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Time to reclaim our country from tyranny and economic decay



As we return to work after the festive season, we are quickly reminded of our unfinished business from last year. Our efforts to challenge the shadowy Chief-led Gukurahundi Outreach Programme continue as we work with our compatriots under the large banner of the Gukurahundi Genocide Alliance. Support from concerned citizens, the church and civic society remains our greatest motivation for staying the course in our quest for restorative justice, closure and healing for the victims of Gukurahundi. We maintain our principled position that any dialogue around Gukurahundi cannot be led or determined by the de facto perpetrator of the 1982-1987 genocide.

In our unity of purpose, we shall line up a number of events to build national consensus around this painful wound that has remained without redress for so long. We shall also approach SADC and other peacebuilding regional bodies to assist us in our fight to be heard by the deaf regime in Harare. Although the Gukurahundi genocide had its epicenter in the Matabeleland region, it had far-reaching effects across Zimbabwe. In many parts of Zimbabwe, ZAPU members and leaders were killed, harassed, dispossessed of their property, abducted and forcefully disappeared by suspected state security agents. Our party was effectively outlawed and forcefully incapacitated. To this day we are still struggling to rebuild ZAPU as the state remains unwilling to lift the caveats placed on our assets by the then Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, Mr Robert Mugabe. Spirited efforts to reclaim our stolen properties have invariably hit brick walls as the ZANU PF regime fears the resurgence of a well-resourced ZAPU.

Since last year, Zimbabwe has witnessed unprecedented levels of corruption with a connected few looting from our national coffers through murky tenders awarded by public officials. The vice of corruption has been exacerbated by the ineptitude and unwillingness of the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC) to fulfill its constitutional mandate. As a nation we have been let down by the ZACC whose flagship function is to fight corruption. We have seen very few and flimsy cases prosecuted with even fewer convictions for corruption. This has emboldened lawless individuals to double down on their corrupt dealings. We hereby call for the disbanding of the ZACC as an organization. It is a waste of taxpayers' money and a cumbersome tower of incompetence. As Zimbabweans let us reimagine a new autonomous organization to fight corruption competently. If the recent public pronouncements by the acting-President Constantine Chiwenga are sincere enough, then the government he leads should act on his command to eradicate corruption and dismantle cartel networks.

Corruption has paralyzed Zimbabwe's once-vibrant economy. From the breadbasket of Southern Africa we have become a basket case of broken dreams. Millions of our gifted and trained citizens have been driven into exile as economic refugees some of them in places so far from home. As prospects for employment varnish the brain drain continues. In 2025 we saw on countless occasions the spectacle of car and cash donations to individuals and institutions considered loyal to the riling party. While our road networks collapsed into deathtraps, flashy cars were dolled out like confetti at a wedding. No ethical considerations were made for the vast majority of citizens wallowing in abject poverty. Mothers in maternal wards have continued to endure cold nights in darkness yet this obscene culture of gifting cars and large sums of cash to celebrity recipients has not stopped. At the height of the madness, it was announced that only President Mnangagwa will now preside over car donations.

The *vene venyika, abanikazi belizwe* (owners of the country) mantra has been taken literally by President Mnangagwa and his cabinet. Hefty tenders awarded to cronies have given us nothing but a litany of shoddy workmanship while draining our fiscal resources. There is no shame in the looting by the same group of corrupt individuals connected to state actors in key positions. Damning reports by the Auditor General have been ignored with no corrective measures taken in spite of countless recommendations based on international best practice. Currency manipulation to create arbitrage continues to exert pressure on our local currency which has failed to reclaim the people's faith as a viable store of value. The strain caused by our currency volatility has been largely felt by civil servants, pensioners and low-income earners, many of whom now live way below the poverty datum line.

Furthermore, the youth in Zimbabwe continue to be disenfranchised in a country where school leavers may never clock in for a formal job. Access to standard education has become so expensive and privatized with public schools falling apart in terms of infrastructure and skilled manpower. Tertiary education is now out of the reach of students from poor backgrounds. The high cost of living confounding the working class is much worse for students pursuing tertiary education. Given our vast mineral wealth as a country it boggles the mind how we can fail to provide free education when our neighbors like Namibia are able to do it from primary school to university. We attribute our children's hardships and stolen future to the mismanagement of resources by the bungling ZANU PF regime. Under our people-oriented ZAPU-led government, there would be free education for all children in Zimbabwe. Employment creation would also be top priority right from the inception of our administration.

This year we are going to viciously play the watchdog role and demand accountability from the public sector. Our security forces should not operate on partisan basis. The process demands transparency right from the intake of new recruits. Once we stick to meritocracy and equal opportunities for all then we will begin to see improvement in the quality of our uniformed forces. Regional balance should also be implemented along the true principles of devolution. The deployment of teachers without multi-lingual skills poses a threat to our indigenous languages around Zimbabwe. We need to ensure that teacher training in Zimbabwe equips our teachers with multi-lingual skills so that they can be deployed anywhere in the country. Eventually, the regimen should apply to all civil servants across the board. We cannot be burning to learn Chinese Mandarin when our teachers cannot speak at least both Shona and Ndebele fluently. Zimbabwe recognizes more than a dozen local languages which should all be preserved as part of our national heritage and indigenous knowledge systems.

As this year begins, let us be vigilant against ZANU PF attempts to shred the National Constitution in order to stay in power. We will never allow their ED2030 agenda to go unchallenged. While they are free to make their wishful resolutions in their private gatherings, we will never allow their party positions to undermine Constitutional authority. Our collective power as a nation is only safeguarded by the Constitution. ZAPU will lead from the front in all legal steps to deflate the ED2030 agenda. Again, in the words of acting-President Chiwenga, the liberation struggle was not waged for the benefit of a few. There can be no lasting peace if black minority elites plunder all the country's wealth while closing the democratic space for power retention. We stand opposed to the rigging of elections and voter manipulation through intimidation and other forms of coercion. From our experience in by-elections last year, we realized how the ruling party is determined to remain in power using state resources to buy votes and undue influence on the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission.

Zimbabwe needs to return to the rule of law and legitimacy through free and fair elections. The last thing ZANU PF should do is clamor for term limits extension when President Mnangagwa's electoral victory in 2030 was discredited by election observer missions from SADC and the European Union. Given his disputed mandate, the First Secretary of ZANU PF should order his party members to abandon their ED2030 aspirations. Zimbabwe is a constitutional democracy where the will of the people is expressed through elections not party resolutions. We call on all reasonable ZANU PF members to convince your colleagues that the ED2030 agenda is against the supreme law of our land. We also call upon Parliament as separate pillar of the state to reclaim autonomy and hold the Executive in check. As lawmakers do not be coerced into endorsing the greatest illegality in the history of our country. In our view the church should also throw its voice of reason behind all patriotic efforts to stop President Mnangagwa from extending his term in office. Above all, we urge the media to play its normative role in holding the government to account. Our press should be free from control by the ruling elites.

We urge the ZANU PF regime to learn something from what has just transpired in Venezuela where a sitting president was surgically abducted from his residence by US troops. The former president and his wife are now prisoners in the United States of America. President Maduro's demise is largely due to betrayal by his inner circle and security aides. President Mnangagwa should know that all the people around him chanting slogans of loyalty will not stand with him during his hour of reckoning. They will sell him out for less than 30 pieces of silver. True security lies in legitimacy and genuine support from the people. History is awash with examples of unpopular regimes that fell when loyalty collapsed under the weight of economic meltdown. Authoritarian rule is fundamentally hollow. Loyalty purchased through patronage evaporates at the slightest rise in temperature. Ignore our free advice at your own peril Mr President.

Fellow Zimbabweans and compatriots in the struggle, let us revive our love for this great nation. Let us not give up on the founding principles of our liberation struggle. We managed to liberate ourselves from the racist colonial rule of Ian Smith's regime. We can also come together again to unshackle ourselves from ZANU PF misrule. We only need to find each other and forge a united front against the ruling party. We are soon going to invite all progressive Zimbabweans to partake in a national democratic convergence that will provide leadership for a national push against ZANU PF. We have suffered enough and our children's future is at stake. It is time for us to reclaim our country from tyranny and economic decay. Happy New Year to you all.