

ZIMBABWE: Weekly Update Monday 11 April 2011

1. Electoral Preparations

- South African facilitators in the Zimbabwe political dialogue that is endorsed by SADC held meetings last week with political negotiators in Harare. The aim was to review the Global Political Agreement (GPA), Government of National Unity (GNU) and to finalise the drafting of an election road-map. SADC urged the parties to implement the resolutions made by the troika summit the previous week in Zambia. It is alleged that ZANU-PF wants elections this year without fully implementing the GPA. This could be in August or September this year. Meanwhile, MDC-T reportedly believes elections could be possible at least by May next year. MDC-N seems to feel that if the GPA is implemented it would be logical to have elections in 2013.
- A SADC Extraordinary Summit on Zimbabwe has been scheduled for May 20. The Southern African region leaders will converse on the means to deal with Zimbabwe's political stalemate and try to decide on an election road-map.
- A study by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has shown that despite an arms embargo, Zimbabwe has continued to import arms of war from countries such as China, Ukraine, Russia, Libya and some East European countries. Pro-democracy activists in Zimbabwe have launched an investigation into reports from Mozambique's trade union activists that an arms shipment from China destined for the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) docked in Beira on Sunday 2 April.

2. International Relations

- The EU ambassador to Zimbabwe, Aldo Dell'Araccia is quoted as having stated that the political situation in Zimbabwe has changed for the worse. This was said during a ceremony by the EU to hand over vehicles for use by Zimbabwe's health department. Douglas Mombeshora, Zimbabwe's deputy health minister seized the opportunity to criticize the EU measures and called for their lifting. However, Aldo Dell'Araccia emphasised that the EU restricted measures would remain in place until the GNU was fully implemented.
- EU Parliamentarians condemned the recent surge of human rights abuses in Zimbabwe, including the persecution of MDC ministers, in an urgent resolution passed on 7 April. The Parliament also insisted that "the Zimbabwean people should be given freedom of expression and of assembly, that all intimidation of politicians and civil society activists should cease and that every elected representative, irrespective of political persuasion, as well as NGOs, political activists, the press and ordinary citizens should be able to freely express their opinions without

fear of violent persecution, arbitrary imprisonment of torture.”

- It is alleged that the Zimbabwean government has secured US\$144 million from China’s Import and Export Bank to install pre-paid water meters in Harare - efforts to ameliorate the disputes between the Harare residents and Harare City Council over water bills.

3. Natural Resources

- TD Securities in Toronto is reported to have mentioned that the platinum and palladium prices might advance as new mines might be delayed after Zimbabwe’s government ordered Anglo Platinum and other mining companies based outside the country to cede majority stakes to Zimbabweans. According to Bart Melek an analyst at TD Securities Zimbabwe was forecast to produce 300 000 ounces of platinum and 240 000 ounces of palladium in 2011, or about 5 % and 4 % of global output. The country’s platinum supplies might grow by 65 000 ounces by 2013, while palladium output might rise by 35 000 ounces.
- A high-powered African Diamond Producers Association (ADPA) delegation was in Zimbabwe to access diamond mining in Marange. The delegation met Mines and Mining Development Minister Obert Mpofu in Harare. It was reported that the Minister expressed enthusiasm over the recent Kimberly Process Chairman Mathieu Yamba (Democratic Republic of Congo)’s decision to allow immediate resumption of rough exports from Marange despite a lack of consensus among the participants of the KPCS. Meanwhile, it is alleged that the EU seeks an emergency meeting over new Kimberly Process Chairman Mathieu Yamba’s move to clear Zimbabwe’s Marange diamonds for sale.
- Farai Maguwu director of the Centre for Research and Development in Mutare has urged the international community to put pressure on Harare to ensure transparency and accountability in the military controlled Marange.

4. Reconstruction

On Monday 4 April 2011, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) warned that Zimbabwe faced a large financial gap. The IMF mission chief to Zimbabwe Vitaliy Kramarenko noted that “the fiscal gap could be eliminated through the removal of ghost workers from the payroll, reinforced controls on employment levels and a reduction in low-priority transfers to state-owned enterprises”. Although the IMF would continue “close policy dialogue” with Zimbabwe, it made it clear that it would not lend to the country until the government would implement sound policies and agree to a comprehensive strategy for clearing its arrears to government creditors.

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