

# ZIMBABWE: Weekly Update Monday 4 April 2011

## 1. Electoral Preparations

- The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security delivered this week its harshest statement on the Zimbabwe crisis so far. Known as the Troika, the Organ issued on Thursday in Zambia a Communiqué urging – among other things - the implementation of the Global Political Agreement (GPA). In particular, the Troika states that there is need for an immediate stoppage of political violence, intimidation and hate speech. The Troika also observed that the GPA should be implemented fully and that there is a need for free political activity in Zimbabwe. In addition, the Communiqué insists that the constitution making process should be finalized and a constitutional referendum should be held before calling for new elections in Zimbabwe. Lastly, the SADC will assist Zimbabwe to formulate guidelines that will ensure free and fair elections with the Troika sending a team of officials to Zimbabwe to work with the South African Government’s facilitation team and the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC).
- The SADC Troika’s Communiqué on Zimbabwe has largely been welcomed by civil society, which nonetheless remains cautious.
- However, in a sign that ZANU (PF) is not welcoming the Troika’s stance, President Robert Mugabe this week said that Zimbabwe was a sovereign country that would “not brook any dictation from any source”. The state-owned Sunday Mail had harsh words for the Facilitator, President Zuma of South Africa, calling him “erratic” and “duplicitous” in its editorial this weekend. This reaction has drawn comments from the South African Government, which has urged Zimbabwe to use “normal channels” of communication.
- ZANU-pf’s so-called anti sanctions petition continues with fresh reports of arrests of and violence against those refusing to sign, with allegations that people have been hospitalized in Chimanimani and arrests in Bulawayo during the week.

- Meanwhile, there has been fresh speculation on President Mugabe's health this week after he was moved around in a golf cart when he arrived at the SADC Troika Summit in Livingstone. The President was also reported to have been attended to by six medical personnel thus raising concerns that his health is failing at a time when there is no clear succession plan in ZANU (PF), with the possibility that if he dies suddenly, the army might take over the country.

## **2. International Relations**

- Apart from the strained relations with South Africa following the Troika Communiqué, Zimbabwe's international relations with other countries are set to be further weakened by ZANU (PF) youths in Bulawayo. The youths have been invading buildings under the guise of black economic empowerment. However, the ZANU (PF) National Youth Chairperson, Absolom Sikhosana, has distanced the party from the activities of the youths, saying that

"If they get arrested or sued for invading buildings, the party will not represent them because what they have been doing is illegal."

## **3. Reconstruction**

- The World Bank this week said that it is upbeat about prospects for Zimbabwe's recovery and the servicing of the country's about US\$7 billion arrears to international lenders. Country Manager for the institution, Nginya Mungai Lenneiye, said that Zimbabwe had made a remarkable recovery in the last month in terms of agricultural and mining sectors. He also said that Zimbabwe's Zimbabwe Accelerated Debt and Development Strategy (Zadds) was a hybrid method that combines traditional repayment methods and the application of mining resources to clear Zimbabwe's debt, which should succeed. Mr Lenneiye ended by saying that

"The challenge now is to create the environment for these sectors to grow the economy with clarifications being made on indigenisation and the land issue among others,"

**ENDS**