



# Zanu PF Congress: A grand exercise in self-delusion



Senator Obert Gutu

The recently held ZANU PF congress was indeed, an exercise in futility.

In some of my previous articles that covered the moribund state of the former ruling party, I have repeatedly stated that ZANU PF is mortally wounded to such an extent that only a miracle can save it from inevitable electoral annihilation by the resurgent and vibrant MDC led by Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai. During the past week, the nation was subjected to some form of tragi-comedy styled the ZANU PF 5th People's Congress.

It was a tragedy because of the sad atmosphere of deeply held factional positions and tribal politics that openly played themselves out at an occasion that was supposed to be a real and genuine political party congress.

Sad because one could not avoid sensing the feeling of utter hopelessness, dejection and resignation amongst members of the Emmerson Mnangagwa faction who were obviously outplayed and outmanouevred at this circus called a congress.

It was a comedy because of the sheer pleasure and comical relief one could get by simply observing grown-up men and women behaving in some very strange manner all in a desperate bid to push their factional agendas. Of course, there was comic relief in the use of electronic warfare in an attempt to

push certain positions particularly the short message campaign using mobile telephone technology.

This campaign was obviously aimed at influencing the delegates' choices during the plenary session at the congress. Alas, there was no plenary session at the congress! The whole act was stage-managed in such a manner that the genuine and legitimate concerns of the majority of the delegates were never entertained. That was vintage ZANU PF.

A political party congress should be an occasion to robustly debate and discuss a party's ideological ramifications as well as to design and articulate its development trajectory going forward. In addition, a congress should also be used as an occasion to choose a leadership that will be able to competently and effectively manage the party's affairs.

Where there is need, as was obviously the case in ZANU PF, a new leadership ought to have been chosen to try to extricate the former ruling party from the political wilderness where it is now domiciled.

The fact that ZANU PF dimly failed to use its congress as an opportunity to renew and re-invigorate itself is clear testimony to the conclusion that the former ruling party is now completely damaged goods which no right-thinking consumer can willingly buy. For what can one say about a party that goes out of its way to thwart internal democracy in a bid to push the selfish and in some cases, openly tribalistic agenda, of some political heavyweights.

One may ask, why were the delegates prevented from making nominations from the floor; even for candidates to occupy seats in the so-called presidium? Who knows what might have happened to the likes of John Nkomo and Simon Khaya Moyo if congress delegates had been granted their democratic right to nominate candidates from the floor.

It is quite possible that characters such as Oppah Muchinguri and Didymus Mutasa would have found themselves in the presidium if genuine democracy had been given a chance at the recently held ZANU PF congress. But we all know that democracy and ZANU PF are like parallel lines; they will never meet.

If ZANU PF so effectively thwarts democracy at its own congress, how can any sane person, therefore, expect such a party to practise democracy in its dealings with other organisations; particularly competing political parties?

A political party that hopelessly fails to renew its old and tired leadership at a congress should never be given the mandate to govern any democratic nation. Zimbabwe is too special to be relegated to the realms of failed states such as Somalia.

ZANU PF has perfected the art of rule by the elders otherwise known as gerontocracy. In any democratic and progressive nation, geriatrics are normally confined to less-demanding tasks and in some cases, they are even confined to retirement homes.

We should certainly respect our deserving elders but then it will be utter recklessness to burden our elders with the onerous task of running the affairs of state. Unlike ZANU PF, the MDC led by Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai has a youthful and focused leadership who obviously have a cutting edge. These are people in the prime of their lives who have both the physical and mental energy to take Zimbabwe to the next level.

Some of the resolutions passed at the ZANU PF congress fly in the face of the spirit of inclusivity which should be the hallmark of the transitional government presently running Zimbabwe.

For instance, the ZANU PF congress resolved that there should not be any more concessions to the MDC in the on-going talks until such a time that so-called illegal sanctions have been lifted. What sanctions? ZANU PF has desperately sought to use the "sanctions" red herring to confuse the people about what the global political agreement (GPA) entails.

Let the position be made abundantly clear that the MDC is not making any special and out-of-context demands at the on-going talks. What the MDC is simply demanding, and rightly so, is full and unconditional compliance with the GPA by all its signatories. Nothing more and nothing less. For instance, Gideon Gono and Johannes Tomana's appointments by Mr. Robert Mugabe were done in flagrant violation of the terms and conditions of the GPA that was solemnised in Harare on 15 September, 2008.

These two men's appointments were effected in late 2008, several weeks after the signing of the GPA. The mere fact that the other signatories to the GPA were never consulted when Mr. Robert Mugabe made these appointments is clear and unmitigated violation of the political agreement. It is, therefore, preposterous, naive and ill-informed for anyone to argue that Gono and Tomana should not be considered as issues in the on-going talks by the negotiators from the three political parties who are signatories to the GPA.

ZANU PF is mortally and fatally wounded. They can only resurrect themselves by resorting to thuggery and violence as they did after the MDC resoundingly won the March 29, 2008 harmonised local government, parliamentary and presidential elections.

Lest the people forget; Morgan Richard Tsvangirai thrashed Robert Mugabe in the March 29, 2008 presidential elections. If democracy had been allowed to prevail, Morgan Richard Tsvangirai should, by electoral right, be

the legitimate and lawful President of the Republic of Zimbabwe today.

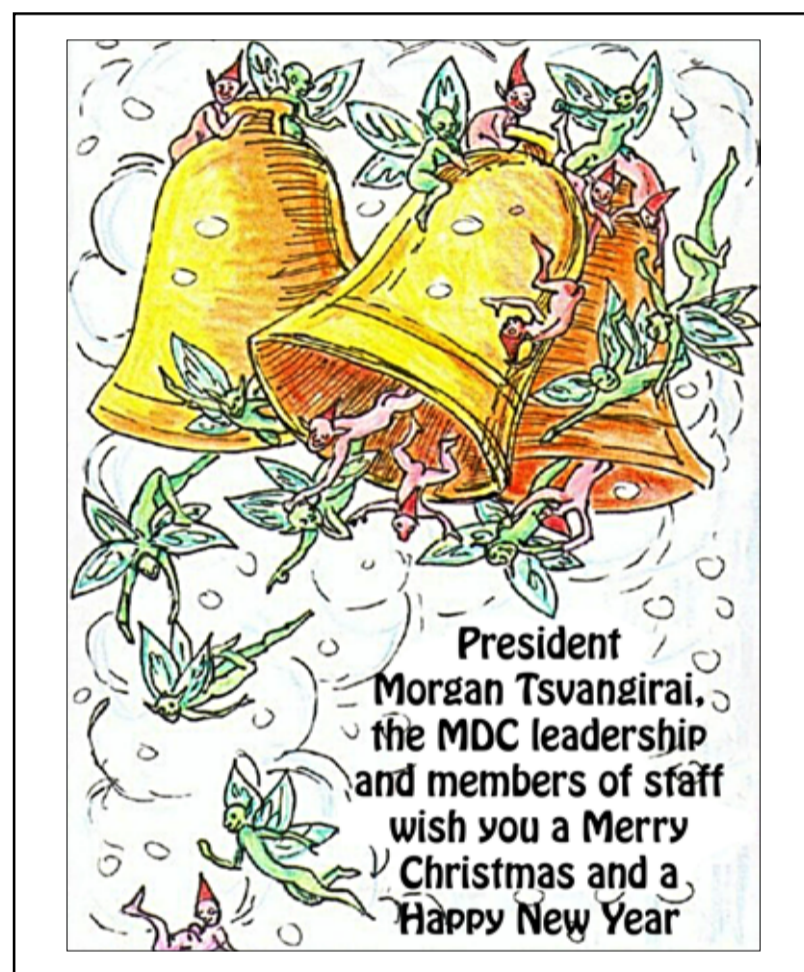
ZANU PF can huff and puff but the simple truth is that the people spoke on March 29, 2008. The people will speak again, more resoundingly this time, should free and fair elections be held right now or at any time in the future.

Mr. Robert Mugabe has promised that elections will soon be held to determine who should run matters of state in our beautiful little country called Zimbabwe. The people cannot wait to show Mr. Robert Mugabe and his moribund and faction-ridden party that they prefer to have Morgan Tsvangirai and the MDC as their custodians in running Zimbabwe.

ZANU PF has hopelessly failed to adapt to the dictates of modern-day developmental politics. It is not a matter of whether but rather, when ZANU PF will become extinct like the dinosaur.

Written by:

Senator Obert Gutu



## Letters to the Editor

### Monkey business

Dear Editor

Please take note of my interest, was that a congress or was it a circus? When we say that Zanu-PF is made up of thugs, people think we are being unreasonable. But did you all see the madness that was beamed live on national TV. It made good entertainment if I may say. How can pot bellied men, and women who look like mothers behave as monkeys? If at all there is anything to be picked out of the congress, it is the need for psycho-social support for Zanu-PF supporters. They are so lost in the middle of the 60's. We are no longer in war my brothers. This is the 21<sup>st</sup> century if you must know. The century of civilisation.

Where we talk out of situations, where we negotiate for a better package not coerce people through violent means to accept your ideology. Like a song we used to sing in primary school, *hatina kumbotukana pfungwa ndodzasiyana....* (loosely translated, we only differed in ideology, so don't take it as a fight)

Munashe

Harare

### Zanu-PFs resolutions pathetic

Dear Editor

To have Minister of Finance Tendai Biti in government as a resolution to some political party, at a congress is

pretty surprising. Is he such a threat to them that they make a resolution on him? Well, is it not sad that they were unable to get as much money as they had hoped for that they thought of postponing, then as a second thought, a whole minister intimidate beerhalls to get money for the congress. Shame on you Zanu-PF. It is about time you get real. Why fight over disagreements? At least those goons who attended the conference knows how it feels to be denied of what the majority wants. As for the money for inputs, where are they getting that money from? At least they have indeed shown us who is running a parallel government. A reminder, this is no longer a Zanu-PF government.

Mo transparency

Hwedza

### Merry Christmas

Dear Editor

Ten months since the MDC formed the transitional government and we have seen tremendous improvements in our lives. We might not have all that we wish for but at least we do have food on our tables. This Christmas is going to be different from last year's. At least we will have some rice, chicken, drinks and afford to buy our children some clothes and presents. At least now we are aware of what the MDC in government are capable. Thank you for giving us an early Christmas present. We have seen true leadership with a difference. Merry Christmas to you at MDC, we the people await real change. Thank you.

Muthulisi

Lobengula

### Never Give up

Dear Editor

We the people of Zimbabwe understand that it has been a long, winding and bumpy road in driving the democratic people's agenda, we therefore appeal to party leadership to remain strong and focused. The inclusive government is only but a stepping stone to a democratic Zimbabwe. We trust the MDC to deliver real change to the people of Zimbabwe. A Change that is real and trustworthy. 2009 has been a difficult year for our president but we want to thank him for remaining strong and continuing to serve the people of Zimbabwe.

Thubelihle

Gwanda

# No rates increases in 2010 – Bulawayo Mayor

BULAWAYO - The Mayor of Bulawayo Thaba Moyo has said the City Council will not scale up its US\$303million 2009 budget next year in order to cushion ratepayers from further increases.

Moyo however castigated the Minister of Local Government, Ignatius Chombo for the approval of council budgets, a move which in the end adversely affected council cash-inflows.

The mayor revealed that council would maintain the current rates and supplementary charges because residents were struggling to pay.

The 2009 budget was only approved on 23 October 2009.

“We are not increasing our tariffs because we want to create a situation where residents can afford to make full payments of the supplementary charges and rates before council increases tariffs,” Moyo said. “At the moment residents have been complaining about our current rates and we are saying there will be no increases in 2010.”

At his inauguration in October, Mayor Moyo said: “We are still making efforts to enforce change and provide for reasonable rates for residents in order to manage good services for the city of Bulawayo.

“We are sure that this will benefit tenants when it comes to their monthly rentals and it will also make budgeting a lot easier for Bulawayo residents as we are to maintain the status quo. Council has also decreased interest rates by nine percent from 19 percent and we anticipate a further decrease to a minimum of five percent,” the MDC Mayor said.

He however, urged residents to pay up their outstanding bills to avoid disconnection of services and to ensure reliable service delivery.

Commenting on the issue of dilapidated and idle buildings, Mayor Moyo said council was aware of unoccupied buildings but at the moment council does not have a policy in place to take over the premises. He however said



Bulawayo Mayor Thaba Moyo

plans were underway to draft a policy that would see to it that the city would benefit from the residential, commercial and industrial buildings in and around the Central Business District (CBD).

“We are saying we do not have a policy in place to repossess these buildings but council is saying that this is not the agreement of sale,” the Mayor said. “Industry should benefit industry if it

is an industrial infrastructure; same applies to residential and commercial business structures. These empty buildings should benefit the city.”

## MDC Ministers' Forum

### Stop using youths as ward co-ordinators - Traditional leaders

HARARE - Traditional leaders across the country have called for the urgent removal of Zanu PF youth coordinators at ward levels as they are causing tension and are responsible for violence in rural areas, the Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Hon. Sekai Holland has said.

Speaking to *The Changing Times* on Tuesday, Hon. Holland said in meetings that the Organ on National Healing and Reconciliation had held across the country with traditional leaders, the elders had called for the removal of Zanu PF ward coordinators as they were mainly responsible for the political violence that was taking place across the country.

“Although violence has been drastically reduced compared to last year, the traditional leaders that we have talked to felt that there was need for the removal of Zanu PF's youth coordinators. The leaders do not understand what they are doing in the communities and they are causing a lot of tension,” Hon. Holland said.

“We want our political parties to grow. We believe in multi-party democracy and the removal of violence and we need to destroy it permanently,” Hon. Holland said.

The Organ on National Healing and Reconciliation comprises three ministers from the three political parties that signed the Global Political Agreement (GPA).

It is responsible for “setting up of a mechanism to properly advise on what measures might be necessary and practicable to achieve national healing, cohesion and unity in respect of victims of pre and post independence political conflicts”.

Hon. Holland said due to the political violence that the country had faced since the attainment of independence in 1980; over 1 million Zimbabweans were in need of national healing.

Over 20 000 people were killed in the Matebeleland and part of the Midlands regions by State security agents between 1980 and 1987.



Minister of State in The Prime Minister's Office, Hon Sekai Holland

Another 500 MDC supporters were murdered by State security agents and Zanu PF supporters during the June 27 2008 run-up presidential election.

She said since the formation of her ministry in February, the organ had managed to meet people from all walks of life including traditional leaders, civil society members, experts and Zimbabweans in the Diaspora.

“One clear message we have been getting from the people is that they want their dignity to be restored. They want respect for one another and a corruption-free society,” she said.

“Another issue is that the people who were affected by politically-motivated violence are eager to have those who were involved in perpetrating the acts to be made accountable for their sins,” said Hon. Holland.

“People want the truth to be told to liberate the country. They also want justice to accompany the truth.”

The Organ has since approached the three principals in the inclusive government, MDC President and Zimbabwe Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, President Robert Mugabe and Arthur Mutambara briefing them on what the people on desire.

Hon. Holland also said her Organ was working in close liaison with other government ministries especially the ministries of Home Affairs, Defence and Media, Information and Publicity to create a violence-free society.

Hon. Holland also said traditional leaders felt that freedom fighters of the liberation struggle of Zimbabwe were being neglected by the government.

“The traditional leaders feel that war veterans for the struggle of Zimbabwe were living under squalid conditions. They could not access health, educate their children and most of them were living under squalid conditions,” said

Hon Holland, who is herself a war veteran.

She said as part of the national healing process there was need to re-look at the living conditions of the country's veterans of the liberation.

Turning to the statement she is alleged to have made in Maputo, Mozambique early this year, in which Hon. Holland was reported to have said that King Lobengula was involved in stealing cattle from the Shonas, the minister said she had approached traditional leaders in Matebeleland who were dealing with the issue at a higher level.

# Masvingo MP's brother brutally assaulted

CHIREDZI – Masvingo Central MP, Hon. Jefferson Chitando's brother Emmanuel Munyaradzi Chitando is battling for his life at Parirenyatwa Hospital in Harare after he was severely assaulted by war veterans and Zanu PF supporters last week and sustained serious facial injuries.

According to Hon. Chitando, Emmanuel, who is a teacher in

Chiredzi North, was approached by the Zanu PF thugs whilst on duty at the school and accused him of spreading hate language against Zanu PF.

The mob allegedly assaulted Emmanuel with whips and booted feet on the face and head. His eyes were badly injured as a result of the attack.

"We rushed him to Chiredzi hospital where he was immediately transferred

to Morgenster hospital due to the injuries sustained. From Morgenster, he was transferred to Parirenyatwa hospital in Harare and he is still in a critical state. He has already undergone two successive operations but his condition has not improved," said Hon. Chitando.

He added the attack was politically motivated and had been carried out

by renegades from Zanu PF who had been ostracised from the wave of political change.

"The incident is another deliberate ploy to grossly undermine the spirit of the GPA (Global Political Agreement). It shows that Zanu PF is not keen to embrace change. It was folly for the Zanu PF mob to attack and brutalise an

innocent teacher carrying his day to day duties," said Hon. Chitando.

The MP also urged political parties to be tolerant of divergent views in order to promote multiplicity of voices in the society.

"Multiple voices in the society help us to share ideas hence the enhancement of a democratic society," he said.

# President Tsvangirai urges councillors to shun corruption



President Tsvangirai addresses Harare Councillors

HARARE-Discipline in office and thriving to bring efficient and corruption-free service to the people of Harare should be the major mandate of MDC councillors, President Morgan Tsvangirai told Harare councillors.

Speaking at a councillors' caucus meeting held at the party headquarters at Harvest house on Wednesday, President Tsvangirai told city of Harare councillors to shun corruption as this was a cancer that needed to be rooted out of our society.

"Do not carry along bad habits. We want to weed out the cancer that has eaten much of society. We need to bring real change to the people, and that is achieved through honesty, integrity and good governance principles. Once we

do this, we can give back dignity to the people," President Tsvangirai said

The President told the councillors that the party will not hesitate to take action against corrupt councillors and other officials in the party. He said the MDC had zero-tolerance to corruption which leads to poor service delivery and short-changes ratepayers.

Speaking at the same meeting, Hon Chamisa said there was need to root out the bad apples so that we are able to move into the new Zimbabwe with a breed of people who want to serve the people.

"We want to make sure we chlorinate our councils of corrupt and shady activities," Hon Chamisa said. "We are a party of excellence and we won't hesitate to weed out those who want to

short-change the people for their own personal gain."

The Harare Mayor, Alderman Masunda, also took the occasion to encourage good corporate governance as a way to deliver real change.

"As long as we stand together to fight the ills of society, as long as we embrace good corporate governance, our road to bringing this city back to its status and more is not too far fetched," said Clr Masunda.

The caucus comes in the wake of suspensions and expulsions from the party of Chitungwiza mayor Israel Marange and other councillors for corruption.

The MDC is clear that anyone found dabbling in corruption will be expelled from the party.

## Zanu PF stifles Bindura council

BINDURA-The opposition Zanu PF in Bindura is stifling the work of the MDC-led town council which is working hard to deliver real change to the people.

Zanu PF, through the unelected Mashonaland Central governor Martin Dinha, is destabilising council activities and preventing democratically elected councillors from delivering service to the people of Bindura.

Early this month, the mayor of Bindura, Clr Daniso Wakatama, sourced seven tonnes of medicines to re-stock two council clinics from the Iranian embassy and food hampers for the old and the vulnerable. Dinha sent a letter to the Iranian ambassador cancelling the hand-over ceremony set for 7 December 2009, ostensibly because Zanu PF officials were attending their Congress, despite the fact that the opposition party had not sourced the supplies.

In November, Dinha visited the mayor at his offices and instructed

him to stop the construction vending stalls at a disused bus terminus.

The consistent meddling in council affairs and the prevention of development and service to the people is a typical Zanu PF demon which has to be exorcised from those who hold public office.

The MDC urges the inclusive government to decisively deal with so-called public officials who prevent democratically elected officials from delivering service to the people. The innocent people of Bindura have failed to access medicines simply because an arrogant and partisan governor thinks the Zanu PF Congress is more important than people's lives.

The MDC believes in delivering real change to the people of Zimbabwe. We believe in providing people with hope, dignity, security, freedom and prosperity.

Together to the end, marching to a new Zimbabwe.

## VP brings cheer to Chikurubi female inmates

HARARE- MDC Vice President and deputy Prime Minister, Hon Thokozani Khupe took time off on a Tuesday afternoon to have a Christmas lunch date with female inmates at Chikurubi female prison.

The lunch meeting, which came barely a week after she donated sanitary ware at the same institution, was highly appreciated by the inmates.

"We are very excited about you coming here. When the food came, we thought you were going to eat from the offices, but when you sat down to eat with us, we felt warm inside. That we have a fellow woman who does not look at us as outcasts. We are forever indebted to

you," said an ecstatic Rudo Maingani, one of the inmates at Chikurubi prisons.

Hon Khupe reminded them that being in prison does not make them less women.

"Just because you are in prison does not mean you cease to be women. I am so happy to have had this time with you".

The Deputy Minister of Justice, Hon Jessie Majome took the occasion to update the inmates on the Constitution-making process.

"We are in the process of drafting a new constitution. You have to be privy to these developments because there is life after prison," said Hon Majome.

The Christmas lunch meeting, was graced by 'father Christmas', with sweets for the children in prisons.

The Deputy Prime Minister is on a nationwide drive to empower women. Only last week, Hon Khupe was donating sanitary ware to prisons and hospitals across the country. The exercise saw her travelling to hospitals and prisons in Harare, Mutare, Masvingo, Gweru, Lupane and Bulawayo

Also present at the function were Women's Assembly chairperson Senator Rorana Dandajena, provincial women's executive members, Mashonaland region prisons doctor, Dr Nathaniel Mkanza and Senior Assistant Commissioner Wonder Chisora, the Prisons' officer commanding Mashonaland region.



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VP Khupe dishes out Christmas lunch to inmates at Chikurubi Prison