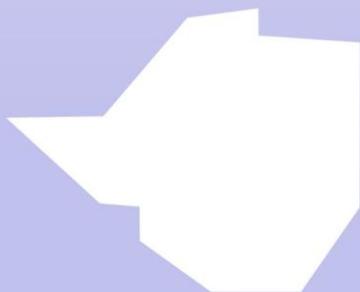




**ZIMBABWE
PEACE
PROJECT**



MONTHLY MONITORING REPORT





'What free, fair and credible'

Introduction

With the polls fast approaching an increase of less than 10% was recorded in violations recorded from the 176 cases recorded in February to 188. Most violations are related to the demand for voter registration slips. It has also been noted that citizens are being forced to buy ZanuPF membership cards. The ZanuPF card has long been associated with privilege as those who buy it, are protected from harassment and access benefits such as food and other aid. For the sake of peace those targeted have acquired the cards.

Power contestations in the opposition party seem to have subsided hence a decrease in the number of intra-party cases has been noted although tensions are still palpable. ZPP is concerned with hate speech on social media, and mainstream media perpetrated by high profile politicians. The sad downstream effect is stoking of political tensions and intimidation of citizens. Agriculture and lands Minister retired Air Force Commander Perence Shiri described ZanuPF as 'a hyena capable of devouring its own children who dare abandon it for other parties.' The statement not only intimidates citizens hoping to exercise their political rights in 'free, fair and credible elections' but curtails their right to freedom of association. On social media, opposition party supporters have been directing hate speech against Thokozani Khupe and others opposed to Nelson Chamisa have been on the receiving end of hate speech. As political parties have started campaigning ZPP is worried by the hate slogans used.

As preparations for the harmonised polls gather momentum the Zimbabwe Republic Police has set up a National Elections Command Centre whose objective is to guarantee a peaceful environment.

Observations from the evidence gathered

1. The most prevalent cases recorded relate to:
 - 1.1 the partisan distribution of government-sponsored relief aid or agricultural support to party loyalists by ZanuPF local leaders;
 - 1.2 demands or requests by local ZanuPF officials for registered voters to produce their voter registration slips to party officials;
 - 1.3 coercion where ZanuPF officials force people to either attend rallies/meetings, donate money or buy party membership cards;
 - 1.4 intimidation and victimisation of opposition supporters by ZanuPF members, officials or supporters.

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 420, 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.





2. Cases of outright political violence were comparatively low. The cases of political violence recorded were mostly isolated and sporadic skirmishes triggered, for the most part, by extraneous causes.
3. There were more cases of intra-party violence and/or intimidation within the two main political parties, ZanuPF and MDC-T, than cases of inter-party violence across the political divide.
4. There are recurring trends that must be monitored closely and discouraged, namely: the forcing of voters to reveal their voter registration information and the recording of personal information of perceived opposition supporters in some rural areas, especially teachers. While the motive behind the former is yet unclear, the latter has previously resulted in the persecution of rural school teachers perceived to be MDC-T supporters.
5. Cases of political violence and/or intimidation were more prevalent in some provinces than others. Provinces like Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, and Manicaland, and districts like Mazowe, Mudzi and Guruve, remain hotspots of political violence, intimidation and coercion of local residents, opposition or perceived opposition supporters by local ZanuPF officials and supporters.
6. Nature of the perpetrators: in all but a few of the cases of violence, intimidation or coercion, the perpetrators were local party leaders, members or supporters. No state actors were implicated directly. Only two instances were recorded. First, where a government minister was implicated in intimidating and using inflammatory language at a local rally. Second, where a local resident minister allegedly forced people to attend his rallies with absentees being threatened.
7. Also, only in three or so isolated incidents were traditional leaders, war veterans, implicated in cases of intimidation. Local chiefs and headmen, on the other hand, were however implicated more in cases of coercion and intimidation. They were reportedly distributing food aid or agricultural inputs in a partisan manner, forcing locals to produce voter registration slips or to make donations to the party, threatening locals against attending opposition rallies or voting the opposition and urging them to vote ZanuPF.
8. Most of the perpetrators of violence, intimidation or coercion were from ZanuPF.
9. Nature of the victims: the victims of violence, intimidation or coercion, whether intra or inter-party, are so far limited to political opponents. Human rights defenders and civil society activists have so far largely been spared.
10. Most of the victims were opposition supporters or perceived opposition supporters.
11. Police involvement: Only two cases of political violence, intimidation or coercion were reported to the police.
12. The police only made one arrest when they arrested and temporarily detained MDC-T supporters following their skirmish with ZanuPF supporters in Caledonia. In another case of suspected political violence in Chivi Central, where a ZanuPF local youth chairperson assaulted two brothers known to be MDC-T supporters, the police were reportedly present but did not intervene.

Recommendations

Although the recorded cases of outright political violence were relatively low and largely in the nature of sporadic skirmishes, the fact that there have been more recorded cases of intimidation and coercion is still disturbing. If such acts remain unchecked, they will naturally mutate into outright violence. It is therefore very important for civil society and law enforcement agencies to continue to closely monitor the cases and gather as much information as possible with a view to possible prosecutions.

- In the same vein, it is also very important for civil society to establish effective means of communication and liaison not only with the law enforcement agencies, including the police and the Zimbabwe Human Rights





Commission, but also with the national leaders of the various political movements in the country. This is important because, as highlighted above, most of the acts of violence, intimidation or coercion recorded appear to be driven by local actors and not pursuant to party policies or centrally coordinated mechanisms.

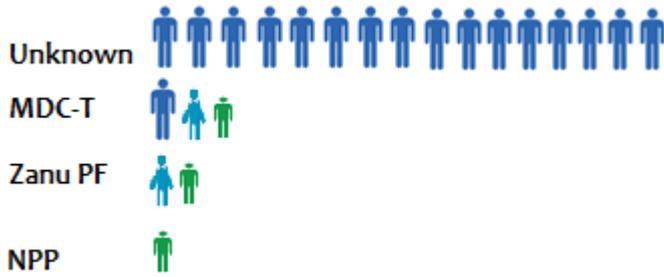
- If the national leaders are committed to a peaceful, free and fair election, as they suggest in public, they must then be able to keep their members or supporters at provincial, district and local levels in line. At this stage it might be in the best interest and strategic for all stakeholders interested to see a conducive environment for the elections to engage. Such engagements will remind the leaders that the political activities of their respective parties are being monitored. Moreover, once the issues are brought to their attention, by extension, they become morally, if not legally, liable for the acts of their party members or supporters.
- With respect to the ZRP in particular, civil society should take advantage of not only the new leadership and its professed commitment to serving the public but also its recently constituted National Elections Command. ZPP should find ways to collaborate with the police in general and the National Elections Command in particular.
- At the same time, civil society and Independent Commissions should also continue to record all cases of political violence, intimidation and coercion in such details as should aid police investigations and prosecutions. Besides, civil society must establish effective collaborative means with the electoral agency, ZEC, in respect of the elections in general and in particular in relation to the observed cases where voters are being forced to divulge their voter registration details. ZEC is better placed to police such matters.
- Civic organisations, must establish a working relationship with the council of chiefs with a view to depoliticising the institution of traditional leaders and educating them on their constitutional responsibilities.
- Generally, civil society is encouraged to take advantage of the new political establishment and build bridges with state institutions.



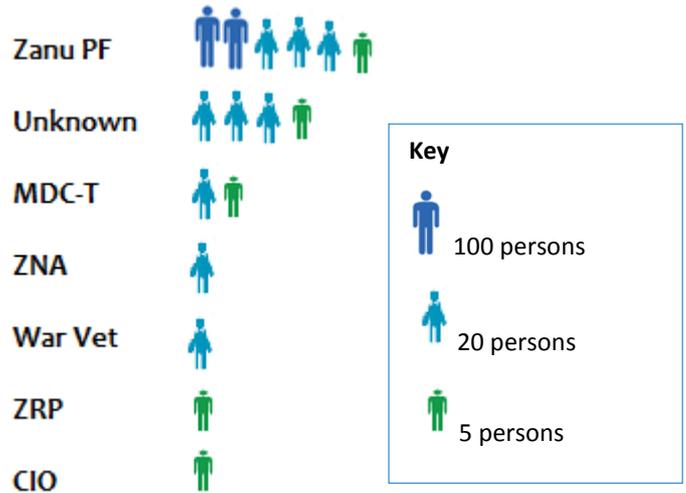


Dashboard of Incidents

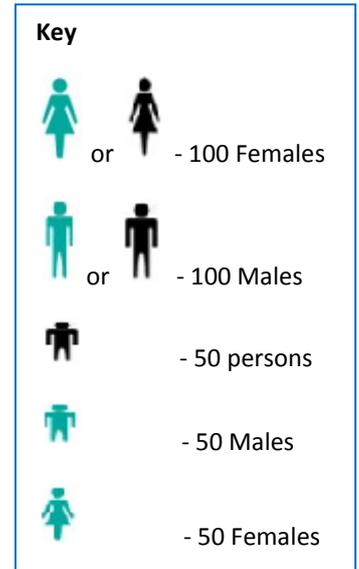
Victims by Affiliation



Perpetrators by Affiliation

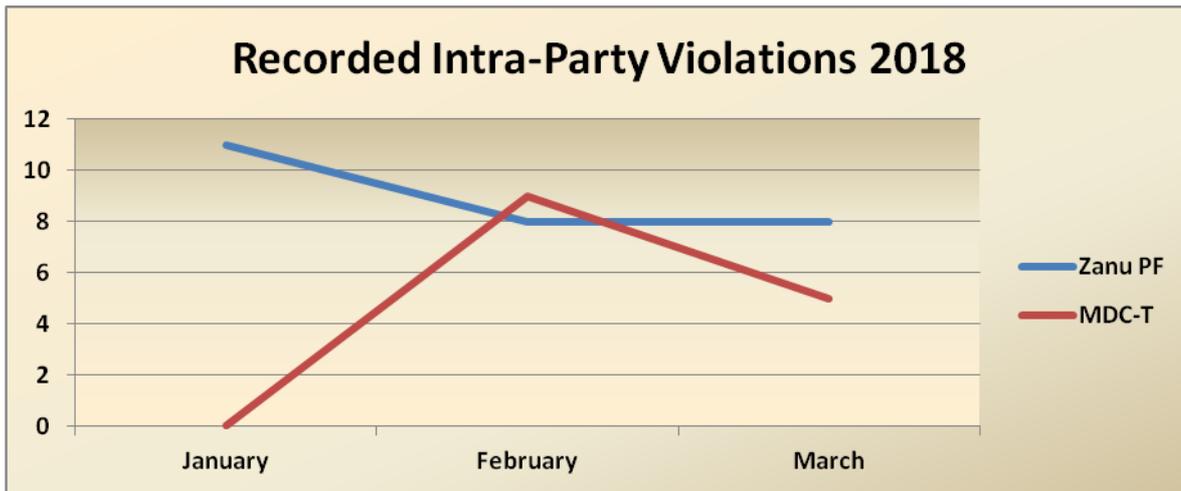


Victims by Gender

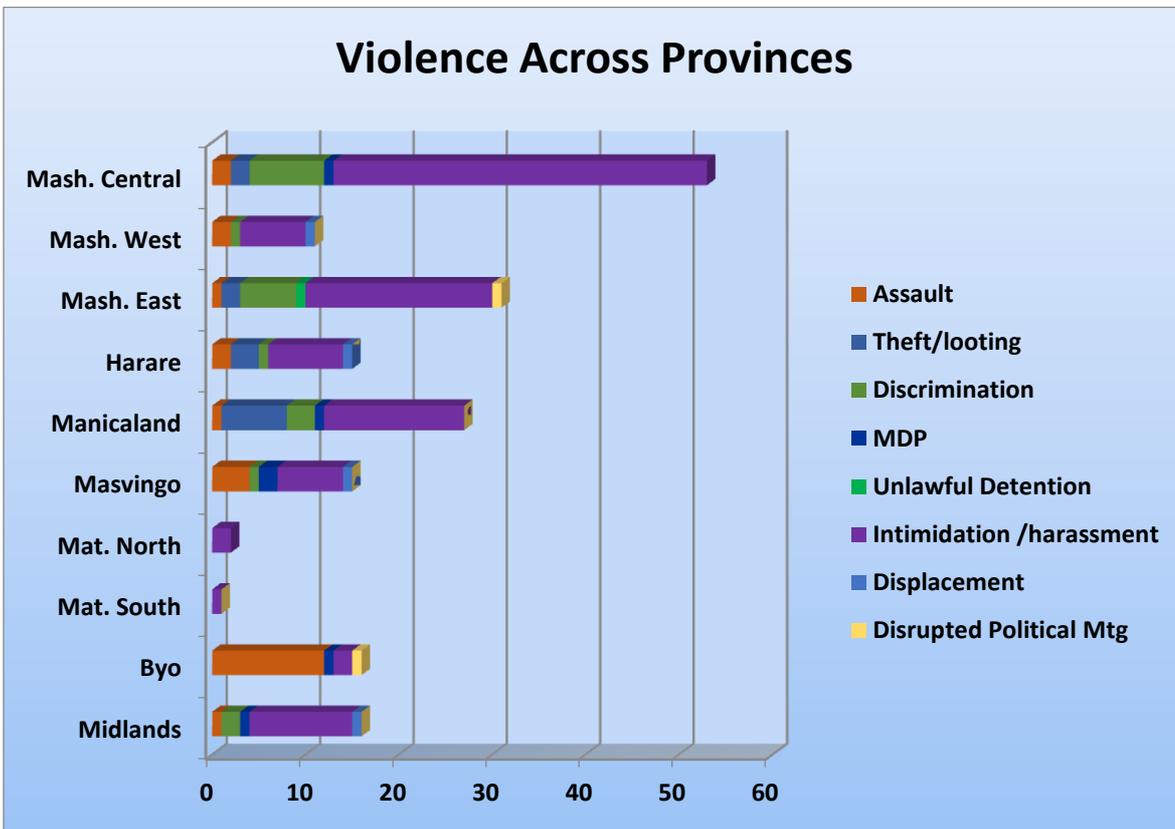


Perpetrators by Gender



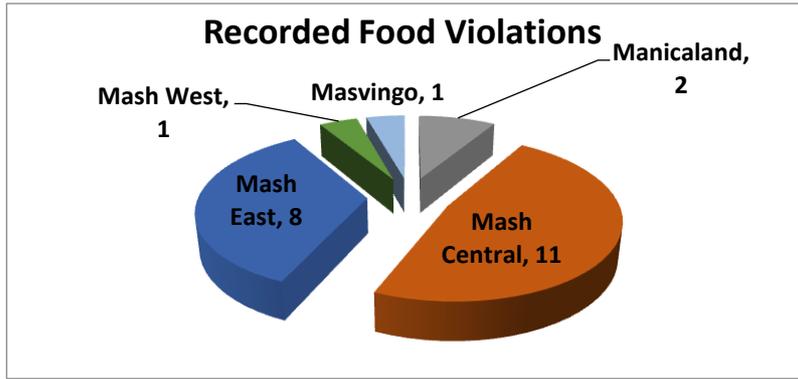


13 intra party violations were recorded for March, the majority within the Zanu PF (8 cases) and 5 recorded for MDC-T

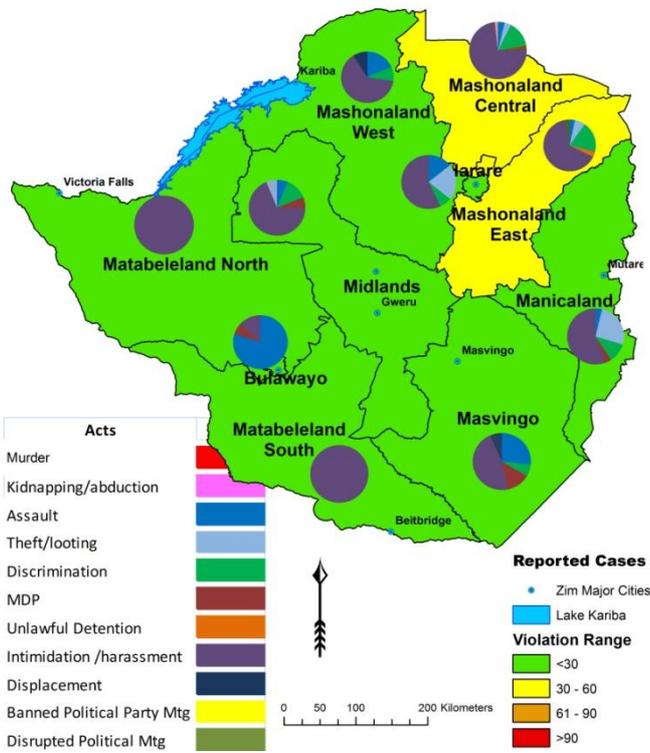


March recorded a decrease in harassment and Intimidation cases to 113 recorded violations, followed by a sharp increase in assault with 25 violations, and a decrease in discrimination with 22 and then theft/looting with 14. Mashonaland Central had the highest recorded violations for March with 53, followed by Mashonaland East with 31, and Manicaland with 27

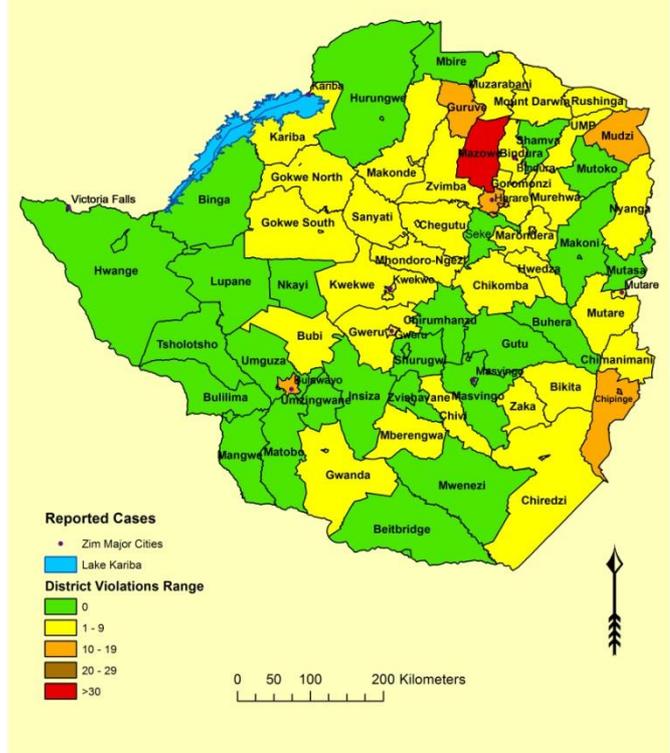




March 2018 Provincial Violations Map



March 2018 District Violations Map





Analysis of the cases of political violence recorded across the country in March 2018

Province	No. of reported cases	No. of Violations noted **	Nature of reported cases
Bulawayo	2	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intra-party violence in MDC-T over party leadership
Mat. North	1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voter intimidation by ZanuPF youth during door to door campaign in Bubi
Mat. South	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voter intimidation – ZanuPF activists demanding voter registration slips in Gwanda North
Mash East	17	31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intra-party intimidation of aspiring ZanuPF Member of Parliament (MP) and councillor by local Senator and local party leaders in Chikomba. Partisan distribution of agricultural inputs to ZanuPF registered voters only – Chikomba Partisan distribution of agricultural inputs to ZanuPF supporters at Dhirihori by local counsellor and local party leadership. Partisan distribution of agricultural inputs to ZanuPF supporters by local headman in Maramba-Pfungwe. Partisan distribution of relief aid to ZanuPF supporters by local councillor at Bromley. Inter-party violence (ZanuPF/MDC-T) at a shopping centre in Caledonia. Provoked by Zanu PF with MDC-T retaliating. Inflammatory and intimidating language by ZanuPF councillor against perceived MDC-T supporters in Mudzi North. Voter intimidation by ZanuPF youth and war veterans in Wedza. Voter coercion and intimidation in Mudzi North – people forced to show voter registration slips; to attend ZanuPF meeting and to donate money. Coercion – people forced to attend ZanuPF meeting by local political leader in Murehwa North; intimidated against voting MDC-T. Coercion and intimidation – local ZanuPF official in Mudzi West forced people to attend meeting and donate money during door to door campaign. Intimidation and victimisation of opposition supporters-MDC-T supporter harassed and intimidated by local MP, councillor and party leadership in Mudzi North. Verbally evicted from village. Pro-ZanuPF teacher in Chikomba demanding voter registration slips of other teachers in the area and compiling their personal details including political affiliations.
Mash. West	7	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intra-party (ZanuPF) intimidation by war veterans to impose MP candidate for Zvimba North. Inflammatory and threatening statement at a rally in Makonde by a government. Minister and former senior army officer. Victimisation of local resident by MDC-T councillor in Kariba – unlawfully evicted from council house. Inter-party scuffle between a ZanuPF member and an MDC-T supporter at a funeral in Mhondoro.
Midlands	10	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intimidation of village heads in Gokwe-Chireya by alleged ZanuPF politburo member and other senior party officials at a meeting – ordered to suppress opposition activities in their areas.





			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At village meeting a local ZanuPF official asked villagers to present their voter registration, slips to local party officials. • Intimidation of outspoken civilian by ZanuPF supporters in Gweru-Chiwundura. Forced to relocate. • Intra-party squabbling (MDC-T) at a local meeting in Gokwe-Gumunyu over party leadership. • Intra-party squabbling (ZanuPF) at a local meeting in Kwekwe-Redcliff over choice of MP candidate. • Partisan distribution of relief aid by ZanuPF local councillor in Kwekwe-Redcliff. • Politicisation of School Development Association (SDA) nominations at a local school in Gokwe-Sesame. Local ZanuPF leader discouraged parents from voting opposition supporters into the SDA. • Murder case in Chiwundura in connection with a suspected love triangle. No political connection established.
Masvingo	8	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local ZanuPF chairperson in Bikita South compiling details and political affiliations of local teachers. • Local ZanuPF chairperson in Chivi assaulted 2 known MDC-T supporters at a local nightclub. No direct political connection. • Unspecified assault in Bikita East. No political connection. • Assault of relatives of a criminal on the run by Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) soldiers in Chivi Central. No political connection. • Case of attempted rape in Chiredzi South. No political connection. • Local dispute over stray cattle in Bikita West. No direct political connection. • Partisan distribution of farming inputs by local ZanuPF leadership – inputs only given to those who produced voter registration slips.
Manicaland	13	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimidation and coercion – people in Chipinge forced to buy ZanuPF cards and to present voter registration slips, • Partisan distribution of farming inputs in Chimanimani – suspected opposition supporters denied. • ZanuPF members including war veteran collecting voter registration information from villagers in Mutare North under false pretences. • Intra-party squabbling (ZanuPF) over MP candidate in Nyanga. • Coercion – people forced to buy ZanuPF membership cards in Chimanimani East. • Rape of a pupil by a teacher in Chimanimani East. No political connection. • Villagers forced to produce voter registration slips in Nyanga North, • ZanuPF member assaulted a commuter omnibus driver for refusing to carry a friend for free in Chimanimani East. • Local ZanuPF youth leader asked villagers at a meeting to provide voter registration information in Nyanga North. • Human Rights activist from Chikanga/Dangamvura received threatening text messages. • ZanuPF members in Mutare South demanded voter registration slip information as condition for food aid.
Mash Central	32	54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partisan distribution of food aid in Mazowe Central by local ZanuPF leader – opposition supporter denied aid. • Partisan distribution of food aid in Mazowe Central by local ZanuPF leadership – perceived opposition supporter denied aid. • Partisan distribution of fertiliser in Mazowe South by local councillor – opposition supporter/s denied.





- Partisan distribution of food aid by local councillor and district chairperson in Mazowe West – unregistered voters denied.
- Partisan distribution of food aid by village secretary in Mount Darwin East – unregistered voters denied.
- Partisan distribution of food aid in Muzarabani South – opposition supporters denied aid.
- Partisan allocation of welfare benefits in Guruve South by a ZanuPF district leader – ward of an opposition supporter denied social welfare education benefit (BEAM).
- Coercion – people forced to contribute towards independence celebrations by village head in Mazowe Central.
- Coercion – villagers forced to contribute towards Independence Day celebrations by local leader in Guruve North.
- Coercion – villagers forced to attend ZanuPF meeting by local branch chairperson in Mazowe South.
- Coercion – villagers forced to surrender voters’ serial numbers by village head in Guruve.
- Coercion – villagers forced to surrender voter serial numbers by ZanuPF activists in Guruve North.
- Coercion and intimidation – village heads in Rushinga ordered by local chief to instruct villagers to vote ZanuPF to avoid post electoral reprisals.
- Coercion and intimidation – ZanuPF youths allegedly sent by local resident minister to force people to attend a meeting he was addressing. Names of attendees recorded and absentees threatened.
- Coercion and intimidation – residents at Forrester Farm, Mazowe Central, forced to attend rally by ZanuPF official. Names of attendees recorded. Absentees threatened with aid embargo.
- Coercion – pupils at a local school in Mazowe Central sent home to bring their parents so that they could attend a rally addressed by the resident minister.
- Intra- party (ZanuPF) intimidation and victimisation – victim forced to remove T-shirt with Robert Mugabe’s face in Mount Darwin South.
- Inter-party (ZanuPF/MDC-T) violence at Gweshe, Mazowe Central, after ZanuPF activists were seen pulling MDC Alliance posters down.
- Voter intimidation in Bindura South – voters warned by local MP to vote ZanuPF to avoid punishment.
- Intimidation – Opposition activist intimidated by ZanuPF members in Mazowe Central. Ordered to provide voter registration information.
- Intimidation – villagers threatened by local councillor and headmen not to attend MDC Alliance rally at Nzvimbo Growth Point, Mazowe Central. Names of attendees recorded.
- Intimidation – villagers in Chiweshe, Mazowe Central, threatened by local chief not to attend an MDC Alliance rally at Nzvimbo Growth Point.
- Intimidation – ZanuPF local chairperson and provincial member in Mazowe North compiling names of attendees of opposition rallies and absentees from their own rallies. Culprits threatened with unspecified action. Witch-hunt reported at multiple locations.
- Intimidation and threats of violence – local ZanuPF chairperson and other officials in Guruve reportedly met to elect a village committee to assist in identifying perceived opposition activists for punishment after elections.
- Intimidation and threats of violence – villagers in Muzarabani South threatened with violence by local ZanuPF youth officer after attending an MDC Alliance rally at





			<p>Nzvimbo.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-party violence: intimidation of a local MDC-T activist by local ZanuPF leaders in Guruve North. • Corruption – ZanuPF local chairperson in Bindura South took food aid meant for vulnerable groups.
Harare	10	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coercion – ZanuPF youths led by youth chairperson forcing people to buy party membership cards in Zengeza West. • Coercion – ZanuPF youths forcing people to buy party membership cards in Epworth. • Coercion – ZanuPF youths forcing people to buy party membership cards in Glen View North. • Skirmishes between police and kombi driver/s. No direct political connection. • Intra-party violence (ZanuPF) in Mbare over a civil matter. • Threats against students by university security to stop a planned students’ demonstration over Grace Mugabe’s PHD degree. • Eviction of an elderly woman in Acardia. No political connection. • Industrial action/strike by doctors at Parirenyatwa Hospital and other government health facilities.
Total	101	188	

** A reported case may have a number of human rights violations.

Conclusions reached

From the information and observations above, it is fair and reasonable to conclude that at least into the foreseeable future, until party nominations or primary elections for various office bearers are concluded, there are likely to be more cases of intra-party violence and/or intimidation across the political divide. Thereafter, cases of inter-party political/electoral violence and/or intimidation should become more pronounced. Certain provinces like Mashonaland East and Central, and Manicaland certain districts like Guruve, Mudzi and Mazowe promise to be hotbeds of political violence. Members of the ruling party, at least at a local level, appear to continue to revel in impunity. The situation is likely being exacerbated by the police who appear to be reluctant or hesitant to bring down the full weight of the law against the ruling party’s officials or supporters. Cases of outright political violence, intimidation and coercion so far appear to be localised. The cases are largely driven by provincial, district and local political leaders, including sitting and aspiring members of parliament or their supporters, local councillors and other local leaders. There appears, at least on the evidence gathered so far, except for the demand of voter registration slips that has raged for months on end, to be no other centralised system, policy or machinery for political violence as was the case in the past, especially in the 2008 elections. The cases recorded so far are sporadic and vary in nature and frequency across the provinces to be centrally coordinated or related. Also, the nature of the victims and the perpetrators point to sporadic and uncoordinated acts. Notable, is the absence of state actors. Refreshingly, save the two cases relating to the government ministers highlighted above, there appears to be a unanimous call by senior political leaders across the political divide (going by their public pronouncements) for a peaceful, free and fair election. Some local chiefs and headmen remain partisan and have been accused of coercion and intimidation. The





partisan conduct of some of the local chiefs and headmen, especially in Mashonaland Central, and the prevalence of cases of the partisan distribution of aid relief and agricultural support by ZanuPF officials suggests that ZanuPF's old system of political patronage remains entrenched, at least, at a localised level. Going to the elections (both the ZanuPF primaries and the national election) the patronage system will likely translate to vote buying. At the same time, the patronage system forebodes political violence and intimidation as the beneficiaries of the system desperately try to protect the system. Despite their prevalence, cases of political violence, intimidation and coercion remain under-reported perhaps because of the public's distrust of the police, which has traditionally been viewed as being partisan or ineffective in political cases.

