police and military wings of the leader's circle. Mr. Thondlana, the weekly editor, adds: "The problems with our country at the moment are dictatorship, [bad] governance, corruption, kleptocracy and other all forms of prejudices. We should be fighting these prejudices like tribalism, regionalism and racism. I say no to racism." (Text ends)

September 8, 2014: Zimbabwe's ZANU-PF to elect DPs by secret ballot

News24, Cape Town – Zimbabwe's ruling Zanu-PF party, led by President [Robert Mugabe](#), is set to choose the country's next vice presidents in December through a secret ballot, media reports say. According to [The Sunday Mail](#), all positions in the presidium were set to be contested at the party's national congress apart from that of Mugabe, who was recently endorsed as party leader at the Youth and Women's League conferences. Justice Minister [Emmerson Mnangagwa](#) confirmed the elections would be held through a secret ballot, adding "that is what the party has been doing since 1963". The country's presidium is composed of the president and first secretary, two vice presidents and second secretaries and the national chairperson. One of the two positions for vice president has been vacant since the death of [John Nkomo](#) in 2013. Three top party officials - Vice President Joice Mujuru, former ambassador to South Africa Simon Khaya Moyo and Home Affairs Minister [Kembo Mohadi](#) - will be vying to become vice president. An [Eyewitness News](#) report said fears of rigging were at a high as divisions continued to rock Zanu-PF, with the recent entrance into mainstream politics of Mugabe's wife Grace further worsening the situation. [Grace Mugabe accepted a nomination last month to lead the ruling party's women's wing](#), triggering accusations that Mugabe aimed to establish a political dynasty.

September 10, 2014: Mugabe The Poorest Among World Leaders –wife'

Cape Town – Zimbabwe's first lady says her husband, President [Robert Mugabe](#), is the poorest among leaders all over the world, a report says. According to [NewZimbabwe.com](#), [Grace Mugabe](#) said this whilst addressing traditional chiefs gathered at her multi-million dollar compound in Mazowe to support her political ambitions. Grace, 49, recently [accepted a nomination to lead the ruling Zanu-PF party's women league](#), a development which triggered suggestions that Mugabe aims to establish a political dynasty. "Mugabe is the poorest president the world over," Grace was quoted as saying. Mugabe himself claimed early this year that he [earned a monthly salary of \\$4 000](#), seen as the lowest for any head of state in southern Africa. This was despite the fact that the first family owned a \$20m mansion in the posh Borrodale suburb of Harare, where their daughter Bona got married in February, the report said. Speaking at the same event, president of the Chiefs Council of Zimbabwe, Fortune Charumbira, said Grace's entrance into politics would bring balance to the country's power equation as Zanu-PF's concerns would reach the president faster, a [Herald report](#) said. Source: - News24

### **THE DAILY CALLER NEWS Foundation**

January 23, 2015: The government of Zimbabwe has pledged to seize the last remaining handful of white-owned farms in the impoverished African country, confident that turning over a few hundred farms to the majority black population will improve its terrible living standards.

Since 2000, President Robert Mugabe and his Zanu-PF party have pursued a series of "land reforms" that have seized farmland belonging to whites in order to redistribute it to landless blacks. About 4,000 farmers had their lands seized in the first wave, leaving only a few hundred commercial white farmers operating in the country.

Now, that number is poised to drop even further, as ministers vowed to finish the land reforms in areas that were protected from the first wave in order to give land to thousands who still lack it.

"The white farmers who are carrying out farming activities on gazetted land will not be tolerated as it is illegal in terms of the laws of the country," Zimbabwe State Minister Joel Biggie Matiza said on Wednesday, according to the Zimbabwean news source News Day. "In this province, we were protecting the very people who yesteryear were our erstwhile oppressors."

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order to redistribute it to landless blacks. About 4,000 farmers had their lands seized in the first wave, leaving only a few hundred commercial white farmers operating in the country.

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Similar statements have been made by other members of the government, who have also pledged to dispossess larger landowners in general.

"Those with multiple farms, we will take them, the few whites on farms, we will look into that and those with big farms, we will cut to size," promised Zimbabwe Vice President Emerson Mnangagwa last weekend.

Meanwhile, Land and Resettlement Minister Douglas Mombeshora said that whites in land disputes with blacks have only 90 days to leave if they want to avoid trouble with the law. He also said whites will be barred from entering joint contracts that would let them operate farmland (and take most of the earnings) while making payments to black owners.

"Joint ventures with white former commercial farmers, we say no to that," said Mombeshora, according to the Zimbabwe newspaper News Day. "We have never allowed that."

Zimbabwe, formerly known as Southern Rhodesia, is almost entirely black, but its tiny white minority has historically been very economically influential. Mugabe's government argues that land seizures reverse the damage from decades of British colonial rule, but the seizures have also been blamed for the country's continued economic backwardness, as the new owners have often lacked either the skills or the means needed to maintain output.

Since the land reforms, Zimbabwe has been in a near-constant state of economic distress. Once a major food producer and one of Sub-Saharan Africa's wealthier countries, Zimbabwe is now quite poor even by African standards, and has to rely on food imports. Before the country abandoned its own currency entirely, inflation was so severe that the country's trillion-dollar bills weren't worth enough to buy a candy bar.

Mugabe has also used the seizures to enrich his family and other politically connected individuals, often at the expense of the poor blacks the seizures were supposedly supposed to help. Recently, Mugabe's wife Grace Mugabe aroused anger for burning the homes of poor farmers in order to take their lands and merge them into a wildlife sanctuary.

LGBT: Robert Mugabe proposes marriage to Barack Obama

[World News Entertainment Politics](#) (June 30, 2015)

Robert Gabriel Mugabe 'proposes to Barack Obama': Zimbabwe's leader says he will travel to the White House, 'get down on one knee and ask his hand' as he mocks US legalisation of gay marriage. Zimbabwean leader joked about proposing to POTUS in Washington DC. Said Obama 'advocates gay people and enjoys an attractive countenance'. Went on to condemn American politicians as 'perverted Satan-worshippers'. 'I can't understand how this people dare to defy Christ's explicit orders as our Lord prohibited mankind from sodomy,' he added . Comes after the Supreme Court legalised gay marriage across all 50 states Robert Mugabe has mocked America's decision to legalise gay marriage across all 50 states by vowing to travel to the White House and proposing to Barack Obama. During his weekly interview with the national radio station, the Zimbabwean president joked that he planned to travel to Washington DC 'get down on one knee and ask his hand'. Source:

ZIMBABWE updates (Mail Onlines June 30, 2015) By [John Hall for MailOnline](#)

-Robert Mugabe 'proposes to Barack Obama': Zimbabwe's leader says he will travel to the White -----House, 'get down on one knee and ask his hand' as he mocks US legalisation of gay marriage

-Zimbabwean leader joked about proposing to POTUS in Washington DC

-Said Obama 'advocates gay people and enjoys an attractive countenance'

-Went on to condemn American politicians as 'perverted Satan-worshippers'

-'I can't understand how this people dare to defy Christ's explicit orders as our Lord prohibited

mankind from sodomy,' he added

-Comes after the Supreme Court legalised gay marriage across all 50 states

President of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe, who is known for his brutal crusades against gay people, has mocked America's decision to legalise gay marriage across all 50 states by proposing to Barack Obama

Robert Mugabe has mocked America's decision to legalise gay marriage across all 50 states by vowing to travel to the White House and proposing to Barack Obama.

During his weekly interview with the national radio station, the Zimbabwean president joked that he planned to travel to Washington DC 'get down on one knee and ask his hand'.

Mugabe, who is known for his brutal crusades against homosexuality, was responding in bizarre fashion to the Supreme Court's landmark ruling that the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees gays and lesbians the same right to marry as heterosexuals.

Speaking on Saturday, Mugabe said: 'I've just concluded - since President Obama endorses the same-sex marriage, advocates homosexual people and enjoys an attractive countenance - thus if it becomes necessary, I shall travel to Washington, DC, get down on my knee and ask his hand.'

Striking a more serious tone, he added: 'I can't understand how this people dare to defy Christ's explicit orders as our Lord prohibited mankind from sodomy', going on to accuse the U.S.

government of being run by 'perverted Satan-worshipers who insult the great American nation.'

The Zimbabwean leader went on to say that although the U.S. was founded on 'lofty Christian principles', the 'corrupt political elite' now acts only towards its own end, according to [Naij.com](http://Naij.com).

His comments came only hours after the Supreme Court's landmark decision to legalise gay marriage in all 50 states - prompting thousands of same-sex couples to immediately tie the knot.

The ruling was delivered just in time for the weekend's Pride celebrations, which saw the Empire State building, Niagara Falls and the White House lit up by rainbow lights.

Zimbabwe's neighbour Mozambique decriminalised homosexuality when a new penal code came into force that swept away old Portuguese colonial laws.

In a victory for gay rights campaigners in Africa, previous laws punishing homosexuality with three months of hard labour were scrapped.

The old code, dating back to 1886, targeted anyone 'who habitually engages in vices against nature' - but no known prosecutions took place after Mozambique became independent in 1975.

'It's a symbolic victory, as social inclusion remains the main challenge,' Frank, a student gay rights activist who declined to give his full name, told AFP.

The new penal code, which was announced last December by then president Armando Guebuza, also decriminalises abortion after lobbying by civil rights organisations.

The code came into force on Monday, though no official events or celebrations were scheduled to mark the occasion. The majority of African countries outlaw homosexuality, but Mozambique has seen little anti-gay violence or social friction over the issue. (Text ends)

### Robert Mugabe Strikes The West Again

"Even satan wasn't Gay, he chose to approach naked Eve instead of naked Adam." - Mugabe on homo sexuality.

Following the legalization of gay marriage across America by the Supreme Court last week, Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe, who is known for his extreme anti-gay views has been making headlines. Earlier this week was a marriage proposal to president Obama and he allegedly said.

TRENDING: Zimbabwean war heroes' skulls to be returned from UK

By [This Is Africa](#) on August 13, 2015

The heads of heroes and heroines of Zimbabwe's first war of independence - who were brutally decapitated by the colonial regime before being sent to Britain as trophies - are to be repatriated

The spirits of war heroes and heroines from the First Chimurenga, Zimbabwe's First War of Independence, will soon rest in their homeland as the United Kingdom has agreed to repatriate the heads of the decapitated fallen heroes, according to [The Herald](#).

The heads, which were on display at a British history museum, belonged to struggle heroes such as Mbuya Nehanda, Sekuru Kaguvi, Chingaira Makoni, Chinengundu Mashayamombe, Mapondera, Mashonganyika and Chitekedza Chiwashira, among others.

"The UK has since invited Zimbabwe to appoint technical experts to meet their museum counterparts in London to discuss some remains of Zimbabwean origin," said the British embassy in an emailed response to The Herald.

Speaking during heroes Day commemorations in Harare on Monday, President Robert Mugabe expressed his bafflement at why the British government enjoyed keeping the heads as a sign of conquest in this day and age.

President Mugabe said once the remains are repatriated, Government would consult with traditional leaders about how to bury them at the sacred shrines scattered throughout the country.

Having been shipped to the UK over 100 years ago, the heads are testament of the terrible price Zimbabweans had to pay for their freedom. (Text ends)

BUSINESS: Africa's Richest Man To Pump Billions Into Zimbabwe

By Editorial Staff (September 1, 2015) AFRICANGLOBE –

Africa's richest man, Aliko Dangote of Nigeria, has said he is ready to invest billions of dollars in Zimbabwe's economic enablers, among them power generation, cement production and coal mining. The investments will start early next year as long as the Government of Zimbabwe expedites logistical issues.

Mr. Dangote, who owns the Dangote Group, met President Mugabe at State House yesterday where he expressed his commitment to pour in billions of dollars in the investments. Earlier, Mr Dangote had met Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa at his offices, who joined President Mugabe and Vice President Phelekezela Mphoko for the meeting at State House.

Mr Dangote's visit comes barely a month after a Chinese delegation came here to finalise the implementation of [mega deals signed by President Mugabe](#) on his State visit to the Asian economic giant last year. The deals are being implemented under the country's economic blueprint, the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-economic Transformation (Zim-Asset).

Speaking to the media at State House, Mr Dangote described his meeting with President Mugabe as fruitful. "We had a very, very good meeting with the President and I briefed him that we have already decided to invest in three areas," he said. "The first one is to do with power (generation), second one is cement (manufacturing) and the third one is coal (mining).

"Our team will be back into the country next week to execute this plan and what we have already planned to do in terms of investment, to create jobs and also to help Zimbabwe to develop their own economy." Asked about where the cement manufacturing plant would be set up and when actual work was expected to start, Mr Dangote said they would consider an area where there were massive deposits of limestone, gypsum and coal.

"You know there are so many permits and whatever, but the Government promised to accelerate (the process) and as soon as we get things right, we will move," he said. "We are not here looking to invest, we have already made up our mind to invest, so we are here and we will invest."

Mr Dangote and his delegation that included Dangote Group executive director Mr Devakumur Edwin touched down at the Harare International Airport around 7am yesterday and had a packed itinerary until around 3pm. He first met VP Mnangagwa at the Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs offices around 8am, before meeting Foreign Affairs Minister Simbarashe Mumbengegwi at his Munhumutapa offices.

The delegation then met Energy and Power Development Minister Samuel Undenge and Tourism and Hospitality Industry Minister Walter Mzembi at their respective offices. They also met Mines and Mining Development Minister Walter Chidhakwa and Transport and Infrastructural Development

Minister Obert Mpofu, who is also the acting minister of Industry and Commerce.

The Dangote Group, whose business spans across manufacturing, logistics and power generation, has interests in several countries, including in Zambia where it established a \$400 million cement manufacturing plant. Speaking to the media after meeting VP Mnangagwa earlier in the day, Mr Dangote said all the coal that they used at their Zambian cement plant was from Zimbabwe.

“What we need to do is that we will bring in cement here and take coal, but we want to set up an integrated cement plant here,” he said. “That actually may be bigger than all the plants that you have currently. “We will look at setting up something that will translate to about 1,5 million tonnes (of cement) per annum, so that when you continue to use cement there will not be a shortage of cement. We will make cement available here.

“On the coal and cement, it’s Dangote Cement that will be investing. A week ago, [Dangote Cement signed a contract with China’s Sinoma for \\$4.3 billion](#). Even with that, it will only take us over 70 million tonnes (for the international market). The projection is that by 2020, it should be at 100 million tonnes, then Zimbabwe will be an addition to try to get that target.

“The timeframe for the investment is dependent on getting all the documentation, for instance the mining licences, but if we get everything this year, we will start construction by the first quarter next year. We will move very fast, but that all depends on the Government.” Mr Dangote said the fact that he came with his delegation was evident enough of their commitment to invest in Zimbabwe.

He said they were ready to pour in huge sums of money into construction of a thermal power generation plant in the country. Geologists from the group, Mr Dangote said, would come to Zimbabwe in the near future to explore the area where they can set up the power plant. “You know, we have this fund, which is a joint venture between Dangote and Blackstone, which is Black Rhino here in Africa. We have \$5 billion with them. It’s one of the vehicles that we want to bring to do the power generation,” he said.

[Blackstone and Dangote Group](#) last year agreed to jointly invest up to \$5 billion until 2020 in energy infrastructure projects across Africa with a particular emphasis on power, transmission and pipeline projects. Ms Josey Mahachi, a Zimbabwean based in Nigeria who hosts a lifestyle programme on M-Net, “Click Africa”, facilitated Mr Dangote’s visit. She said she was elated that her efforts were about to bear fruits. President Mugabe thanked her for being “a good ambassador for Zimbabwe” after she was introduced to him by VP Mnangagwa.

UN News: Robert Mugabe shouts 'we are not gays' at UN, gets laughs.

(September 28, 2015)

Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe deviated from his prepared speech at the UN general assembly to declare "we are not gays", drawing some laughter and applause.

Ironically, the 91-year-old leader's remarks came during a speech on human rights. Respecting and upholding human rights is the obligation of all states, and is enshrined in the United Nations charter. Nowhere does the charter abrogate the right to some to sit in judgment over others, in carrying out this universal obligation. In that regard, we reject the politicisation of this important issue and the application of double standards to victimise those who dare think and act independently of the self-anointed prefects of our time.

We equally reject attempts to prescribe 'new rights' that are contrary to our values, norms, traditions, and beliefs. We are not gays! Cooperation and respect for each other will advance the cause of human rights worldwide. Confrontation, vilification, and double-standards will not.

"We are not gays" was not in the prepared remarks issued to journalists ahead of delivery and appears to have been ad-libbed by Mugabe, whose government has been accused of blatant human rights abuses. Male same-sex sexual activity is illegal in the country and LGBT activists face repeated crackdowns and abuse.

### **October 22, 2015: Xin hua News: China has awarded a peace prize to Robert Mugabe**

Ailing Zimbabwean dictator Robert Mugabe has been announced as the 2015 winner of the Chinese version of the Nobel Peace prize.

Mugabe was honoured with the award for his work promoting "African peace" and for "overcoming a number of difficulties. Contributing to building the government, economy, and order in the country," the award organisers said.

Apparently the brutal repression of his own people during a 28-year-long dictatorship, repeated election violence carried out by the military and the country's destroyed economy didn't deter the judging panel of nine "experts and scholars."

The 91-year-old has won a gold Confucius trophy to add to his collection and 100,000 yuan (£10,200) in prize money.

The Confucius Prize, or the 'Chinese Nobel Peace Prize', was established in 2010, which just so happened to be the same year that Chinese political dissident Liu Xiaobo was awarded the Nobel.

Tan Changliu, the Confucius Prize chairman in 2010, said at the time the board's desire is to promote world peace from "an Eastern perspective." The prize is not officially linked to the Chinese government.

The five Confucius Prize winners so far are:

Lien Chan, Taiwanese former Chinese Nationalist Party chairman (2010)

Vladimir Putin, President of Russia (2011)

Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General (2012)

Yi Cheng, former president of China's Buddhist Association (2013)

Fidel Castro Ruz, former President of Cuba (2014)

HT: Quartz

### **Newsweek**

**Former Zimbabwe VP Launches Party to Challenge Mugabe**

By Conor Gaffey On 3/1/16 at 2:07 PM

A former vice president of Zimbabwe and close aide of veteran leader Robert Mugabe has announced the launch of a new opposition party to challenge the ruling Zanu-PF.

Joice Mujuru served as Mugabe's deputy between 2004 and 2014 and fought alongside the president in the 1970s during a guerrilla war against white minority rule in Zimbabwe. She was purged from the ruling party in December 2014 after Mugabe accused her of leading a "treacherous cabal" within Zanu-PF that was aiming to depose the president. Mujuru denied the accusations, saying her loyalty to Mugabe was "unquestionable".

At a news conference in the Zimbabwean capital Harare on Tuesday, Mujuru, 60, announced that she had launched the Zimbabwe People First party to fight 92-year-old Mugabe's tight grip on power. "We are not fighting one man but a system, a system that is unjust," said Mujuru, according to Reuters.

The issue of who will succeed Mugabe has dominated Zimbabwean politics in recent months. Mugabe's wife Grace and current Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa—who took over from Mujuru—are seen as the two main contenders. Grace, 50, was widely reported to have been involved in Mujuru's downfall, with Mugabe thanking his wife for exposing another of Mujuru's alleged plots, this one to kill the president.

Mujuru has rarely been seen in public since her sacking. At Tuesday's press conference, she continued to dismiss the accusations against her and said her new party would be an inclusive entity open to all Zimbabweans in the country and diaspora abroad. She also rejected the notion that she would return to the ruling party.

### **Newsweek**

**Zimbabwe's Mugabe Plans to Live to 100 and Won't Retire**

By Conor Gaffey On 3/4/16 at 4:17 PM

Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe has already been in charge for 36 years and, at 92, is the world's oldest serving head of state. But the veteran leader says he is not done yet.

Mugabe plans to live until he is 100 and indicated that he would remain president for life in a Thursday interview with state channel Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) TV, Reuters reported.

The former freedom fighter also dismissed reports of succession battles within his Zanu-PF party and added that the next party leader would be democratically elected, not chosen by him, suggesting that his wife Grace Mugabe would not be an automatic heir to his position.

Mugabe served as Zimbabwe's first prime minister following independence in 1980 and took over as president in 1987. He was chosen to lead Zanu-PF in 2014, meaning he will be the party's presidential candidate in the 2018 elections. If Mugabe was to win that election and serve the full term, he would be 99 by the time he is finished.

"Why successor? I am still there. Why do you want a successor? I did not say I was a candidate to retire," said Mugabe in the ZBC TV interview on Thursday.

The president's health is a constant source of speculation in Zimbabwe. Several recent public incidents—including the elderly statesman falling down a flight of stairs at Harare airport in February 2015 and Mugabe reading the wrong speech at the opening of the Zimbabwean parliament in September 2015—have suggested the veteran leader's health could be failing. But Mugabe dismissed any such concerns, saying that he was still fit and did morning exercises every day.

The issue of who will succeed Mugabe as Zanu-PF leader has dominated the party's internal politics in recent months, with two main camps emerging: one backing his wife Grace Mugabe and the other behind Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa. Grace Mugabe has established herself as a leading figure within the party after becoming head of its women's wing in December 2014 and assuming a position on the party's decision-making body, the Politburo.

But Mugabe appeared to pour cold water on the idea that he had prepared a path for his wife to take over from him. "Others say the president wants to leave the throne for his wife. Where have you ever seen that, even in our own culture, where a wife inherits from her husband?" said Mugabe. The president added that the next Zanu-PF leader would be democratically elected by a vote at a party congress.

Zanu-PF's political dominance in Zimbabwe has been aided by the lack of a strong opposition: the main opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) won just 49 seats compared to Zanu-PF's 158 in the 2013 elections, although the electoral process was widely criticized as unfair.

A former vice president under Mugabe, Joice Mujuru, announced on Tuesday the formation of a new political party, Zimbabwe People First, to challenge Mugabe's Zanu-PF. Mujuru was purged from the ruling party in December 2014 after Mugabe accused her of plotting to depose him, following a sustained campaign against Mujuru by Grace Mugabe. The president dismissed the challenge posed by Mujuru in the ZBC interview, saying that the new party was doomed to fail.

### **ZIMBABWE: Robert Mugabe Beaten Up By His Wife Grace In Public, Again – Police Guards Slapped In The Face Too**

The Southern Daily on May 3, 2016 in News in Zimbabwe Harare Police deputy commissioner general and close relative of president Robert Mugabe Innocent Matibiri is being blamed for failing to protect the dictator as details emerge of the embarrassing altercation in which the president was beaten up by his wife Grace Mugabe.

Footage of the incident shows Grace Mugabe slapping her husband in a fit of rage. Matibiri, Mugabe's chief police guard, rushes in and tries to calm the situation, telling Grace Mugabe that if she wants to fight her husband she must do it in their bedroom, not in public.

Grace Mugabe slaps Matibiri hard in the face and he withdraws in shame, leaving Mugabe to face further abuse from his wife, who is 40 years younger than the 92 year-old despot now afflicted with poor health.

The beating left Mugabe and his aides shell-shocked. Mugabe has previously complained of abuse from his wife, who harbours presidential ambitions and has declared: "Who has more right than me to be president?"

The failure by Mugabe's guards to restrain his violent wife has left the president exposed and allowed Grace Mugabe to institute a reign of terror within Zanu PF where her entry as the women's league chairperson has sparked chaos amid allegations of sex scandals.

Grace Mugabe has declared that she will not follow protocol because she is 'superior' to all of Mugabe's aides by virtue of being "their boss's wife".

## **COUNTRY FACT FILE**

Location

In South central Africa

Official title of the state

The Republic of Zimbabwe: is an inland state located in Southern Africa, between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers.

#### Neighbours

Zambia on N., Botswana on W., South Africa on S., Mozambique on E. Land boundaries; total 3,066 km. Border countries; Botswana 813 km, Mozambique 1,231 km, South Africa 225 km, Zambia 797 km.

#### Flag description;

Seven equal horizontal bands of green, yellow, red, black, red, yellow, and green with a white isosceles triangle edged in black with its base on the hoist side; a yellow Zimbabwe bird representing the long history of the country is superimposed on a red five-pointed star in the center of the triangle, which symbolizes peace; green represents agriculture, yellow mineral wealth, red the blood shed to achieve independence, and black stands for the native people.

#### Local division

8 Provinces, 2 cities with provincial status (Bulawayo & Harare).

#### Government type

Republic - semi-presidential with parliamentary democracy.

#### Legislation chamber

Bicameral Parliament

#### Brief Political History:

The UK annexed Southern Rhodesia from the South Africa Company in 1923. A 1961 constitution was formulated that favored whites in power. In 1965 the government unilaterally declared its independence, but the UK did not recognize the act and demanded more complete voting rights for the black African majority in the country (then called Rhodesia). UN sanctions and a guerrilla uprising finally led to free elections in 1979 and independence (as Zimbabwe) in 1980. Robert Mugabe, the nation's first prime minister, has been the country's only ruler (as president since 1987) and has dominated the country's political system since independence. His chaotic land redistribution campaign begun in 2000 caused an exodus of white farmers, crippled the economy, and ushered in widespread shortages of basic commodities. Ignoring international condemnation, Mugabe rigged the 2002 presidential election to ensure his reelection. Opposition and labor groups launched general strikes in 2003 to pressure Mugabe to retire early; security forces continued their brutal repression of regime opponents.

#### Form of State

Parliamentary Democracy

Head of State is the executive President President is elected every five years (current president has been in power since independence with no term limits). A multi-party republic with two legislative houses. The Senate 93 seats, 60 members elected by popular vote, 10 provincial Governors nominated by the Executive-president and the head of Government, 16 traditional chiefs elected by the council of chiefs, 2 seats held by the president and deputy president of council of chiefs, and 5 members appointed by the Executive-president. And the House of Assembly 210 seats, members are elected by popular vote to serve for five-year terms. Cabinet-ministers appointed by both the Executive-president and the head of Government, responsible to the House of Assembly.

Executive branch

President, Prime Minister, Bicameral parliament

Separated by chief of State (Executive president) and head of Government. Executive president elected by popular vote to serve for five-year terms without presidential term-limits. Head of Government to be appointed by the president with consent of Parliament.

Former Rulers

11th - 15th Century AD Mapungubwe Kingdom

19th century AD The Ndebele Kingdom

1871-1891 Lord Cecil Rhodes

1953 - 1963 Sir Roy Welensky as head of then "Central African

Federation" consisting of then Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe, Northern

Rhodesia (now Zambia) and Nyasaland (now Malawi).

1970-1976 Clifford Dupont

1976-1978 John Wrathall

1978-1979 Henry Everhard

1979 - Bishop Abel Muzerewa

1980-1987 Canaan Sodindo Banana

1987-present Robert Gabriel Mugabe

Judicial chamber

Supreme Court ; High Court

Capital City

Harare Altitude 1472 mtrs/4828 ft

Geographic coordinates 17.50S , 31.03E. Located at the confluence of the Limpopo & Zambezi rivers, first it was the name of black residential area. The city retained the name "Salisbury" until April, 1982 when it took Africanized name. "Harare" derived from the local Shona chieftain "Naharawa". Founded and declared as municipal town in 1897, and it became to city status in 1935.

Names of main towns

Bulawayo, Chitunguiza, Gweru, Mutare, Kwekwe, Kadoma.

Date of Independence

18th April, 1980

Religions (Major)

Predominantly traditional, tribal beliefs, with Christian minority.

Main spoken languages

English (official), Chishona, Sindebelle spoken.

Currency unit

Zimbabwe Dollar (ZWD) =100 cents

Area in Km<sup>2</sup>

390,759.00

Country area comparison in Africa

26 out of 55 states.

Demographic terms;-

Average annual population growth rate 2.954 %

Birth rate 31.57 births per 1,000 population

Average life expectancy ; 47.55 years

Death rate 14.9 deaths per 1,000 population

Male 47.98 years ; Female 47.11 years;

Illiteracy rate (%)

Male: 6, Female: 10

Average per capita income

USD 500

Population density

31.7/km<sup>2</sup>

Urban population (%)

38

Contributor groups (%)

Farming, Fishing: 18, Industry: 24, Social service: 58

Main Export Items

Tobacco, iron, steel, gold, sugar, ferro alloys, maize, nickel, cotton, asbestos.

Economy is based on

Mainly Agriculture

Climate

Tropical: Moderated by altitude.

Extremes;-

Lowest point; Junction of the Runde and Save rivers 162 mtrs.

Highest point; Inyangani 2,592 mtrs.

Weather of the Capital city (Harare) average temperature 18.50c.

Summer 16-27oc, winter 7-21oc average monthly Rf in summer 196mm in winter 1mm.

Altitude 1472 mtrs

Hottest Month October - November 16-27oc average daily min. & max.

Coldest Month June - July 7-21oc.

Driest Month July 1mm average Rf.

Wettest Month January 196 mm average Rf.

Measures

Metric system.

Time

2 hours ahead of GMT/UTC

Public holidays

18 February (independence), 25 May (Africa day), August 11 & 12 (Heroes day), Decembre 25 & 26 (Christmas).

Ethnic groups

Shona 78%, Ndebele 20%, Whites 2%.

Topographic & Environmental concern:

Zimbabwe is high plateau country rising to mountainous eastern border, slopping down on the other borders. Environment: deforestation; soil

erosion; land degradation; air and water pollution; the black rhinoceros herd - once the largest concentration of the species in the world - has been significantly reduced by poaching; poor mining practices have led to toxic waste and heavy metal pollution.

## **Economic Overview;**

The government of Zimbabwe faces a wide variety of difficult economic problems as it struggles with an unsustainable fiscal deficit, an overvalued exchange rate, soaring inflation, and bare shelves. Its 1998-2002 involvement in the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, drained hundreds of millions of dollars from the economy. Badly needed support from the IMF has been suspended because of the country's failure to meet budgetary goals. Inflation rose from an annual rate of 32% in 1998 to 133% at the end of 2004, while the exchange rate fell from 24 Zimbabwean dollars per US dollar to 6,200 in the same time period. The government's land reform program, characterized by chaos and violence, has badly damaged the commercial farming sector, the traditional source of exports and foreign exchange and the provider of 400,000 jobs.

### Industry

Mining (coal, gold, platinum, copper, nickel, tin, clay, metallic & non-metallics), food processing, beverages, steel, wood products, cement, clothings & footwears, chemicals, fertilizer.

### Chief crops

Tobacco, sugarcane, cotton, corn, grain-wheat, coffee, peanuts : sheep, goats, pigs.

### Natural resources

Chromium ore, Gold, Nickel, Asbestos, Copper, Iron ore, Vanadium, Lithium, Platinum, Coal, Tin, Phosphates & Manganese, group-metals.

### Land in use (%)

Arable land: 7

Grassland: 13

Forest woods: 49

Other: 31

### Marine

Coastline:None.

Commercial Sea port:-

Zimbabwe is an inland state, uses mainly port of Beira (Mozambique).

## Development prospect:

Zimbabwean economy enjoying nascent recovery is set to become the biggest casualty. Apart from the political instability. An indigenisation law enacted in 2008 but only being implemented now is likely to shift up a gear resulting in takeovers of foreign firms. Foreign investors are likely to stay away, dealing a blow to an economy in dire need of liquidity. The complexity of Zimbabwe's politics has significant bearing on its economic prospects. The IMF's Article IV report has forecasts based on two scenarios– one in which current policies remain unchanged and another in which IMF recommended policies are adopted. Under the first scenario, the IMF projects Zimbabwe's GDP to grow by 3.1 per cent in 2012 against the government's forecast of 7.8-9 per cent. Total revenue is expected to increase from \$2.7bn to \$3.4bn in 2012. According to the IMF, exports, which are crucial for the revival of Zimbabwe's economy considering its vast resources, will increase marginally from \$4.3bn in 2011 to \$4.5bn in 2012. On the other hand, imports will almost remain static at \$5.8bn against 2011's \$5.9bn. The government's medium term plan 2011-2015 forecasts mining to record the highest sectoral growth in 2012 at about 20 per cent, down from 44 per cent, followed by agriculture, hunting and fishing at 15 per cent, down from 19 per cent. Other key sectors such as manufacturing and distribution, hotels and restaurants are expected to record growth of 6 to 7 per-cent respectively.