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Summary of Report

Elections & Governance

ZIMBABWE: Shut your mouth or else

For the past two months the members of the youth militia aligned to President Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF party - have been warning villagers to either shut up or support ZANU-PF's view on the new constitution, which includes no limit on the number of presidential terms that can be served. They have dubbed their operation "Vhara Muromo", or Shut Your Mouth.

Economy & Energy

Some Diamonds From Zimbabwe Field Cleared for Export

Human rights groups say they are partially satisfied with the recent agreement made by an international diamond monitor to allow Zimbabwe to export some of its precious stones mined from controversial fields.

Conflict Diamond Discussion in Deadlock Over Zimbabwe Exports

Opponents of a move to allow Zimbabwe diamonds to be certified as "conflict-free" held their ground during a meeting of the World Diamond Council in St. Petersburg, Russia. The dispute could limit the ability to regulate trade of the stones.

Diamond Industry Hopes for Approval of Zimbabwe Exports

Members of the World Diamond Council are meeting in St. Petersburg, Russia to discuss whether to allow the sale of diamonds from Zimbabwe's Marange fields. Gabe Joselow reports from Moscow the diamond industry hopes the Zimbabwe stones will be deemed "conflict-free."

Diamond Industry Debates Zimbabwe Certification

Important voices in the international diamond world are calling on the international regulator to certify Zimbabwe's so-called blood diamonds for export. An important meeting is taking place in the Russian Federation this week where Zimbabwe tries once again to get its controversial rough diamonds certified.

Human Rights, Social Issues & Developments

Suspected S. Africa Terre'blanche killer out on bail

A South African court on Wednesday released one of two black workers facing charges of killing white separatist Eugene Terre'blanche on 5,000 rand (\$663) bail, saying it did not see him as a flight risk.

In Brief: American Bar Association honours Zimbabwean lawyer

The American Bar Association (ABA) has decided to honour the feisty Zimbabwean lawyer, who has defended ordinary Zimbabweans, journalists and politicians, as the winner of the 2010 International Human Rights Award. Beatrice Mtetwa, human rights lawyer, was of the view that American Bar Association has decided to honour her because it draws attention to the fact.

AFRICA: Child witchcraft allegations on the rise

Accusations of child witchcraft are on the rise in sub-Saharan Africa - spurred on by urbanization, poverty, conflict and fragmenting communities, creating a "multi-crisis" for already vulnerable children - says the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

SWAZILAND: Children still share jail cells with adults

Swaziland's judiciary is concerned by an absence of detention facilities for children, which forces them to share jail cells with adult criminals.

UN Observes Nelson Mandela International Day

The United Nations General Assembly held a special meeting on Friday to honour former South African President Nelson Mandela in advance of his 92nd birthday. The U.N. General Assembly last year declared July 18th as Nelson Mandela International Day. It was set as a day to recognize contributions made by the former South African president to a culture of peace and freedom.

FIFA Praises World Cup Host South Africa

Senior officials of football's governing body (FIFA) have praised South Africa for the just concluded World Cup. South African officials are also expressing satisfaction, saying they hope to use the event to foster unity and social development.

Mandela Greets Fans Ahead of World Cup Final

Former South African president Nelson Mandela has made a brief appearance at the Soccer City stadium to greet fans ahead of the World Cup final in Johannesburg.

Food Security & Health Issues

ZIMBABWE: A third of children chronically malnourished

The prevalence of chronic malnutrition (in Zimbabwe) is now 33.8 percent, according to World Health Organisation standards, that means one in every three children is chronically malnourished - a significant public health threat, said George Kembo, director of the Zimbabwe Food and Nutrition Council. Only 8.4 percent of children under two years - meaning one in 10 children - is receiving a diet that is minimally acceptable.

Militancy

SOUTH AFRICA: Xenophobia given a red card

Xenophobic violence spiked in South Africa's Western Cape Province as the soccer world cup ended in a blaze of fireworks, and although it appears to have subsided, the fear of further attacks against foreign nationals still lingers.

Refugees/IDPs & Migration

S. Africa World Cup party gives way to migrant fears

Almost as soon as Spain defeated the Netherlands in Sunday's World Cup final, concerns flared about a relapse into attacks on migrants. President Jacob Zuma called on Thursday for "calm and unity" after reports African migrants were fleeing South Africa for fear of fresh xenophobic violence after the close of the World Cup soccer tournament.

S. Africa security forces move to protect migrants

South African security forces moved into townships in the Cape Town area on Monday to protect the migrants after attacks and threats against foreign migrant workers.

ZIMBABWE: Fear drives migrants home

Since the final game on 11 July there have been numerous attacks on foreign nationals and their businesses, mainly in Western Cape Province. The Forced Migration Studies Programme (FMSP) of the University of the Witwatersrand, in Johannesburg, estimates that 1.2 million Zimbabweans live in South Africa, mostly arriving in the past decade after their country's economy collapsed. But now, these xenophobic attacks have forced them to leave South Africa and to return back to their home country.

Peace keeping conflict resolution and security analysis

South African Police Take Measures to Protect Foreigners

The South African government says it is taking measures to address threats of violence against foreigners. South African police have stepped up patrols in several impoverished communities after some foreign-owned shops were looted and hundreds of foreigners reported being threatened with violence if they do not leave the country.

Detailed Report

Elections & Governance

ZIMBABWE: Shut your mouth or else

(IRIN)

12 July 2010

RUSHINGA, 12 July 2010 (IRIN) - Jairos Mukotosi, 50, is avoiding a team of consultants, sent as part of a parliamentary outreach programme to the Rushinga area of rural Mashonaland Central Province in northeastern Zimbabwe, to find out what people would like included in a proposed new constitution.

But for the past two months the members of the youth militia aligned to President Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF party - have been warning villagers to either shut up or support ZANU-PF's view on the new constitution, which includes no limit on the number of presidential terms that can be served. They have dubbed their operation "Vhara Muromo", or Shut Your Mouth.

Mugabe has ruled since independence from Britain in 1980 and the new constitution will replace the Lancaster House agreement, which has been amended 19 times. In 2008 ZANU-PF lost its parliamentary majority for the first time since independence, and Mugabe nearly lost the presidential poll outright.

Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), withdrew from the run-off election in protest over the high levels of political violence and intimidation. The MDC claimed that more than 4,000 people were killed, although the official figure is a hundred or so.

"I am a victim of the June 2008 elections and still live in fear," Mukotosi told IRIN. "Even though we were living in peace following the formation of the inclusive government [in February 2009, when ZANU-PF and the two factions of the MDC formed a coalition government], the ghost of violence and fear is returning."

ZANU-PF wants a draft constitution, commonly referred to as the Kariba Draft, to be adopted. Apart from placing no limit on presidential terms, it also gives the president wide-ranging powers.

"I am not taking any chances; these militia stole and killed my cattle because they thought I was a member of the MDC, since my son works in Harare [the capital, an MDC stronghold]. Now I will not participate in the constitution-making process because they might kill me and my family this time," he said.

Mashonaland Central Province is a traditional ZANU-PF stronghold, but wavered in its support for Mugabe in the 2008 elections. Mukotosi said the militia were re-establishing

the torture camps set up then, and forcing villagers to attend political rallies that ZANU-PF activists call "political orientation" meetings.

At these meetings "we are reminded of what happened in 2008", and "warned that those that escaped with maiming will die if they support imperialist views, like legalising homosexuality and advocating for the post of a prime minister [currently held by Tsvangirai]". Mukotosi said the militia recently assaulted two young men for wearing anti-violence T-shirts donated by a non-governmental organisation.

A villager from Magaranhewe, near Rushinga, about 200km from Harare, told IRIN the army presence in the province was increasing. "Two of the soldiers are our sons from this village, and when they returned we thought they were on leave," said Samuel Mukarati, 43.

"However, they are always in uniform and team up with their colleagues from the barracks next to Rushinga police station to patrol the villages. Nobody has been beaten up yet, but we fear there could be violence because this is how things happened in 2008."

He said because of fear, few people were attending the constitutional outreach programmes spearheaded by parliament, and that the youth militia were approaching villagers to check whether they held ZANU-PF membership cards.

The Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP), a human rights watchdog, noted that the expectation of elections taking place next year and the deployment of teams consulting on a new constitution were stoking political tension.

Election talk

"President Robert Mugabe's announcement of possible elections in 2011, compounded by speculations that the Constitution Parliamentary Select Committee [COPAC] consultations were to commence at the end of April or early May 2010, has given rise to political tensions in the different provinces as political parties jostle to control the events and views on the constitution," the ZPP said in a recent statement.

Douglas Mwonzora, an MDC parliamentarian and co-chairperson of the constitutional parliamentary committee, told Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR): "We have heard reports of intimidation, but we hope the police are ready to deal with those unruly elements behind it, so that the outreach programme is finished on time."

The ZANU-PF co-chairperson of the committee, Munyaradzi Mangwana, who is also a parliamentarian, told local media there were no cases of violence related to the constitution consultation process.

ZLHR spokesperson Kumbirai Mafunda told IRIN his organisation and the Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) would send observers to monitor the constitutional consultations.

Economy & Energy

Some Diamonds From Zimbabwe Field Cleared for Export

(Voice of America)

16 July 2010

Human rights groups say they are partially satisfied with the recent agreement made by an international diamond monitor to allow Zimbabwe to export some of its precious stones mined from controversial fields.

Officials with Partnership Africa Canada says they welcome the agreement's condition that Zimbabwe make improvements in its diamond-mining practices if it wants to sell more than the two batches of the gems.

Under the deal reached during a meeting of the World Diamond Council in St. Petersburg, Russia, Zimbabwe can export two batches of rough-cut stones through September 1.

But Partnership Africa Canada is calling for more controls in the months ahead. It says the deal averted a crisis concerning international sales of Zimbabwean diamonds, but the country must still prove its credibility in the future.

After the agreement was reached, officials with Human Rights Watch said the Kimberley Process itself needs urgent reform to ensure that no more so-called "blood diamonds" are sold.

The Kimberley Process oversees a certification program to ensure that diamonds sold on world markets are not used to finance armed conflicts. Human rights groups claim that in Zimbabwe, government forces control the controversial Marange diamond fields and commit human rights violations there.

A Kimberley Process review team will visit Zimbabwe next month to oversee all aspects of production of rough stones from Marange and ensure the country is complying with the new agreement. The Kimberley Process' Zimbabwe monitor, South African Frank Chikane, criticized by human rights campaigners for recently clearing Marange diamonds for export, will now have to share his responsibilities with a civil rights group, which must still to be appointed.

Human rights groups lobbied hard last year for Zimbabwe to be suspended from the Kimberley Process.

Both President Robert Mugabe and his Minister of Mines, Obert Mpofu, had said that Zimbabwe would ignore any restrictions on its diamond sales.

However, after the meeting in St. Petersburg, mines minister Mpofu said Zimbabwe would adhere to the agreement.

The issue of whether to allow Zimbabwe to export diamonds from the Marange field has deeply divided Kimberley Process members, who represent governments, advocacy groups and the industry.

At a meeting last month in Tel Aviv, the group hit a stalemate on whether to resume exports. African countries, as well as India, Russia and others, advocated lifting of the ban on Zimbabwe diamonds, in line with a recommendation from a Kimberley Process diamond monitor who recently visited the country. But the United States, Canada and human rights groups resisted the idea.

Zimbabwe has been under investigation for allowing the military to control the Marange diamond field, as well as permitting diamond smuggling and illegal panners, mostly locals, in the unregulated area.

In November, the Kimberley Process suspended sales of Marange diamonds until improvements could be made.

Mining experts have estimated that Zimbabwe's diamond fields are likely the biggest deposits found in Africa since the Kimberley fields were discovered in neighboring South Africa nearly 150 years ago. The mines ministry says it already has about \$1.7 billion worth of diamonds ready to be sold. Zimbabwe's total international debt is estimated at around \$5.5 billion.

Conflict Diamond Discussion in Deadlock Over Zimbabwe Exports

(Voice of America)

15 July 2010

Opponents of a move to allow Zimbabwe diamonds to be certified as "conflict-free" held their ground during a meeting of the World Diamond Council in St. Petersburg, Russia. The dispute could limit the ability to regulate trade of the stones.

Members of the diamond industry, governments and civil groups met for a second day this week to try to come to a consensus on whether to approve raw diamonds from Zimbabwe's Marange fields to be exported and sold.

Parties involved in the talks are members of the Kimberley Process - an initiative to ensure the diamonds sold in markets around the world are not used to finance rebel groups warring against legitimate governments.

The broad majority supports certification for Marange diamonds, saying they meet the minimum requirements, and the diamond trade could help Zimbabwe's faltering economy.

But the opposition argues government forces that control the Marange fields are committing human-rights violations there.

The complaint does not exactly fit the Kimberley criteria for "conflict diamonds", but members of the industry say the issue should still be sorted out under the authority of the Kimberley Process.

World Diamond Council vice president, Sergey Oulin, the host of the St. Petersburg meeting, says if the Kimberley Process fails to resolve this situation, it would be its biggest failure in history.

Kimberley participants met previously on this issue in June, but failed to reach unanimous consent needed for certification.

Oulin says if they do not find a compromise solution, they will lose any authority they have over the situation.

He says the question is whether we participate in that process as active members, or allow natural events to resolve it for us; then we will just have to follow the outcome, and our opinion will not matter.

One possible outcome is that Zimbabwe will trade the diamonds without Kimberley certification, as President Robert Mugabe has promised to do.

Diamond Industry Hopes for Approval of Zimbabwe Exports

(Voice of America)

14 July 2010

Members of the World Diamond Council are meeting in St. Petersburg, Russia to discuss whether to allow the sale of diamonds from Zimbabwe's Marange fields. Gabe Joselow reports from Moscow the diamond industry hopes the Zimbabwe stones will be deemed "conflict-free."

Diamond industry leaders, government officials and human rights group monitors held a closed-door meeting in St. Petersburg to discuss disagreement over a ban on Zimbabwe's rough diamonds.

Talks are taking place through Thursday at the seventh annual meeting of the World Diamond Council. Participants hope the discussions will be productive, after a meeting two weeks ago in Tel Aviv, Israel ended without agreement.

At issue is whether diamonds from the Marange fields in Zimbabwe meet the requirements of the Kimberley Process - an initiative by governments, industry and civil groups to certify diamonds as "conflict free." That means they were not sold to finance rebel groups warring against legitimate governments.

Alex Popov, president of the Moscow Diamond Bourse and a member of the World Diamond Council says the diamond industry hopes the ban on sales from Zimbabwe is lifted.

"We hope that a solution will be found to allow Zimbabwe diamonds from these two particular mines who [sic] have been cleared by the Kimberley Process moderator to enter the main stream of trade," Popov said.

As he notes, a South African monitor from the Kimberley Process recently reported Zimbabwe's Marange fields meet the minimum requirements for certification, though they failed a previous inspection.

But some governments, including the United States, continue to voice opposition as rights groups accuse Zimbabwean government forces that control the fields of committing acts of violence and other abuses there.

Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe has warned he will allow the diamonds to be exported with or without Kimberley Process approval, a prospect that worries many in the diamond industry, including Alex Popov.

"Zimbabwe has a very, very sizable amount of raw diamonds, and if these deposits will be left to uncontrolled trade, we will see very big damage to the diamond and jewelry industry," Popov said.

Zimbabwe is estimated to hold up to 25 percent of the world's diamonds. The country hopes the sale of the valuable gems will help revive its struggling economy.

Diamond Industry Debates Zimbabwe Certification

(Voice of America)

14 July 2010

Important voices in the international diamond world are calling on the international regulator to certify Zimbabwe's so-called blood diamonds for export. An important meeting is taking place in the Russian Federation this week where Zimbabwe tries once again to get its controversial rough diamonds certified.

Officials from the Kimberley Process, which was created to end trade in diamonds used to fund conflict and war, are discussing Zimbabwe's controversial rough stones with members of the World Diamond Council in St. Petersburg.

Before the meeting, Zimbabwe Mines Minister Obert Mpofu said Zimbabwe had complied with Kimberley Process requirements, so rough stones from the Marange area in southeastern Zimbabwe should be certified for export.

Mpofu is from the ZANU-PF Party, and he was supported by Finance Minister Tendai Biti, from the Movement for Democratic Change Party. Biti says Zimbabwe's 16-month-

old inclusive government desperately needs revenue from diamonds to revive the country's ailing economy. He said last week that Zimbabwe's rough stones from Marange, could not be classified as 'blood diamonds.'

Biti said the government has received no income from illegal sales of Marange diamonds and certification would provide income and exercise some control of the exploitation of the alluvial diamond fields, which have a relatively short production life.

International Diamond Manufacturers President Moti Ganz said in Moscow the Marange stones should be certified because this would improve Zimbabwean lives. He said without immediate certification of the rough stones the diamond market would be flooded with Zimbabwe stones, which would cause "catastrophe" in the diamond trade during a recession.

Ganz and others estimate the Marange stones could account for a quarter of all the world's diamonds.

In parliament Tuesday, President Robert Mugabe again said Zimbabwe would sell its Marange stones regardless of the verdict of the Kimberley Process.

Human Rights Watch and the group Partnership Africa Canada say the Kimberley Process monitor responsible for Zimbabwe has ignored gross human-rights abuses in the Marange area. The human-rights groups say the diamond fields have been "militarized" by Mr. Mugabe's security chiefs.

Several diamond analysts in Israel, which presently chairs the Kimberley Process, say smuggled Zimbabwe diamonds have been sold in India for cutting and polishing. The origin of a cut stone is impossible to establish.

Human Rights, Social Issues & Developments

Suspected S. Africa Terre'blanche killer out on bail

(Reuters)

14 July 2010

(Reuters) - A South African court on Wednesday released one of two black workers facing charges of killing white separatist Eugene Terre'blanche on 5,000 rand (\$663) bail, saying it did not see him as a flight risk.

Chris Mahlangu, 28, a gardener at Terre'blanche's farm, and a 15-year-old -- not identified for legal reasons -- were charged with the April murder that highlighted continuing racial tensions 16 years after the end of the apartheid system that Terre'blanche had fought to preserve.

A magistrate court ruled Mahlangu had cooperated with police and saw no likelihood that he would avoid trial, the South African Press Association reported.

"Naturally we are disappointed with the ruling but we respect it," Mthunzi Mhaga, a spokesman for the National Prosecuting Authority, told Reuters.

The 15-year-old accused of killing Terre'blanche has been declared fit to stand trial and did not apply for bail.

Terre'blanche was a prominent figure during the dying years of apartheid but then lived in relative obscurity, particularly since his release in 2004 after serving a prison sentence for beating a black man nearly to death.

Terre'blanche was hacked to death and two black workers from his farm were charged with the killing that many at first worried could have sparked racial violence.

Police said the motive for the crime was likely unpaid wages rather than anything political. The case served as a reminder of the bitter country's divisions, but did little to fan the flames of racial strife in the country now dubbed the "Rainbow Nation."

In Brief: American Bar Association honours Zimbabwean lawyer

(IRIN)

19 July 2010

JOHANNESBURG, 19 July 2010 (IRIN) - "Things are not all right in Zimbabwe," said human rights lawyer Beatrice Mtetwa, delighted that the American Bar Association (ABA) has decided to honour her because it draws attention to the fact.

The ABA announced that the feisty lawyer, who has defended ordinary Zimbabweans, journalists and politicians, as the winner of the 2010 International Human Rights Award.

"People assume that there has been an inclusive government in place in Zimbabwe for the past 18 months, but there has been no restoration of the rule of law," she told IRIN. "The award has inspired me."

Morgan Tsvangirai's opposition Movement for Democratic Change formed a unity government with President Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF in 2009, after violent elections in which ZANU-PF lost its majority in parliament for the first time since independence from Britain in 1980.

Mtetwa has worked for more than 20 years to protect press freedom from government restrictions that have threatened media independence and all opposing speech in Zimbabwe.

"The award was created with the knowledge that in many countries with repressive regimes, the regime is less likely to take retaliatory action against a human rights

advocate if the advocate has received international recognition," said an ABA press release.

Past recipients include the well-known Sudanese human rights lawyer Salih Mahmoud Osman, who spent over two decades providing free legal representation to victims arbitrarily detained, tortured, and subjected to serious human rights abuses in Sudan.

AFRICA: Child witchcraft allegations on the rise

(IRIN)

16 July 2010

DAKAR, 16 July 2010 (IRIN) - Accusations of child witchcraft are on the rise in sub-Saharan Africa - spurred on by urbanization, poverty, conflict and fragmenting communities, creating a "multi-crisis" for already vulnerable children - says the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

A wide spectrum of children are at risk, including orphans, street-children, albinos, those with physical disabilities or abnormalities such as autism, those with aggressive or solitary temperaments, children who are unusually gifted; those who were born prematurely or in unusual positions, and twins.

Broadly-speaking, the notion of sorcery can be translated as the ability to harm someone through the use of "mystical power".

Most of the accused are boys and most aged 8-14, says the report, *Children Accused of Witchcraft; an anthropological study of contemporary practices in West Africa*

Some of the countries with the highest prevalence rates include Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Nigeria, according to the report.

No comprehensive study has been undertaken to indicate the extent of the phenomenon, says Joachim Theis, UNICEF's child protection adviser in West Africa. However, according to discrete studies, "thousands" of children have been accused of witchcraft and subsequently thrown out of their homes in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi in the DRC; Mbanza Kongo capital of Zaire Province, Uige and Luanda in northern Angola; and a large number in Akwa Ibom state in southeastern Nigeria.

Accused children end up being attacked, burned, beaten, and sometimes killed, according to the researchers. Exorcisms can include forcing children to fast; pouring petrol into children's eyes or ears, beatings and being forced to swallow various substances. Many confessions are extracted under duress or violence, says the report.

Modern phenomenon

Contrary to wide-held perceptions in the West, child witchcraft in Africa is not an ancient “African tradition” but a relatively modern phenomenon dating back 10-20 years, says report author Aleksandra Cimpric. Before this, elderly people, and particularly women, tended to be accused.

The increase in accusations seems partly associated with the growing economic burden of raising children, linked to urbanization, separation of families and the weakening of family structures, says UNICEF's Theis; it is reinforced by the emergence of Pentecostal or revivalist churches in many of the affected countries.

Exploitative pastor-prophets claiming to be able to identify witches and offering exorcisms provide additional legitimization for witchcraft accusations. Their lucrative vocation complements the work of traditional healers, who also fight against the malevolent forces of the “other world”, the report noted. In a televised case in Nigeria, “Bishop” Sunday Ulup Ay in Akwa Ibom state in the southeast made a personal fortune through exorcisms, charging \$261 per child. He has since been arrested.

Sorcery in Africa is not a uniform belief, says Theis. “It has spiritual, economic and social drivers... It gets blurred with all sorts of other beliefs, but it cannot always be put into one box.”

Protecting children

Child protection agencies cannot try to shape beliefs in witchcraft but must take a strict child protection approach to combat accusations, says Theis: “We’re not trying to eradicate a belief in witchcraft that we cannot necessarily understand. But we are saying violence and abuse against children is wrong and must stop, and we must use every method to stop it.”

He continued: “We can use some of the same methods we’ve already developed to address other forms of violence and abuse against children.” Many accused children are abandoned street children and require the same kind of rehabilitation and reintegration as they do, he said.

Some of the methods proven to work - as played out in Katanga Province, in southern DRC - include raising awareness among (and by) communities; negotiating with families, children and religious leaders on individual cases; finding allies in local churches who can help spread the word; providing services for vulnerable children; and enforcing the law; according to UNICEF.

Putting in place better basic services to cater for children’s needs and helping to strengthen the protective structure of the family can also reduce the risks associated with witchcraft accusations, says the report.

Legislation

Rather than legislation to protect children, in Cameroon, CAR, Chad and Gabon practicing witchcraft is outlawed, leading, in CAR's case, to a large number of child witchcraft cases being brought to the family courts. Many of the children end up in prison.

"We want laws against accusations of witchcraft against children," Theis told IRIN. "It may not be possible to change attitudes, but we can raise awareness among families, legal professionals, doctors, change legislation, mobilize - all of this can have an impact... Witchcraft beliefs were deeply entrenched in Western countries for many years, and take a long time to disappear," said Theis.

SWAZILAND: Children still share jail cells with adults

(IRIN)

14 July 2010

MBABANE, 14 July 2010 (IRIN) - Swaziland's judiciary is concerned by an absence of detention facilities for children, which forces them to share jail cells with adult criminals.

"Do we have facilities for keeping a minor?" enquired presiding High Court judge Thomas Masuku during the recent trial of a 16-year-old boy, when it became apparent that the accused was being held in the same cell as adults in the northern town of Pigg's Peak.

"Why should children be kept with adults? It is not right for children to be kept in custody [in such circumstances]. I have to repeat it over and over," Masuku said from the bench.

Correctional Services spokesman Luke Malindzisa acknowledged that two minors - one aged 16 and the other aged 17 - were being held contrary to prison regulations at Pigg's Peak. "Under normal circumstances that is not supposed to be the case," he said.

"In every correctional institution there must be a wing to cater for minors before being convicted and taken to Mdutjane Juvenile Centre, and another wing for female offenders before they are convicted and taken to Mawelawela [Women's prison] if found guilty," Malindzisa said.

Swaziland's HIV/AIDS infection rate - the highest in the world - is reflected in the 12 or so detention and prison facilities scattered throughout the landlocked country.

"What is worrying is that children are vulnerable to being molested and abused by adult criminals, which is why they must be separated," Save the Children spokesman Elizabeth Kgololo told IRIN.

"I have raised this point again and again in the press and on the radio - the need for special facilities for minors under arrest and incarcerated for crimes. The police and the correctional services are not happy that I belabour this point, but something has to be done," she said.

Lack of will

"These boys and girls are being housed for long periods of time with hardened adult criminals," Kgololo pointed out. Although the law caters for children to be confined separately, "the lack of political will" meant this was not a reality.

"They always say there is not enough money, but it seems there is always enough money to do other things - for example, children and women are taken to court in the same vans as hardened adult male criminals; the fact that men and women travel together this way is bad enough," she commented.

"Children must be fetched at the children's remand facility and taken to court by police officers, and not be kept with adults on the excuse that those [adult prison] cells are closer to the courts," Kgololo insisted.

Child welfare activists said children accused of perpetrating crimes, and even those convicted of crimes, warranted special treatment. "Some of us believe that prisons are for reform and not just punishment, and young people are the best to be corrected," Joyce Ngwane, a part-time teacher and abused children's counsellor in the commercial hub, Manzini, told IRIN.

"They have their whole lives ahead of them," she said. "No one who is not yet convicted of a crime should suffer punishment, which is what is happening to the child defendants who are housed with adult criminals."

UN Observes Nelson Mandela International Day

(Voice of America)

16 July 2010

The United Nations General Assembly held a special meeting Friday to honour former South African President Nelson Mandela in advance of his 92nd birthday.

The U.N. General Assembly last year declared July 18th as Nelson Mandela International Day. It was set as a day to recognize contributions made by the former South African president to a culture of peace and freedom. At the General Assembly's first observance of the day, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, in recorded remarks, that when he met Nelson Mandela, he was struck by his charisma and charm.

But, Mr. Ban added, he was most impressed by his humility. "Nelson Mandela's accomplishments came at great personal cost to himself and his family. His sacrifice not only served the people of his own nation, South Africa, but made the world a better place

for all people everywhere. Today, on the first Nelson Mandela International Day, we thank him for everything that he has done for freedom, for justice, for democracy. He showed the way. He changed the world. We are profoundly grateful," he said.

Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, South Africa's minister of international relations, told the General Assembly that Nelson Mandela's birthday is observed in South Africa by people devoting time to community service. "This service to humanity is what defines the United Nations. By celebrating Mandela Day, we are reaffirming our commitment to the values and mission for which the United Nations was established," he said.

At a news conference, the South African foreign minister urged U.N. member states to secure a non-permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council for South Africa in the years 2011-2012.

Speaking at the General Assembly on behalf of the United States, Ambassador Brooke Anderson said South Africa, once seen as the world's epitome of racism, has now become its paragon of reconciliation.

"Sometimes it takes great leaders to remind us of the truths that we hold self evident. Nelson Mandela is such a leader, and we are fortunate to walk the earth in his days. We hope that this day in his honor will remind all our citizens of his towering, healing and joyful example. When he won his country's first free election on May 2, 1994, then President-Elect Nelson Mandela called the birth of democracy in South Africa a small miracle. It was indeed a miracle, but there was nothing small about it. For that great gift, on behalf of the United States, let me simply say, Mandiba, we thank you," she said.

Nelson Mandela's 92nd birthday is on Sunday.

FIFA Praises World Cup Host South Africa

(Voice of America)

12 July 2010

Senior officials of football's governing body have praised South Africa for the just concluded World Cup. South African officials are also expressing satisfaction, saying they hope to use the event to foster unity and social development.

The president of the international football federation, Sepp Blatter, Monday complimented the South African government for meeting its obligations and the South African people for their warm hospitality during the World Cup.

"I would also like to give a compliment to Africa as a continent because Africa has proven that really they can organize this World Cup," he said. "They can organize a big competition. And as I said at the very beginning, it is a question of trust and confidence."

The month-long tournament ended Sunday night with Spain's national team hoisting the coveted trophy after defeating the Netherlands, 1-0.

Football's world governing body, or FIFA, said the 64 matches drew more than three million fans, the third largest turnout after the United States in 1994 and Germany four years ago.

More than six million people visited fan parks during the matches, and an estimated 750 million television viewers around the world watched the final.

Critics had feared that South Africa's high crime rate and lack of public transportation would mar the event, but it went off without any major problems.

FIFA Secretary-General Jerome Valke praised the security forces for their work.

"They have done even more than what people were expecting," he said. "I mean there was not a single incident, nothing which put at risk the World Cup during all 32 days."

The most serious incident occurred when some 600 fans were unable to attend the quarter-final match in Durban because of bad weather and congestion at its new airport.

Several dozen cases of petty crime were reported, including several robberies of visiting football teams and journalists. These were dealt with by special courts which handed out severe penalties to the guilty.

No cases of murder, rape or hooliganism were reported.

Asked about the bomb attack in Uganda that killed more than 70 people who were watching the World Cup final, Blatter said it could not be directly linked to the event but should be condemned regardless of its motive.

South African President Jacob Zuma went on national television to congratulate the nation.

"We did it. It is an emotional moment for this 16-year-old nation which has only recently emerged from the horrors of apartheid," he said. "We have been able to show the world that we have what it takes to compete with the best, united in our diversity."

He noted that the government had worked with the private sector in organizing the World Cup and said the experience would help efforts to boost employment, education and health services.

"We are sad that it is ending, but we are smiling because it went so well," he said. "Yesterday was the final, but it was definitely not the end. It was the beginning of a better future for South Africa and Africa."

He praised the spirit of the foreign fans, saying the Cup was the start of a lifelong friendship and invited them all to return.

Mandela Greet Fans Ahead of World Cup Final

(Voice of America)

11 July 2010

Former South African president Nelson Mandela has made a brief appearance at the Soccer City stadium to greet fans ahead of the World Cup final in Johannesburg.

The 91-year-old anti-apartheid leader and his wife broadly smiled and waved to the tens of thousand of fans as they were driven around the field in a small golf cart. The appearance, which lasted just a few minutes, was Mr. Mandela's first at the World Cup.

Earlier, Mr. Mandela's grandson, Mandla Mandela, accused FIFA of exerting "extreme pressure" on the former president to attend the World Cup final and called football's governing body "inconsiderate" because the family is still in mourning.

Mr. Mandela skipped the opening game of the World Cup following the death of his great-granddaughter. Thirteen-year-old Zenani Mandela was killed in a car accident while returning home from the World Cup opening concert.

This is the first World Cup hosted by an African nation.

Food Security & Health Issues

ZIMBABWE: A third of children chronically malnourished

(IRIN)

16 July 2010

HARARE, 16 July 2010 (IRIN) - Tinashe, a single mother of three living in Mbare township in Harare, the Zimbabwean capital, regularly misses a meal so as to stretch her US\$90 a month income, and occasionally gives her children food left over from her employers' meals at the middle-class household where she is a domestic worker.

"My children are at the stage when they should be growing tall, but that is not the case - they are underweight," said Tinashe, who did not want her surname used. Her wages pay the rent and the school fees, but there is never enough money to put regular meals on the table, she told IRIN.

Many households endure the same experience. "Nearly 12,000 child deaths each year may be attributable to maternal and child under-nutrition", the latest Zimbabwe Food and National Nutrition Survey noted.

The survey was produced by the UN Children's Agency (UNICEF), the UN World Food Programme (WFP), the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the British government's Department for International Development (DFID), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), and Helen Keller International, which works to prevent malnutrition and blindness.

"The prevalence of chronic malnutrition is now 33.8 percent and, according to World Health Organisation standards, that means one in every three children is chronically malnourished - a significant public health threat," said George Kembo, director of the Zimbabwe Food and Nutrition Council. "Only 8.4 percent of children under two years - meaning one in 10 children - is receiving a diet that is minimally acceptable."

UNICEF's country representative, Peter Salama, said in terms of the survey more than a third of Zimbabwe's children under the age of five were chronically malnourished and consequently suffering from stunted growth. Children in rural areas were found to be more affected by malnutrition than those living in urban areas.

"The data emerging from the survey provides irrefutable evidence of the magnitude of the problem of malnutrition in Zimbabwe. These levels of malnutrition are unacceptably high. They represent not only a challenge to reaching our development goals, but will also constrain economic growth," he said.

The survey did not expect the country to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), set by the UN, of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, and reducing child mortality, unless the prevailing situation changed.

A range of factors contributed to malnutrition. "Exclusive breastfeeding is considered the cornerstone of child survival and development. If universally practised by over 80 percent of the population, it can result in 13 percent reduction of under five mortality," Kembo said.

Sanitation

Harare's sanitation woes remain a vexed issue. In recent years poor maintenance of the sewerage and water reticulation systems, and unaffordable water purifying chemicals, have been blamed for outbreaks of cholera, a waterborne disease, that have claimed the lives of thousands of people.

Residents have consistently complained that they were charged for water that was either not delivered or unsafe to drink, and have subsequently refused to pay their water bills.

The mayor of Harare, Muchadeyi Masunda, told IRIN the city would be forced to disconnect water supplies for non-payment of bills, because there was "nothing for nothing".

It is a circular argument. Masunda said residents had to settle their accounts, so the city could purchase water treatment chemicals, in order to supply safe drinking water.

Militancy

SOUTH AFRICA: Xenophobia given a red card

(IRIN)

13 July 2010

JOHANNESBURG, 13 July 2010 (IRIN) - Xenophobic violence spiked in South Africa's Western Cape Province as the soccer world cup ended in a blaze of fireworks, and although it appears to have subsided, the fear of further attacks against foreign nationals still lingers.

According to media reports, "a number" of shops owned by foreign nationals in townships close to Cape Town were razed and looted on 11 July, and about 120 people sought refuge at police stations overnight but had since left, Daniella Ebeneze, of the province's disaster management department, told IRIN.

"The South African Police ... have indicated that the situation is under control and that they are maintaining a high visibility in the most vulnerable areas," the Provincial Disaster Management Centre said in a statement.

A Ghanaian man was accosted and shot dead on 12 July in Gugulethu township, but police would not comment on whether the killing was an act of xenophobia.

"Initial reports suggest police responded quickly and well" to outbreaks of xenophobic violence in the province, an approach that "addresses the sense of impunity of [xenophobic] perpetrators," said Duncan Breen, an advocacy officer for the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa, an NGO promoting and protecting the rights of refugees and migrants.

Persistent rumours circulated ahead of South Africa hosting the soccer world cup, saying that after the final game there would be a reprise of the 2008 attacks against foreign nationals, when about 62 people were killed and more than 100,000 displaced.

The Forced Migration Studies Programme (FMSP) at the University of the Witwatersrand estimates there are about 1.6 to 2 million foreign-born residents in South Africa, out of a population of 48 million. The FMSP estimates that there are about 1.2 million Zimbabweans living in South Africa.

According to a June 2010 FMSP policy brief: "While [xenophobia is] not a direct cause of violence, widespread anti-outsider sentiments serve as a resource for ethnic, economic, and political entrepreneurs and criminals.

"Outsiders can easily become scapegoats for economic hardship and are vulnerable to robbery and attack because they lack documentation, often carry cash due to banking barriers, and are less likely to have the support of the general residents of the area," the policy briefing said.

Quick reaction by government

"The primary difference [between 2008 and the present] is the greater preparedness from government," Breen told IRIN, and civil society had also taken a strong and vocal stand against xenophobia in recent months to counter the widespread rumours of another large-scale attack.

An inter-ministerial committee on xenophobia has been set up and ministers have warned of "harsh action" against those attacking foreign nationals. Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa and Defence Minister Lindiwe Sisulu arrived in Western Cape Province on 12 July, the day after foreign-owned shops were looted.

"Opportunistic criminals must know that we will deal with them harshly; there is no way we will allow them to spread fear and crime. We are working very hard to find them and prosecute them," Sisulu said on arrival in the province.

Catherine Schulze, spokesperson for the South African Institute of Race Relations, a think-tank, said in a statement that there was not enough information to accurately predict a recurrence of violence similar to that directed against foreigners in 2008, but the conditions that had prompted it were "largely unchanged".

"Poverty, unemployment, and incomes indicators have not shifted significantly since 2008, while high levels of crime and violence are an everyday reality in many poor communities. At the same time, reports of increased threats, some disguised as jokes and idle banter, have created an enabling environment for a renewed series of attacks," the statement said.

Bishop Paul Verryn, of the Methodist church, told local media that threats had been made against him and foreign nationals staying at the Central Methodist Church in the Johannesburg CBD.

The church has provided refuge to thousands of destitute Zimbabwean migrants arriving in South Africa in recent years. "The metro police came [to the church] and said they would be coming for the people," Verryn told the local media.

"People are returning to Zimbabwe in large numbers," a humanitarian worker in Musina, a town near South Africa's border with Zimbabwe, told IRIN. Families as well as lone

migrants said they were moving in response to the threats of xenophobia. "They told me they don't want something to happen to them, or experience something [xenophobia] again."

Refugees/IDPs & Migration

S. Africa World Cup party gives way to migrant fears

(Reuters)

15 July 2010

(Reuters) - President Jacob Zuma called on Thursday for "calm and unity" after reports African migrants were fleeing South Africa for fear of fresh xenophobic violence after the close of the World Cup soccer tournament.

A previous spate of anti-foreigner attacks in 2008 cut into investor confidence and another wave could weaken Zuma and mar the country's image after its successful hosting of the Cup.

"Let us isolate all elements who may have sinister agendas, who may want to create havoc and sow pain and destruction in communities, especially foreign nationals residing in our country," Zuma said in a statement.

Almost as soon as Spain defeated the Netherlands in Sunday's World Cup final, concerns flared about a relapse into attacks on migrants from neighboring states competing for scarce jobs.

Police shifted from protecting foreign visitors at soccer stadiums to patrolling impoverished townships where migrants have lived as officials vowed no repeat of the violence two years ago that killed 62 and left more than 100,000 homeless.

But many migrants fear a rapid dissipation of feelings of African unity generated by the first World Cup ever held on the continent, stilling South African accusations that foreigners were stealing jobs at a time of 25 percent unemployment.

"I am going home because I am afraid. People have been telling me that after the World Cup there will be xenophobia," said Jonathan, a migrant from Malawi who works as a cleaner in KwaZulu-Natal province on South Africa's eastern coast.

The country's liberal immigration policies have led to millions of Africans flocking to its borders where prospects for work as unskilled labor in the continent's biggest economy, albeit few, are far better than what they can find at home.

Government officials have said the fear is real, but the threats of mass violence are based on hyped-up rumors.

HYPE OR WELL-GROUNDED FEAR?

Zuma's government has accused the media of generating hype about a possible flare-up of race-related violence and said the threats were the work of criminals.

But the International Organization for Migration reported this week Zimbabwean families were fleeing.

Local reports have said foreigners were leaving on buses while one migrant from Somalia told Reuters he was seeking refuge in a densely populated suburb after his store in a township was burned down.

"I was told every foreigner should go back home," said Khadar Bashir, a 24-year-old Somali trader.

One of the difficulties in classifying the motive for attacks on migrants is the country's alarmingly high crime rates. The poor from South Africa and abroad fall victim to violence daily in the state where murders average 50 per day.

Sixteen years since the end of white minority rule, millions of blacks still live in abject poverty and the African National Congress-led government has struggled to deliver on its promise of better living conditions.

"We are dealing with youth hiding behind xenophobia to do their criminal activities," police commissioner Bheki Cele said of recent reports in local media of xenophobic attacks.

Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa said separately: "Xenophobia is not going to happen. I call on people and the media not to be part of peddling this hysteria of a possible outbreak."

S. Africa security forces move to protect migrants

(Reuters)

12 July 2010

(Reuters) - South African security forces moved into townships in the Cape Town area on Monday after attacks and threats against foreign migrant workers.

Scores of workers from neighboring African countries took refuge at police stations in the Western Cape on Sunday night, fearing for their lives after shops run by migrants had been looted, national news agency SAPA reported.

The incidents cast a shadow over the glow of South Africa's successful hosting of the World Cup, which ended on Sunday night with Spain beating the Netherlands in the final in Johannesburg.

Police said they had arrested seven people after anti-foreigner incidents in the Western Cape but no-one had been hurt.

"There were two shacks that were burned in separate areas and there's been sporadic incidents of looting and threats have been made on foreign nationals," police spokesman Frederick van Wyk said.

Police and soldiers had deployed in the area to protect the migrants, he said.

South Africa has attracted millions of workers from across the continent who compete with locals for scarce jobs and resources. Two years ago more than 60 people were killed during anti-foreigner attacks.

President Jacob Zuma said he was aware that foreign workers feared attack but he said there was little evidence to suggest South Africans would turn on them. The worries were the result of rumors, he said.

"Let us make a distinction between a rumor and a concrete report with a clear source of information," Zuma said at a news conference marking the end of the World Cup.

In Lenasia, south of Johannesburg, about 300 residents blocked traffic with burning tires to protests about living conditions.

"Police have been deployed to the area and are trying to clear the crowds," Johannesburg police spokesman Wayne Minaar said.

Such protests, which were common before the World Cup, had died down during the 32-day soccer tournament.

Sixteen years since the end of white minority rule, poor blacks are frustrated that their social conditions have not improved and the ruling African National Congress's promises of better housing, education and healthcare have not materialized.

ZIMBABWE: Fear drives migrants home

(IRIN)

15 July 2010

HARARE, 15 July 2010 (IRIN) - John Muswere, 34, arrived four hours ago at the main bus terminus in Harare, capital of Zimbabwe, after making an unplanned journey with his wife, their three-year-old child and few household possessions from Johannesburg, South Africa, where he spent 18 months working as a mechanic.

"I am left with little money on me because I left South Africa in a hurry and before my employer could pay me. All the transport operators are saying my money is too little and

I don't know how I am going to leave this place [the bus terminus]," Muswere told IRIN while his wife tried to pacify their wailing child.

The hasty trip was prompted by rumours that foreigners would be targeted once the FIFA World Cup finished, just as they were in May 2008, when 62 people were killed and more than 100,000 displaced.

Since the final game on 11 July there have been numerous attacks on foreign nationals and their businesses, mainly in Western Cape Province. The Forced Migration Studies Programme (FMSP) of the University of the Witwatersrand, in Johannesburg, estimates that 1.2 million Zimbabweans live in South Africa, mostly arriving in the past decade after their country's economy collapsed.

"I will be starting from scratch, and at no time has life been so uncertain for me. I don't know how I am going to feed the family because it might be a long time before I get a job here," Muswere said. His uncle has offered them temporary accommodation.

The threats began a few months before the soccer world cup, and came in the form of notes pasted on the door of their one-room rented flat in the inner-city suburb of Berea, Johannesburg, "telling me that they would kill me and my family if I remained in their country after the World Cup".

The notes accused Muswere and other Zimbabweans in the suburb of "stealing their sisters, jobs and houses".

"I thought they were mere threats until they accosted my neighbour, who was coming from night duty at a local supermarket where he worked as a security guard, poured petrol on him and set him alight. Fortunately, he survived but he is still in hospital," said Muswere.

Grace Takawira, 46, arrived on the same bus as Muswere after travelling from Western Cape, where she had been employed as a domestic worker for the past four years. "I just packed my few belongings and hitch-hiked to Johannesburg, where I boarded a bus to Harare," Takawira told IRIN.

"I had seen several Zimbabweans and other foreigners being attacked shortly after the World Cup ended. Many foreigners who feared for their lives sought shelter at police stations, but I could not stand the idea of living as a refugee." She has decided to try cross-border trading to feed her three children.

"Hundreds of Zimbabweans are crossing back to Zimbabwe on a daily basis as they flee xenophobic attacks," said the bus driver, who plies the Harare-Johannesburg route but declined to be identified.

Burdening a weak economy

"Most of them are in a desperate situation, as they don't have enough money for bus fares. Some of them only managed enough money to come as far as Beitbridge [on the Zimbabwe side of the border] and are squatting in that town," he told IRIN.

"The South African government should improve on its policies, so that more jobs are created and there is greater literacy among citizens of that country," John Makumbe, a Harare based political analyst, told IRIN.

"It is clear that high levels of unemployment, widespread poverty, and low levels of skills are contributing to xenophobia among South Africans, who see foreigners as the main cause of their problems."

Innocent Makwiramiti, an economist and former chief executive officer of the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce, expected problems. "The economy is still weak and the return of Zimbabweans from South Africa will push up unemployment. While those that are returning might have skills in their respective professions, it will be difficult for them to start their own ventures because they don't have the capital."

Peace keeping conflict resolution and security analysis

South African Police Take Measures to Protect Foreigners

(Voice of America)

14 July 2010

The South African government says it is taking measures to address threats of violence against foreigners. Civic groups say hundreds of people have fled the country in recent days fearing a repetition of the xenophobic violence of two years ago.

South African police have stepped up patrols in several impoverished communities after some foreign-owned shops were looted and hundreds of foreigners reported being threatened with violence if they did not leave the country.

The reports raised fears of a repetition of the xenophobic attacks two years ago in which 62 people were killed and more than 100,000 were displaced.

The South African government says such fears are based on unsubstantiated rumors.

Deputy-Minister of Police Fikile Mbalule told national radio the government believes criminals are behind the tension.

"The so-called xenophobic attack is basically characterized by high sense of criminality and we must deal with those criminal elements who are looting and doing all sorts of such things," said Mbalule.

He said police have stepped up patrols and pledged that perpetrators of any acts of violence or criminality would be brought swiftly to justice.

Some officials have accused civic groups and the media of issuing alarmist reports which they say could encourage such acts.

But the spokesperson for South Africa's Institute of Race Relations, Catherine Schulze, warned the threat is real.

"It is [enophobic violence] not inevitable at all. We are just warning that the environment that gave rise to the attacks in 2008 is quite unchanged. Poverty, unemployment and very low income rates all contribute to this enabling environment," she said.

She praised the government for deploying additional security forces in tense areas and urged it to use its leadership to change perceptions of migrants in the country.

Resentment against foreigners runs high among some impoverished South Africans who accuse them of taking jobs and low-cost housing away from them.

But general society was dismayed at the violence of two years ago. The government and people of South Africa widely condemned the attacks and donated millions of dollars to help the victims.

The government has created an inter-ministerial task force to prevent any new outbreaks by encouraging dialogue and education through churches, community policing forums and civic groups.