



COMMUNIQUE

We, the people of Zimbabwe, represented by more than 300 delegates from civil society, community based, faith based, grassroots movements, youths and other social movements; inspired by our shared and enduring commitment to the values and principles of the SADC Treaty; and acutely aware of the conditions of injustice, impoverishment and repression that most Zimbabweans currently subsist in. Meeting in advance of the 36th SADC Heads of States and Government Summit to be held in Swaziland and under the theme 'A People Driven Zimbabwe Committed to Promote Social and Economic Justice'.

Hereby make the following recommendations according to sector specific issues:

1. Debt, Finance and Trade

Concerned with:

The negative impacts of the Zimbabwe Government's macro-economic policies on the livelihood options of poor and vulnerable Zimbabweans particularly informal vending, smallholder farming, cross border trade, artisanal mining, craft and related industries.

The continued imposition of privatisation, deregulation and austerity measures alongside massive resource leakages through illicit financial flows and pillaging of natural resources by corporate interests protected by lopsided investment agreements.

Failure by SADC to formulate and implement cohesive, equitable and people centred Regional policy frameworks to govern finance and taxation arrangements, natural resource governance, intra-regional trade and investment.

Call upon SADC to:

- **Accelerate the implementation of the SADC Trade Protocol** to facilitate cross-border trade and remove the trade barriers that inhibit the participation of women, cross-border traders, artisans and other groups from participating in intra-regional trade.
- **Urge the government of Zimbabwe to implement the Simplified Trade Regime by:** i. establishing one stop border posts at all SADC border crossings and ii. Fast track the construction of the Beitbridge - Chirundu Highway.
- Urge the government of Zimbabwe to **protect the rights and livelihoods of informal sector workers by** i. rectifying, domesticating and implementing the International Labour Organisation (ILO)'s Recommendation No. 204 of 2015 to formalise the informal economy and the Zimbabwean Government to stop politicisation of work places in the informal sector; ii. repeal Statutory

Instrument 64 which bans imports and SI148 which slashed travellers rebate to USD200 from USD300;

- **Develop and implement a Regional Charter** outlining rights and obligations of informal cross border traders and promote engagement through National Committees to widen adoption of STR.
- Compel the government of Zimbabwe to fulfil its obligations under the Maputo declaration to **promote agricultural productivity and food security by:** i. progressively increasing budgetary allocations to agriculture to at least 10 percent of the national budget; and ii. Supporting smallholder farmers' efforts to adapt to the devastating effects of climate change.
- Urge the government of Zimbabwe to give effect to its commitments under the SADC Protocol against Corruption to **contribute to the prevention, fight and reduction of corruption by:** i. halting partisan political interference and obstruction of the work of the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission and criminal justice system at large; and ii. bring domestic legislation in line with the Protocol
- Urge the government of Zimbabwe to **resolve the debilitating debt crisis in Zimbabwe** by: i. Instituting an independent Audit of Zimbabwe's debt; and ii. Conducting an inclusive, participatory and representative Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper development process to inform the contraction of new loans from the IMF and World Bank

2. Social Service Delivery

Concerned with

The rapid decline of standards of living and human dignity across the region as is evidenced by poor access to basic social services; declining life expectancy; lack of access to adequate water and sanitation; high levels of maternal mortality and food insecurity.

The continued failure by SADC to meaningfully harness regional integration in Southern Africa as a vehicle to address declining social and economic conditions for vulnerable groups and improve quality of life for all.

The imposition of harsh austerity measures and the privatisation of social service delivery without adequate social safety nets to cover the poor and the vulnerable

Call upon SADC to:

- Urge the government of Zimbabwe to **accelerate the domestication and implementation of SADC policies on poverty reduction** such as the Declaration on Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development and the Regional Poverty Reduction Framework to address food security and poverty
- Urge the government of Zimbabwe to **prioritise the development and implementation of social protection programmes** to cushion poor and vulnerable groups from the negative impacts of years of economic decline.
- Develop mechanisms to **ensure the equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth to improve the standards of living for all citizens** in the Region particularly to women, the youth and vulnerable population.

3. Governance, Human Rights and Constitutionalism Sector

Concerned with,

The shrinking civic and political space for Civil Society to participate in and influence decision making in the Region.

The marginalisation of Zimbabweans opposed to the ruling establishment from free and unhindered participation in Zimbabwe's political processes through often violent and illegal means.

The continued lack of accountability and transparency by duty bearers in Zimbabwe amidst rampant corruption, breakdown in the rule of law and abuse of office to advance partisan interests.

Call upon SADC to:

- **Accelerate progress towards a rules-based and democratic process of regional integration** through a people driven reform of SADC's own governance structures
- **Re-instate the SADC Tribunal** as a regional mechanism to address governance issues
- Urge the government of Zimbabwe to meet its obligations under the SADC Anti-corruption Protocol by **urgently instituting legal and public sector reforms to stem corruption.**
- Urge the government of Zimbabwe to **adhere to the SADC Standards and Principles Governing Democratic Elections and Election Observation Missions** by i. reforming existing electoral regulatory frameworks and institutions; ii. Repealing pieces of legislation that unconstitutionally undermine the freedoms of speech, association and assembly; iii. Establish an Electoral Court to adjudicate challenges to electoral results and arbitrate electoral disputes; iv. Enable the development of a peaceful electoral environment by dismantling institutions of violence and banning violent rhetoric by public officials.

4. HIV and AIDS Sector

Concerned with

The growing lack of access to quality treatment, care and support for marginalised populations such as youth, migrant workers and orphaned children due to

Call upon SADC to

- **Intensify efforts to fight against stigma and discrimination against the people living with HIV/AIDS** (manipulated to do dirty and less productive work, relegated in HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, media support is limited, organisations making money through manipulation of HIV/AIDS victims;
- Urge the Government of Zimbabwe to **adhere to the Abuja declaration and allocate 15% of the total budget to the health sector** in order to improve drug supply and hospital staffers to avoid defaults by HIV/AIDS patients;

- Urge the Government of Zimbabwe to **subsidise user fees for health services to improve access to treatment, care and support to HIV/AIDS patients;**

5. Disability Sector

- SADC Governments should allow free of duty imports by the disabled;
- SADC Governments should invest in disability user friendly infrastructure and aiding accessories (boots, clutches, etc.) to promote affordability;
- SADC Governments should invest in programmes to fight stigma and discrimination against the disabled at work places, schools, church, etc;

6. Women and Gender Sector

Concerned with:

The disproportionate impact of poverty and inequality on women.

The under-representation of women in decision making and policy formulation processes.

The continued marginalisation of women from agriculture, artisanal mining and other productive sectors

Call upon SADC to

- Urge the government of Zimbabwe to meet its gender rights obligations under the SADC Gender Protocol by **putting in place gender sensitive economic policies bolstered by law, gender specific budgetary commitments, and national institutions to advance women's economic empowerment.**
- Encourage the Government of Zimbabwe to meet **SADC recommended quotas on women representation in decision making and policy formulation processes.**
- Urge the Government of Zimbabwe to fulfil its obligations under the Maputo Declaration to **address gender inequities in agriculture by:** i. Utilising the opportunity of the Land Commission Bill to harmonise the different pieces of legislation on land and redress the historical marginalisation of women's land rights; and ii. implement national policies to increase smallholder women farmers' access to documented land, productive inputs and resources, extension support, markets and inclusive financial services

7. Youth/Students Sector

Concerned with:

Declining standards of living amongst youth characterised by: lack of access to employment opportunities, income and productive resources; inhibitive costs of education and training and exclusion from decision making processes.

Politicisation of youth structures and development processes to serve partisan agendas including the recruitment of youth to conduct political agendas.

Call upon SADC

- **Develop and implement a SADC Youth Union** that exclusively deals with youths issues to feed into regional policies.
- Encourage the government of Zimbabwe to create an enabling environment for youths to demand their rights and contribute to national policy formulation in a transparent and accountable manner
- Urge the government of Zimbabwe to guarantee **youth's access to free primary and secondary education and subsidised tertiary education**;
- Encourage the Government of Zimbabwe to **declare youth unemployment a National Disaster** and thereby create the necessary structures and budgetary commitments to resolve the situation.

8. Labour Sector

Concerned with

The rapid de-industrialisation of the Zimbabwean economy and the loss of livelihoods for Zimbabwean workers.

The structural discrimination and xenophobic attacks on migrant workers

The non-payment of Civil Servants salaries by the government of Zimbabwe.

Call upon SADC to

- Develop and implement regional legal frameworks to criminalise 'wage theft' and abuse of worker rights by multi-national companies;
- Develop and implement **regional mechanisms to protect the rights of migrant workers, guarantee their freedom of movement and enable migrant workers to enjoy the benefits of regional integration.**
- Accelerate the implementation of the SADC Labour Protocol by **creating a Regional Labour Desk** tasked with monitoring implementation of the protocol and international labour standards by member countries.
- Urge the Government of Zimbabwe to **avail public land with access to basic infrastructure and amenities** for informal traders, artisans and smallholder farmers to conduct market activities.

9. Natural Resources Governance Sector

Concerned with

The rampant pillage of land and other natural resources by multi-national corporations leaving little in terms of social and economic development for affected communities.

Call upon SADC to

- Implement the recommendations of the High Level Panel of Experts' report on Illicit Financial Outflows in Africa as adopted by the AU Heads of State and Government Summit in January 2015;
- Develop and enforce **regional standards to regulate the extractive sector** accompanied by regular monitoring and auditing and the imposition of applicable sanctions' regime for multinational corporations that fail to meet agreed Regional standards.
- Recognise and protect the rights of artisanal miners as equal players in the mining industry.
- Encourage the government of Zimbabwe to include communities in the negotiation of terms for the granting of mining and other extractive concessions to corporate interest guided by the principle of communities' right to free, prior and informed consent in all extractive industry investments.

10. Faith Based Sector

Concerned with

The harassment and victimisation of church leaders for speaking out against human rights abuses and bad governance in Zimbabwe.

Attempts by the Government of Zimbabwe to impose new taxes on churches.

Call upon SADC to

- Guarantee security for peaceful demonstrators;
- embrace the church's role in supporting national socio-economic development;
- Urge the government of Zimbabwe to reverse efforts to tax religious organisations as they are already contributing to community development through charity work (health care and educational services and food aid among others);

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