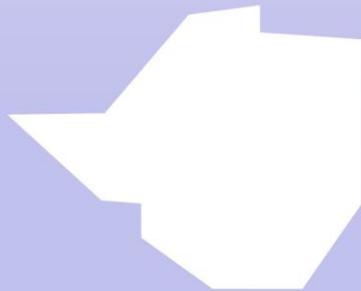
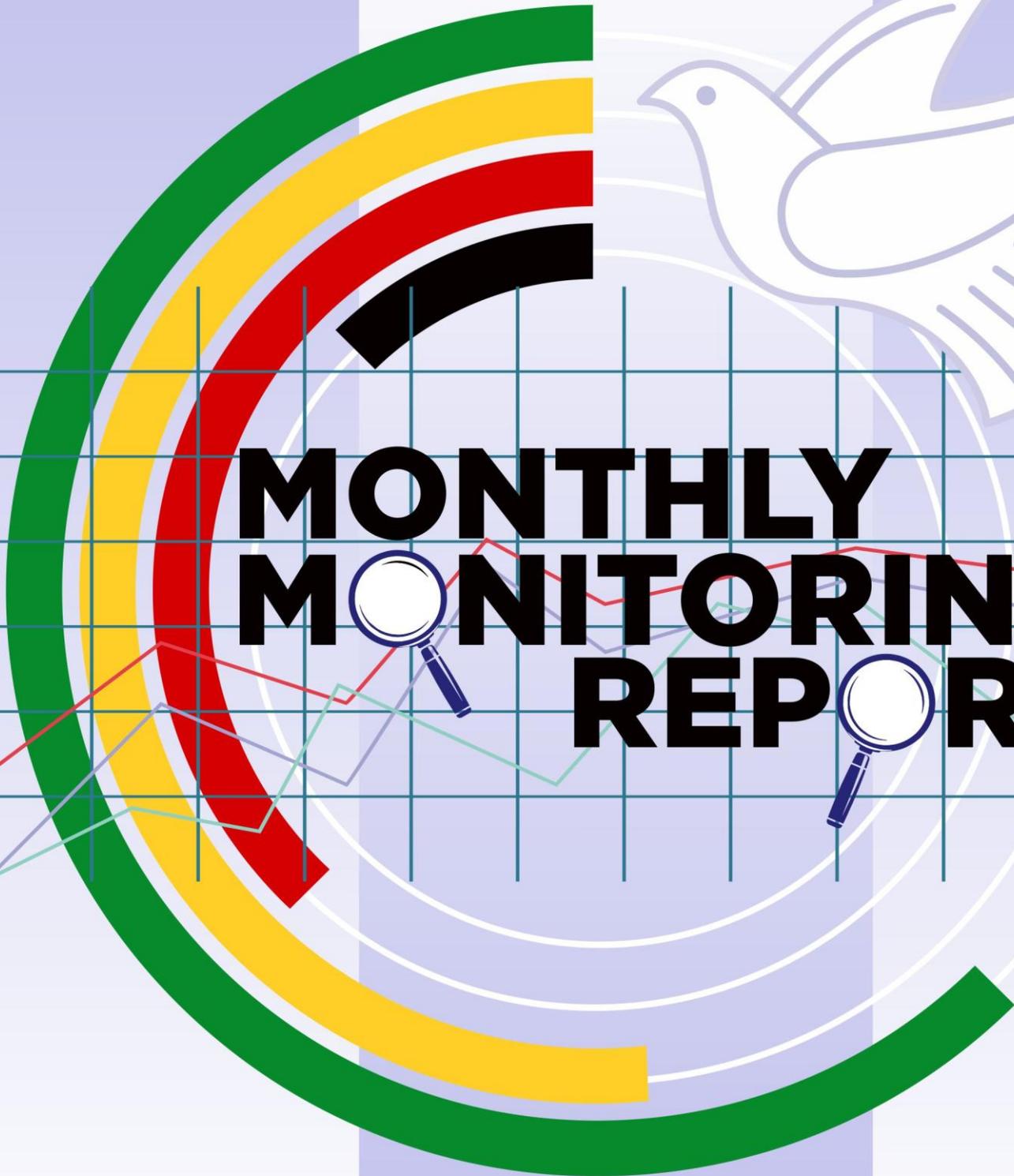




**ZIMBABWE
PEACE
PROJECT**



MONTHLY MONITORING REPORT





Ominous Internal political party processes

Introduction and Statistical Analysis

The primary elections in the two main political parties, Zanu PF and the MDC-T, continued to shape political events in May. (The MDC-T held its primary elections in May, while for Zanu PF, they were mainly re-runs. Zanu PF's primaries were in April). The primary elections nearly defined all the incidents of human rights violations in the month. Of the 81 cases that were recorded in May, almost a 20 percent decrease from the previous month where 102 cases were recorded – over 75 percent of the cases were directly connected to the primary elections. These included incidents of intraparty violence; political victimisation, intimidation and harassment; coercion and discrimination. It should be noted that a single case recorded can have multiple human rights violations perpetrated.

Twenty four cases of intraparty political violence, mainly in the MDC-T, were recorded in May. In contrast, there were only two cases of interparty political violence between Zanu PF and the MDC-T. There were 22 incidents of victimisation, intimidation and harassment, mainly by Zanu PF and mainly against unsuspecting villagers and opposition or perceived opposition members or supporters. Seven cases of discrimination involving the politicisation and partisan distribution of food aid by Zanu PF local officials were also recorded, as well as four cases of coercion mainly involving Zanu PF and relating to forced meetings and forced donations, and two incidents of incitement to violence and hate speech. The other cases recorded were of a non-political nature and related to general violence, including the severe beating of civilians by members of Zimbabwe National Army in Kariba; corrupt and criminal practices by public officials; and violations of the right to education and other children's rights. Ten cases of school children who were sent back home for school fees were recorded, as was one case of statutory rape and another of school children draped in Zanu PF regalia – ostensibly forced to attend a political gathering or to take part in political activities.

Effectively, intraparty violence and incidents of political victimisation, intimidation and harassment defined the month of May, accounting for almost 57 percent of the violations recorded. The incidents were for the most part localised and targeted at political opponents and their supporters in the primaries. Some of

ABOUT ZPP

The organisation was founded in 2000 by church-based and human rights organisations. The current members of ZPP are Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJPZ), Counselling Services Unit (CSU), Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights), Civic Education Network Trust (CIVNET), Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) and Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ).

ZPP was established with the objective of monitoring, documenting and building peace and promoting the peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts. The Zimbabwe Peace Project seeks to foster dialogue and political tolerance through non-partisan peace monitoring activities, mainly through monitors who document the violations of rights in the provinces. The monitors, who at full complement stand at 477 including Persons with Disability at District level, constitute the core pool of volunteers, supported by four Regional Coordinators. The Regional Coordinators relate with the national office headed by the National Director and programme officers in various units.





the recorded incidents included fist fights, poll disruptions, destruction of property, and so on. In Midlands, a case involving the abduction of a suspected Zanu PF spy by MDC-T officials was recorded, while three cases involving the use of a firearm were also recorded. In Chegutu, the sitting Member of Parliament reportedly fired a gun during skirmishes over Zanu PF primary elections, while in Bulawayo, an MDC-T councillor allegedly threatened to shoot rival supporters, and in Kuwadzana, an aspiring MDC-T parliamentary candidate reportedly moved around with a gun to intimidate rivals.

By provinces, Manicaland had the highest number of violations with 15 cases; half of which related to intraparty violence and victimisation. Harare province and Mashonaland both recorded 13 cases of violations. In Harare, nearly half the cases were related to intraparty violence owing to the primary elections, while in Mashonaland Central nearly half related to victimisation, intimidation and harassment. The Matebeleland provinces on the other hand had the lowest incidents of violations, with two cases of intraparty political violence recorded in Bulawayo, two cases of victimisation in Matebeleland North and no recorded case in Matebeleland South.

In relation to the politically motivated cases, most of the violations were targeted at political opponents, either in relation to the primaries or across the MDC-T/Zanu PF divide. A few cases of intimidation by Zanu PF members were however recorded against National People's Party (NPP) supporters. The perpetrators of the violations were predominantly male and were mainly at a localised level although there were instances involving senior officials like sitting or aspiring Members of Parliament or councillors. Local leaders, especially village heads continued to be implicated in partisan conduct, including victimisation, intimidation and harassment. In relation to the non-political cases, although isolated, ZNA officials continued to be implicated in cases of public assault, while public officials were also implicated in corrupt or criminal conduct, including theft of livestock and the misappropriation of food aid.

The victims of the violations, likewise, were mainly localised and were either political rivals within the same party, members of the opposition or members of the public, especially the rural folk. The villagers were mostly prone to victimisation, intimidation and harassment, coercion and discrimination, especially at the hands of Zanu PF officials or traditional leaders at their respective local levels. City dwellers on the other hand suffered intraparty violence the most.

See diagram below.





Breakdown of the cases and human rights violations recorded in May by Province

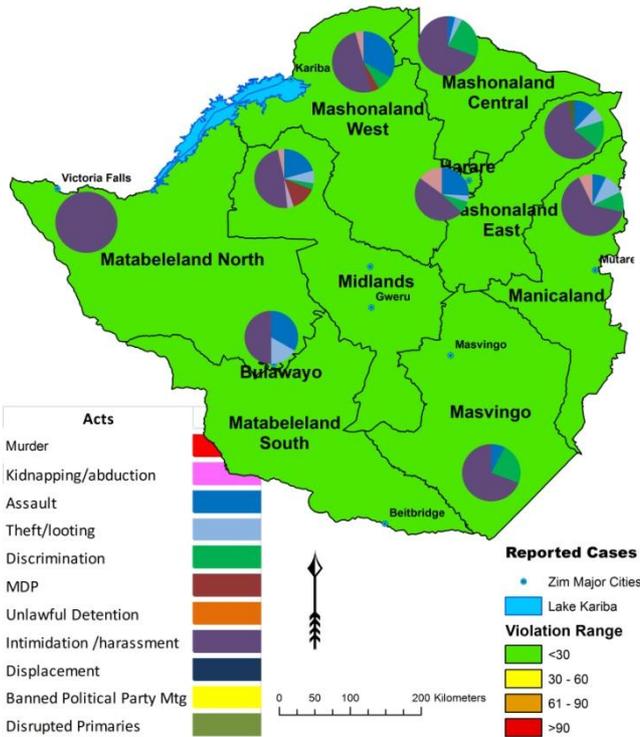
	Byo	Hre	Manic	Mash Cent.	Mash East	Mash.West	Masvingo	Mat. North	Mat. South	Midlands	Total cases	Total Recorded Violations
Intra-Party violence	*	**** ****	**		***	****	*			*****	24	34
Inter-Party violence	*		*								2	2
Incitement/ Hate Speech		*									2	2
General violence		*				**				*	4	25
Corruption			**							*	3	10
Victimisation/ Intimidation			*****	*** ***	***		*****	**		*	22	72
Right to education		***	*	****			**				10	10
Discrimination/ Food aid.			*	**	*	**				*	7	19
Criminal conduct			*								1	1
Right of the child			*								1	1
Coercion				*	**	*					4	4
Right to health										*	1	1
TOTAL	2	13	15	13	9	9	8	2		10	81	181



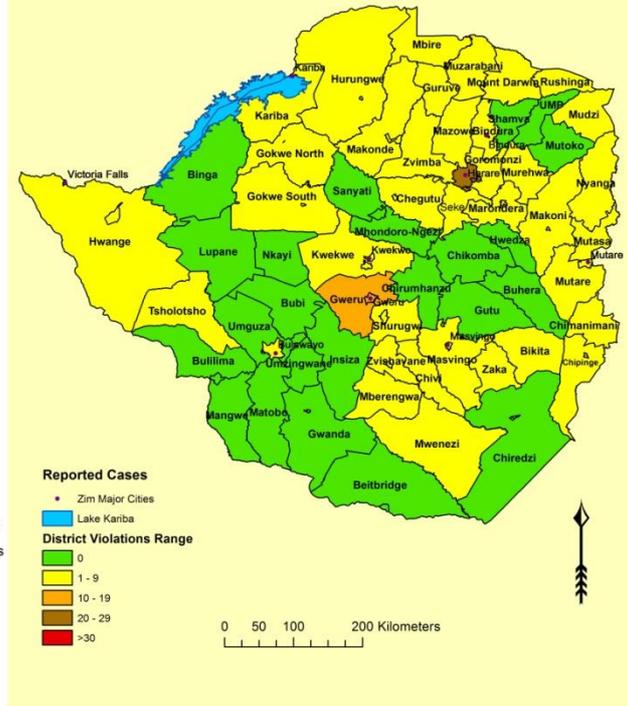


Dashboard of Incidents

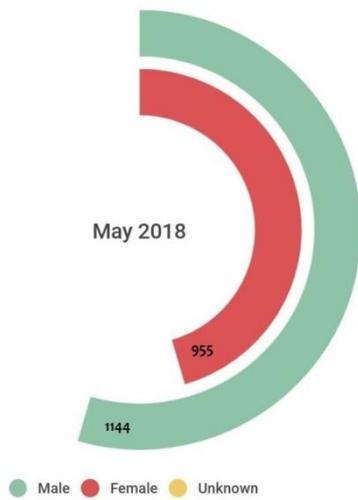
May 2018 Provincial Violations Map



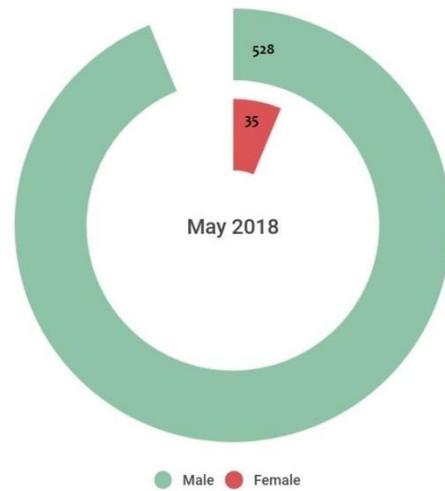
May 2018 District Violations Map



Victims by Gender



Perpetrators by Gender

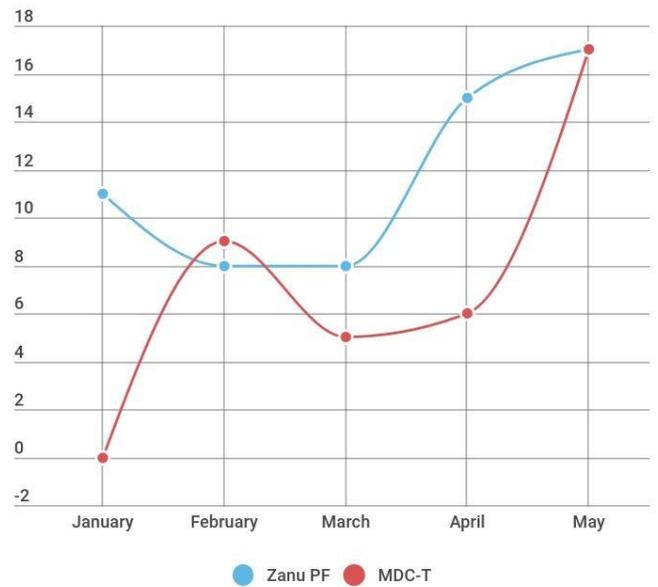
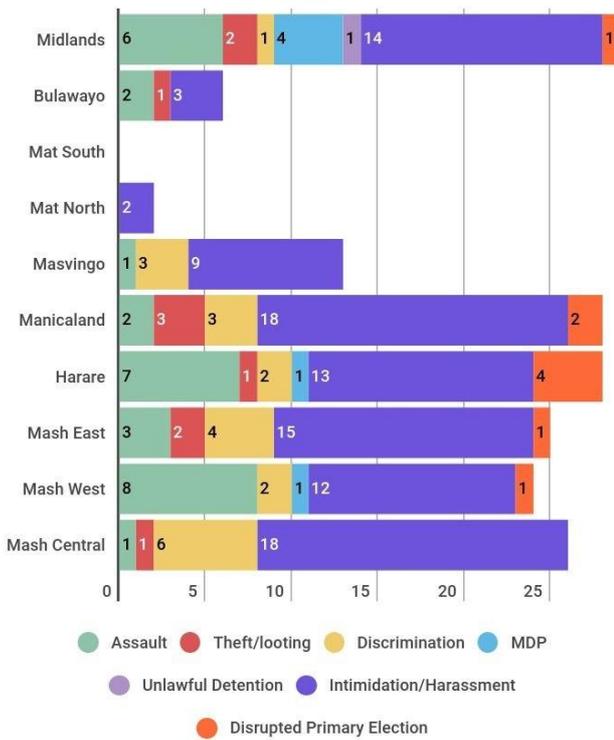
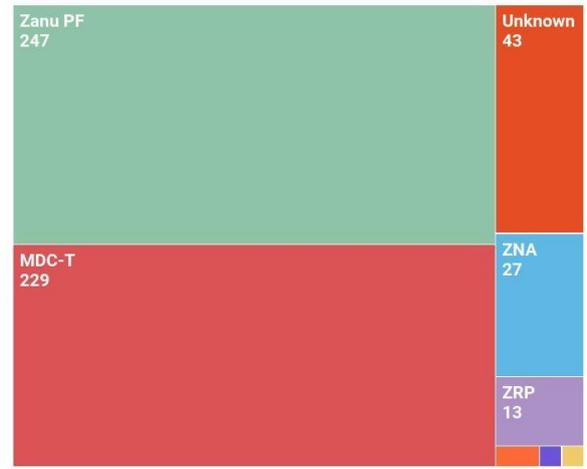




Victims by Affiliation



Perpetrators by Affiliation



Intra Party Violence

Violations across Provinces





Provincial Food and Other Aid Violations





Interpretive analysis

There was a notable 20 percent decrease in recorded cases of human rights violations from the previous month, which should be a positive development as we go to the general election in two months' time. However, on a closer look, there are tell-tale signs that, unless drastic measures are taken urgently, the election may not be as peaceful, free and fair as the national leadership promises. The high incidents of intraparty political violence in Zanu PF and the MDC-T collectively during the respective parties' primary elections and the high incidents of victimisation, intimidation and harassment mainly by Zanu PF in May, both accounting for about 57 percent of the recorded violations, do not bode well for a peaceful, free and fair election. The incidents seem to confirm that violence remains part of our political discourse; even in the opposition movement. The same violence that manifested itself in the primary elections, if unabated through impartial, decisive and concerted efforts, is likely to translate to interparty violence mainly between Zanu PF and the MDC-T and the MDC Alliance which it belongs to going to the election.

Despite all the talk by the political leaders, at least for now, there appears to be no concrete indication that the situation could be arrested. Zanu PF's institutional structures, especially at a localised level, which have traditionally been accused of political manipulation, intimidation and violence, appear intact and it seems the 'spiderweb' or 'dandemutande' in shona reveals the intricate manner in which everything is linked from voter registration and the establishment of cell structures and the demand for voter registration information. Local leaders aligned to the ruling party, particularly in the countryside, including traditional leaders, continue to coerce, victimise, intimidate and harass local residents with seeming impunity. ZPP is encouraged by two judgements in the courts relating to the mandate of traditional leaders according to Section 281 (1) and (2) of the constitution. Two rulings in the courts against traditional leaders' practise of dabbling in politics were welcome. Chief Fortune Charumbira was ordered to retract a statement on traditional leaders' support for Zanu PF and two days later another ruling banned chiefs from politics as this practise jeopardised citizens' ability to exercise their rights to vote freely and fairly. At the same time, government resources, including food aid, continue to be used in a partisan manner for political purposes.

From 2016 ZPP noted a bulging record of victims of unknown affiliation at the height of the social movements and compounded by deepening ructions in Zanu PF and the subsequent purging. As the 2018 elections beckon it is interesting to note that this category from January 2018 has seen a downward trend indicating that most citizens are finding homes in political parties.

Meanwhile, looking at political violence that broke out during the primary elections in Zanu PF and the MDC-T, it could reasonably be argued that, for political expediency, both parties are reluctant to tackle the problem. Despite the seriousness of some of the conduct, which as indicated above, included the use or threat of use of firearms by senior





party officials, neither Zanu PF nor the MDC-T has taken any disciplinary action against the alleged culprits. Both parties appear hesitant to take decisive action which might alienate party functionaries or supporters as the election draws closer. Yet by openly promoting impunity both parties are only emboldening their supporters and breeding more violence going to the general election.

The law, on the other hand, was also not very effective in addressing the recorded incidents of political violence. Of the 26 or so cases of intraparty and interparty political violence that were recorded, only five cases or so involved the police, either because the police were not present or were not able to act or because the cases were not reported. Police presence and capacity to act in political cases, especially in rural areas, thus remains an issue that must be addressed urgently. Presently, it appears that in some rural areas, local police are powerless to deal with some of the local political leaders. There is however also a corollary duty on members of the public to report criminal conduct to the police and to come forward as witnesses in political cases and this needs to be emphasised to them.

Besides the police, other state institutions like the Council of Chiefs or the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission have also not been very effective in relation to the unconstitutional and sometimes criminal conduct of some of the traditional leaders who continue to delve in political matters or to act in a partisan manner.

Conclusion

Unless concerted efforts are taken by the relevant institutions of the state and all the political parties concerned, human rights violations, including those that were subdued in May, will likely escalate going to the general election. Political violence such as was witnessed during the primary elections, unless punished effectively within the political parties concerned as well as through the law will likely escalate. Likewise, unless checked effectively, the heightened incidents of victimisation, intimidation and harassment recorded in May are also likely to rise towards the election. Equally, although subdued in May, incidents of coercion, especially forced meetings and forced donations, which have largely gone unchecked, are also likely to increase as election campaigning escalates. In the same manner, as more state resources, including food aid, are made available, leading up to elections, more cases involving the partisan distribution of government aid by ruling party officials are also likely to increase.

There is therefore need for ZPP and other non-governmental organisations to continue to engage all the critical players to ensure that human rights violations do not escalate towards the general election. Perhaps more urgently, all the political parties must be encouraged to not only denounce political violence publicly. They must also be encouraged to take positive disciplinary action against known culprits as inaction breeds impunity which in turn breeds more violence. With respect to police action in relation to





political cases, the police must be encouraged to ensure that their officers, especially those in rural outposts, have the means and the capacity to deal effectively with errant local political leaders. Other institutions like the Council of Chiefs must also be encouraged to take positive action against members who continue to be implicated in political activities contrary to the law.

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