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# Monthly Monitoring Report

MARCH 2025

**What does it mean for  
Human Rights in  
Zimbabwe??**

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## ABOUT ZPP

The Zimbabwe Peace Project, ZPP, is a peace-promoting organisation that uses human rights lenses in peacebuilding, having established that the deprivation and abuse of human rights pose the greatest threat to peace in Zimbabwe.

The organisation was established in 2000 as a project of civil society and faith-based groups in response to the violence and human rights violations that characterised the political landscape of the time. These organisations were the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZIMRIGHTS), Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN), Civic Education Network Trust (CIVNET), Counselling Services Unit (CSU), Zimbabwe Liberators Platform (ZLP) and Non-Violent Action and Strategies for Social Change (NOVASC). Over the years, the ZPP network of members has evolved as the network welcomed new member organisations while others have developed new thematic interests or have ceased to exist. Current member organisations are the Catholic Commission of Justice and Peace (CCJPZ), Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZIMRIGHTS), Counselling Services Unit (CSU), Women and Law Southern Africa (WLSA), National Association for the Care of the Handicapped (NASCOH) and the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ).

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The month of March 2025 was marked by an intensifying climate of fear, repression, and systematic human rights violations across Zimbabwe. As the controversial push to extend President Mnangagwa's term beyond the constitutional limit of 2028 persisted, the country experienced a sharp increase in politically motivated intimidation, state-sponsored coercion, and repression of fundamental freedoms.

The Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) documented 128 human rights violations impacting 2,349 individuals. Violations included threats of violence, intimidation and harassment, assault, arbitrary arrests, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, unlawful evictions, suppression of key civil liberties such as freedom of expression, association, the right to peaceful protest and a case of abduction. Informal traders and journalists were also directly targeted, often facing physical attacks and obstruction in their pursuit of gainful economic activities, threatening their livelihoods and further shrinking the civic space.

A total of 1,265 women, including 95 women with disabilities, and 1,084 men, including 79 men with disabilities, were affected. These figures underscore the disproportionate impact of state repression on vulnerable groups, particularly women and persons with disabilities, whose access to justice and safety remains severely compromised.

Perpetrators of these violations were overwhelmingly linked to state and local governance institutions. Members of Zimbabwe Republic Police accounted for 35.8% of the violations, followed by the ZANU PF at 26.2%. Local council officials were responsible for 20.5%, while members of opposition parties, Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) at 4.6% and MDC-Alliance at 1.3% also contributed to a share of the abuses. Government and state officials (3%), traditional leaders (2.6%), and unaffiliated citizens (6%) were also implicated.

These figures portray a gloomy picture of the Zimbabwean human rights situation and raise concerns about the erosion of the rule of law, where perpetrators of human rights violations enjoy impunity for suppressing dissent, stifling free speech, restricting freedom of assembly and association, among other human rights violations. The targeting of civilians, journalists, and opposition members points to an entrenched culture of political intolerance, which not only stifles democratic participation but also threatens sustainable peace.

Despite this grim landscape, there were glimmers of hope. The intervention by Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, and a consequential High Court ruling, compelled the Ministry of Home Affairs and prison authorities to immediately address the degrading conditions at Mutare Central Police Station and Remand Prison. This is a timely ruling which will go a long way in improving the conditions of Zimbabwean detention centres and ensure that Zimbabweans in conflict with penal law are treated according to norms and standards of international human rights law.

The ongoing Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Zimbabwe at the United Nations Human Rights Council also presents an opportunity for the country to address its deteriorating human rights record. However, genuine reform will only be realised through political will, respect for constitutionalism, and an end to state-sponsored repression.

ZPP calls for urgent national dialogue among human rights actors and structural reforms to restore respect for human rights, uphold constitutional protections, and ensure inclusive, peaceful participation in public life. Without this, Zimbabwe risks descending into authoritarianism, with devastating consequences for its people and prospects for peace.

MARCH VIOLATIONS

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND THREATS OF VIOLENCE

In March 2025, Zimbabwe witnessed a disturbing escalation in harassment, intimidation, and threats of violence—particularly targeted at individuals expressing dissenting views or attempting to exercise their constitutional rights. 27 human rights violations related to threats of violence, which affected 606 people (322 men and 284 women), were documented. Community members in Mvurwi, Mashonaland Central Province were threatened in WhatsApp groups by unidentified actors using South African phone numbers, warning them against participation in the planned

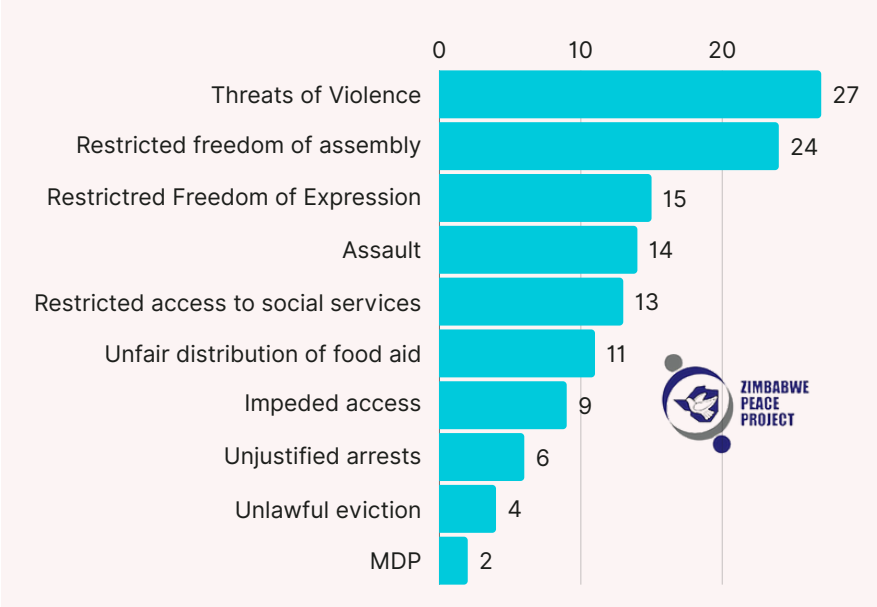
March 31 demonstrations and considering supporting the ruling party. These activists vowed to surveil participants, take videos, and submit names to law enforcement reminiscent of the 2019 crackdown during fuel protests, where MDC Alliance activists were arrested. In Midlands Province, in Chiwundura (wards 10, 11, and 12), ruling party youths conducted door-to-door campaigns warning villagers not to engage in any political action perceived to oppose the 2030 agenda, reinforcing a climate of fear. A group of men casually discussing the political situation at a Tafara bottle store in Harare were intimidated by plain clothes security agents, demonstrating the state’s reach into private conversations. In Murehwa Ward 30, Mashonaland East, two male CCC activists assaulted a ZANU PF supporter and issued death threats against him, targeting him for his political affiliation with the ruling party.

On March 31, At Agape Christian Junior School in Makoni Central, Manicaland ,ZANU PF operatives entered school premises to record teacher attendance, pressuring the headmaster to recall absent staff and creating an atmosphere of coercion even within educational institutions. Some teachers had stayed home, fearing possible eruption of violence as a result of the M31 protests. In Glendale, members of a Mazowe South constituency WhatsApp group were threatened through private messages for discussing poor service delivery, discouraging civic participation and silencing voices critical of government performance. Additionally, in St Mary’s Constituency, Chitungwiza, police called and threatened a human rights activist for facilitating a capacity building workshop, warning him of physical assault and forcing cancellation of the event, an act emblematic of shrinking civic space.

These incidents collectively reflect a sustained assault on civil and political rights, including freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly as enshrined in sections 58, 59, and 61 of Zimbabwe’s Constitution. The use of surveillance, intimidation, and political policing not only violates fundamental rights but instills a pervasive culture of fear that suppresses public discourse, discourages activism, and undermines efforts toward democratic, peace and the enjoyment of human rights in Zimbabwe.

ENVIRONMENTALIST ABDUCTED

On 5 March 2025, a female environmental rights defender and leader of an environmental advocacy organisation in Murehwa District, was abducted under alarming circumstances. The victim had been engaged in a legal dispute with a local investor who had financially supported her organisation but later attempted to seize control of the project. Despite the case being slated for court, the investor requested an out-of-court settlement, scheduled for the day the abduction occurred. The victim was found a week later, showing clear signs of torture, including bite marks and the effects of having inhaled unknown substances. She suffered from amnesia and seizures upon hospital admission. The incident raises grave human rights concerns, including violations of the right to security, freedom from torture, and the right to a fair legal process. It also underscores the dangers faced by rights activists in Zimbabwe including environmental rights defenders, particularly when their work challenges powerful political and economic interests. The abduction was allegedly orchestrated by the local investor, raising an urgent need for accountability and protection of human rights defenders.





### HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS ARISING FROM THE M31 PROTESTS IN ZIMBABWE

The March 31 protests, called for by former ZANU PF senior member Blessed Geza, triggered a disturbing escalation in human rights violations across Zimbabwe, underscoring an increasingly repressive political environment and shrinking civic space. The Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) recorded 24 violations restricting freedom of assembly and association (affecting 740, 270 men and 470 women), 15 violations against freedom of expression (affecting 146 people (72 men and 74 women), and 14 assaults (affecting 68 citizens (38 men and 30 women), most of which were directly linked to attempts to suppress the protests. These targeted violations reflect a deliberate state-led strategy to violate constitutionally guaranteed rights, especially the rights to demonstrate, express opinions freely, and participate in peaceful political activity.

In anticipation of the protests, security forces were deployed to pre-emptively intimidate citizens, arrest activists, and surveil communities, while online spaces were policed to silence dissent. The arrest of 98 Zimbabweans in Harare alone, solely for participating in the March 31 protests, exemplifies

the criminalization of protest. Of these, 95 were remanded to April 10 for a bail ruling by Magistrate Isheunesu Matova, while three others appeared before Magistrate Ruth Moyo. In Midlands Province, Councillors Mawere (Ward 16 Mkoba) and Parirenyatwa Nyika (Woodlands) and six others were arrested for allegedly mobilizing participants to participate in March 31 protest and were reportedly assaulted, with Mawere enduring over a week in pretrial detention. Such prolonged detention without trial is a blatant violation of the right to a fair and timely trial and constitutes punitive repression without legal conviction. This use of the justice system as a tool of intimidation exerts immense psychological and financial pressure on detainees and their families while sending a clear warning to the broader public against civic engagement. These actions point to an entrenched culture of weaponization of the judiciary and criminal law to punish human rights defenders. The impact on human rights is a severe dismantling of freedom of expression ([read our extensive analysis here](#)), eroding public trust in institutions, and deterring peaceful participation in democratic processes. Without immediate accountability and structural reforms, Zimbabwe risks institutionalizing a state of fear where dissent is punished, justice is deferred, and democratic freedoms are rendered meaningless.





## VIOLENT CLAMPDOWN ON INFORMAL TRADERS

The government of Zimbabwe and local authorities' ban on night vending, under the pretext of curbing crime and money laundering, has triggered a disturbing chain of human rights violations, violent confrontations, and economic distress across multiple towns. Vendors, most of whom are unemployed citizens, including graduates and former formal workers rely heavily on informal trade for daily survival. The restricted trading hours, compounded by abrupt and violent crackdowns by both municipal and national police, have devastated their ability to earn a living, leading to serious violations of economic and social rights. In towns like Chegutu, Masvingo, and Chipinge, law enforcement operations involved indiscriminate beatings, destruction of property, and the unlawful confiscation of goods. On March 26 in Chegutu, riot police descended on vendors late at night, brutally assaulting both men and women and arresting informal traders and taxi drivers. Witnesses reported terrifying scenes of people being beaten in public places. In Masvingo CBD, a woman selling vegetables collapsed after her entire stock was taken, lamenting that her grandchildren would go without food and that she would fail to pay rent—an illustration of how deeply this crackdown affects basic human dignity and the right to livelihood.

Violent encounters between police and informal traders intensified, with council police in Harare and other areas such as Chinhoyi and Mutare being attacked by desperate vendors. In one case, ZRP officers in Chegutu West beat a taxi driver and damaged his vehicle, provoking a crowd to retaliate by throwing stones. These incidents not only reflect growing public frustration but also expose the dangers of militarised, heavy-handed policing in civilian economic spaces. Moreover, these operations have no accompanying plan to provide alternative livelihoods or spaces for vending. Authorities have failed to construct adequate marketplaces despite repeated vendor requests, choosing instead to criminalize survival strategies. In Chipinge, council security reportedly demands bribes of USD 30 to return confiscated goods—further evidence of corruption and exploitation of the vulnerable.

The impact on human rights is grave. The right to work, to livelihood, to be free from inhuman and degrading treatment, and the right to due process are all being systematically violated. The brutal suppression of informal traders undermines constitutional guarantees and places already marginalised citizens in even more precarious conditions. Instead of addressing the root causes of economic hardship, authorities are weaponizing poverty, turning law enforcement into instruments of fear and repression. The policing strategy, rather than protecting communities, is fueling social unrest and deepening the crisis of legitimacy faced by local and national institutions. ZPP therefore urges the government and local authorities to ensure there is a sustainable dialogue between informal traders on one hand and law enforcement on the other hand, informed by a rights-based approach that respects human dignity, fosters inclusive economic participation, and restores public trust.



# TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN ZIMBABWE



## ***...as Judge condemns inhumane prison conditions***

The Zimbabwe Peace Project acknowledges a significant development in the promotion of human rights and dignity, as a recent High Court ruling by Justice Sijabuliso Siziba ordered the Ministry of Home Affairs and prison authorities to immediately improve the inhumane and degrading conditions in holding cells at Mutare Central Police Station and Mutare Remand Prison. The case was brought by Michael Mundandishe who was appalled by the conditions following his arrest on August 1, 2024, and

was represented by Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights. The court found that his detention conditions violated Section 50(1)(c) of Zimbabwe's Constitution, which prohibits inhuman or degrading treatment. The judge instructed authorities to install flushing toilets, washing basins, provide toilet paper, and ensure privacy in bathing facilities. This landmark judgment reflects long-standing concerns raised by human rights defenders over poor prison conditions, which includes overcrowding, disease outbreaks, and lack of basic hygiene facilities, as highlighted in past reports and affidavits from inmates across the country. The ruling is progressive as it upholds constitutional rights, reaffirms the state's duty to treat all persons including detainees with dignity, and sets a legal precedent for improved prison standards. By recognizing the humanity of inmates and pushing state actors toward compliance, the ruling reinforces the principle that even in detention, human dignity must not be compromised. ZPP urgently calls on the Ministry of Home Affairs and prison authorities to fully comply with the High Court order and immediately uphold their constitutional and international human rights obligations by ensuring that detention conditions meet the standards of human dignity, as required under Section 50 of Zimbabwe's Constitution and international human rights law.

## UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE PUBLISHES FINDINGS ON ... ZIMBABWE

The UN Human Rights Committee issued on 28 March 2025, its findings on Zimbabwe (among other countries) after examining the State parties during the latest session. The findings contain the Committee's main concerns and recommendations on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as positive aspects.

### *Highlights on Zimbabwe include:*

The Committee welcomed the abolition of the death penalty but expressed concern that it can still be imposed during a state of emergency under clause 7 of the Death Penalty Abolition Act. It also regretted that individuals sentenced to death before the abolition have not had their sentences commuted. The Committee urged the State party to fully eliminate the death penalty by repealing clause 7, commuting existing death sentences to terms of imprisonment, and acceding to the Second Optional Protocol to the Covenant for the abolition of the death penalty.

The Committee was concerned that the Private Voluntary Organization Amendment Bill 2024, which aims to curb money laundering and financing of terrorism, could potentially restrict civic space and have a chilling effect on the exercise of the right to freedom of association and assembly. It further raised its concern about the extremely grave penalties, including loss of citizenship, denial of the right to vote and the death penalty, under the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Amendment Act (the 'Patriot Act') of 2022, which criminalises anyone who "wilfully injur[es] the sovereignty and national interest of Zimbabwe" and those who promote calls for economic sanctions against the country. The Committee urged the State Party to consider abandoning the enactment of the Private Voluntary Organisation Bill and returning the Bill to Parliament. It should also convene wide consultations with relevant stakeholders to align the Bill with the Constitution and international standards. The Committee also called on Zimbabwe to repeal provisions of section 22 A of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Amendment Act of 2022 that impede the exercise of fundamental rights and freedoms.

## 10 STEPS BACKWARDS



### ***..as the culture of fear undermines freedom and peace***

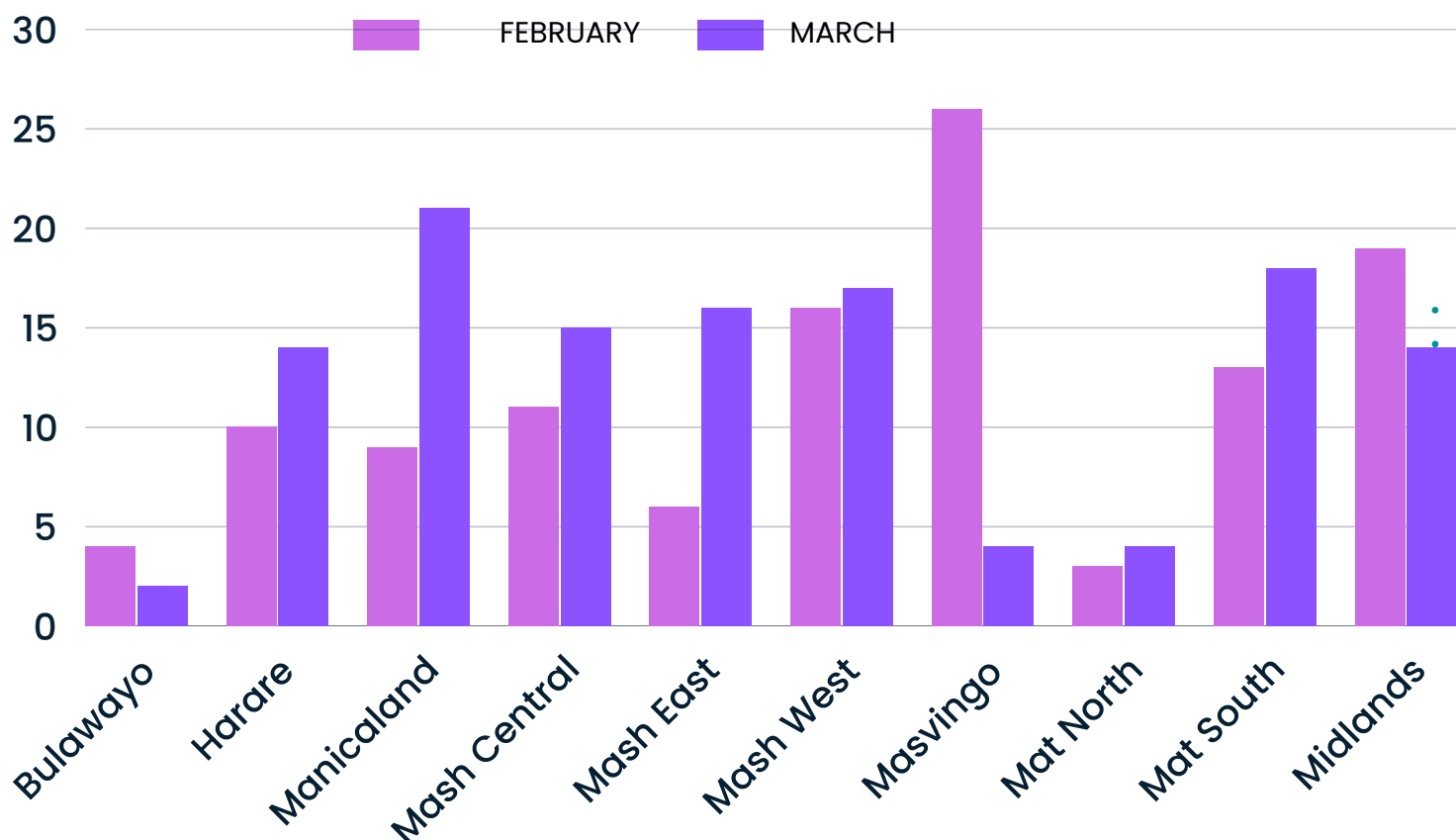
The visible and deliberate deployment of military personnel in press conferences and the use of heavy artillery in the streets of Zimbabwe as witnessed in March 2025 represents a concerning normalisation of militarisation in civilian spaces. This practice, which has been on the rise during politically sensitive periods such as planned protests or election seasons, sends a powerful and chilling message to citizens that ‘the state is watching, and any action will be met with force.’ Historically, Zimbabweans have borne the brunt of brutal state crackdowns. From the Gukurahundi massacres of the 1980s to the bloody post-election violence in 2008 and the 2019 shutdown protests, security forces particularly the military have played a central role in suppressing dissent. These events have deeply scarred the national psyche, fostering a culture of fear that continues to haunt communities across the country.

When government officials address the public flanked by soldiers or when anti-riot tanks patrol otherwise peaceful streets, the symbolism is unmistakable: the state is prepared to use force. This intimidatory posturing silences critical voices and deters public participation in civic life, including constitutionally protected acts such as peaceful protest, petitioning, and free expression. Rather than promoting peace, such displays might undermine it. True peace is not the absence of visible conflict but the presence of justice, freedom, and open dialogue. By equating civilian engagement with insurrection, the state erodes public trust and alienates the very citizens it purports to protect.

In the long term, this militarised governance not only shrinks democratic space but stunts the growth of a peaceful, active citizenry. It stifles the development of inclusive politics and discourages people, especially the youth and women from participating in building a just, accountable, and democratic society. For Zimbabwe to move toward genuine peace and development, the state must demilitarize public life and affirm the primacy of civilian authority and constitutional rights. This requires respecting freedoms, holding security forces accountable, and fostering a culture of engagement rather than fear.



# PROVINCIAL OUTLOOK



## Mashonaland West

In Mashonaland West Province, 17 human rights violations were documented affecting 412 people (196 men and 216 women). The violations included police brutality, arbitrary evictions and restrictions of freedom of expression among others. In Chegutu, police used excessive force to disperse crowds in public places and places of entertainment, beating people and impounding vehicles. A taxi driver was assaulted by the police and his vehicle was destroyed. This was observed as politically motivated ahead of the planned demonstrations on March 31. In the light of freedom of expression, at Waze Business Centre, ward 16, Chegutu East, a victim was assaulted by a ruling party member for speaking ill of the ruling party highlighting limitations on free speech. A mining dispute between Bryden Primary School in Chegutu West Constituency and Chinese-owned Shuntai Investments, which is constructing a cement plant just 3km from the school, poses a serious threat to children's right to education, safety, and health. The plant's operations raise grave concerns about pollution and other environmental hazards affecting learners highlighting the failure of authorities to protect schoolchildren from harm.

## Mashonaland Central

In the province, 15 human rights violations were recorded, exposing a pattern of politically motivated abuse and systemic discrimination. The victims affected 307 people (177 men and 130 women). Victims were denied access to essential services, including a woman in Makaza village, Mt Darwin South who was refused agricultural inputs solely because of her known support for an opposition party. Intimidation and threats of violence were widespread in Glendale, Mazowe South, with ZANU PF members targeting citizens who criticized poor service delivery in social media forums. The ruling party also continued to coerce individuals into joining its ranks by threatening to withhold critical food aid from those who declined. In a deeply troubling development, access to education for vulnerable families is being further eroded traditional leaders like Chief Bushu in Shamva North are demanding \$10 for court sessions and an additional \$30 for messengers from parents summoned over unpaid school fees at Chavakadzi High School, placing undue financial pressure on already struggling households, after the school sought help from the Chief in dealing with parents with debt.

## Mashonaland East

Human rights violations remain a critical concern in Mashonaland East, with 16 cases recorded in March alone, impacting 382 people (170 men and 212 women). In Murehwa, residents have been subjected to systemic intimidation and coercion, primarily linked to ruling party activists. In Goso area, Mutoko South Constituency, community members were forced to contribute \$1 each under the guise of transport for agricultural inputs—funds that were later diverted to fund Independence Day celebrations. Those who resisted were threatened. Further reports reveal targeted surveillance and political manipulation. In Murewa East, headmen and health workers were summoned by District Chairman Elias Svowa to a meeting where they were instructed to spy on and report individuals suspected of participating in planned demonstrations. To incentivize compliance, each attendee received \$20, an apparent attempt to buy loyalty and suppress dissent. These acts violate basic rights to freedom of expression, association, and protection from coercion, further entrenching a culture of fear and political control in the region. These actions appear to infringe upon fundamental human rights, including freedom from intimidation, coercion, and surveillance. In Murehwa Ward 30, Mashonaland East, two male CCC activists assaulted a ZANU PF supporter and issued death threats against him, targeting him for his political affiliation with the ruling party, pointing to political intolerance.

## Harare

In March 2025, 14 human rights violations were documented affecting 225 people (139 men and 86 women), thus reflecting a broader pattern of state repression and shrinking civic space. On March 11, police violently dispersed a gathering at Kuwadzana 6 shopping center, deploying 15 officers and two unmarked grey pickup trucks. Participants, accused of engaging in a political discussion, were threatened by plainclothes agents and warned against speaking on current political rumors, an overt attack on freedom of expression. A day earlier, on March 10, police in St Mary's Chitungwiza, intimidated a citizen attempting to facilitate a human rights workshop, threatening him with assault for engaging in civil society work, clearly violating his right to association. Tensions peaked on March 31 when protests organized by former ZANU PF senior member Blessed Geza were met with an overwhelming security response. Despite low turnout largely attributed to fear and intimidation those who did participate were brutally dispersed with tear gas. A total of 98 individuals were arrested for what authorities labeled as an "unlawful gathering." This heavy-handed response laid bare the state's intolerance for dissent and blatant disregard for constitutional rights to peaceful protest and petition. These incidents unfold against a backdrop of deepening economic crisis, systemic corruption, and entrenched impunity. The state's repeated use of intimidation, arbitrary arrests, and unlawful detentions to silence critics not only contravenes Zimbabwe's constitutional guarantees but further entrenches a culture of fear.



MARIAN CHOMBO, MASHONALAND WEST MINISTER OF STATE FOR PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS AND DEVOLUTION DENOUNCING THE PROTESTS

## Bulawayo

In Bulawayo, the government's directive to restrict vending hours to between 5pm and 9pm coupled with the proposed ban on night vending under the pretext of curbing robbery and money laundering has triggered unrest and deepened socio-economic distress. This policy, implemented without consultation or viable alternatives, is a direct threat to the livelihoods of thousands of informal traders, many of whom depend solely on vending for survival in an already collapsing economy. The violent clash two weeks ago between vendors and council police, who were manning vending stands, underscores the rising tensions and desperation in communities where economic survival is criminalized rather than supported. Compounding this crisis is the worsening water situation. Many urban areas have gone more than two weeks without access to clean tap water, forcing residents to rely on unregulated water vendors selling from mobile Jojo tanks at \$1 per bucket. This not only exposes residents to potential health risks but also violates the fundamental right to clean, safe, and affordable water—guaranteed under both the Zimbabwean Constitution and international human rights standards. Together, these conditions highlight a deteriorating human rights environment, where the right to earn a living and access basic services is increasingly undermined by state actions and neglect. The use of force to enforce vending restrictions, without addressing the root causes of informal trading or providing economic alternatives, reflects a punitive rather than rights-based approach to governance.

## Manicaland

Manicaland Province recorded 21 human rights violations affecting 336 people (153 men and 183 women), underscoring a troubling pattern of political coercion, abuse of power, and systemic neglect of essential services. In Makoni Central's Ward 8, ZANU PF operatives, led by a known party official, conducted intimidation campaigns at Agape Christian Junior School, documenting absent teachers and pressuring the headmaster to compel their return under threat mirroring coercive tactics reported in other districts to force political allegiance. In Chipinge Urban, vendors resisting forced relocation by local authorities faced harassment, with council security confiscating their goods and extorting \$30 for their return, an egregious abuse of power and violation of economic rights. The humanitarian situation is equally dire. In Chimanimani West, insufficient and poorly managed food aid has left vulnerable families without critical support amid a declared national drought, and in Ward 15, collapsing healthcare infrastructure and medicine shortages led to preventable deaths. These violations starkly expose the collapse of civil liberties, political freedoms, and access to essential services intensifying Zimbabwe's deepening human rights crisis.

## Midlands

In Midlands Province, 14 documented human rights violations revealed a disturbing pattern of state-led repression and disregard for fundamental rights. 192 people were affected (102 men and 92 women). In Gweru, Councillor Mawere (Mkoba ward 16) and eight others were arrested and assaulted by law enforcement agents for allegedly mobilising protests, while another activist was briefly detained and interrogated for similar involvement. These actions highlight systemic police brutality, the criminalization of dissent, and targeted intimidation aimed at stifling civic engagement. Ruling party affiliates in Chiwundura constituency have reportedly threatened villagers against participating in anti-government activities, fostering a climate of fear and coercion. Collectively, these developments reflect Zimbabwe's worsening human rights crisis marked by restrictions on free speech, assembly, and growing impunity for abuses perpetrated by state agents.



## Masvingo

In Masvingo Province, 17 human rights violations were recorded, underscoring a disturbing pattern of state neglect and abuse as 238 were affected (110 men and 128 women). Pupils at Shazhaume Primary were sent home over unpaid fees despite rain, exposing them to illness and prompting accusations of child abuse. In Chiredzi's Ward 25, war veterans disrupted a church service with threats, infringing on freedom of worship. On March 13, municipal and ZRP officers raided vendors, seizing goods and stripping livelihoods from those already struggling with rent and school fees. Discrimination persists, as Mushaviri Primary excluded children of parents with disabilities from school programs. Meanwhile, police intimidation in Masvingo town created an atmosphere of fear, while healthcare failures such as a woman being denied mosquito nets without explanation further illustrate systemic neglect. These incidents mirror longstanding concerns about disregard for basic rights.

## Matabeleland North

In Matabeleland North Province, four human rights violations were documented affecting 18 people (12 men and 6 women). Political interference in the distribution of social welfare food aid was recorded. On March 14, beneficiaries in Nkayi South received mealie-meal, but the process was hijacked by ruling party operatives self-appointed secretaries who were not elected by the community yet controlled the registration process. As a result, beneficiaries were aligned with the ruling party excluding victims for perceived political affiliation to opposition parties. This blatant politicization of aid sparked widespread discontent, as citizens condemned the manipulation of basic necessities for partisan gain.

## Matabeleland South

Human rights violations are impacting lives in Matabeleland South province. In March eight violations were documented affecting 24 people (10 men and 14 women). Residents in Umzingwane ward are struggling with a crippling water crisis, with many households still without tap water. The residents struggle to access portable water and are compelled to travel long distances of up to 4km to fetch water or hire scotch carts. Additionally, exclusions and political discrimination in food distribution issues have led to concerns over the quality and suitability of food aid. These issues highlight a broader impact on human dignity and food insecurity, and the need for government accountability in government sponsored food aid.

## Conclusion

Zimbabwe's human rights landscape remains dire, marred by persistent violations at the hands of government and state security agents. The Zimbabwe Peace Project's observations underscore a grim reality, where citizens' rights are routinely disregarded. However, glimmers of hope emerged from interventions by organizations like Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, which have led to crucial High Court rulings among other actions being taken by human rights actors to aid victims to access justice and propel a positive attitude towards promoting and respecting human rights.

However key challenges still remain, including repression of dissent where Freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly are severely restricted, particularly during politically charged periods as witnessed in March. Violence and intimidation continues to be witnessed where state-sponsored actions induce fear among citizens. Ultimately, Zimbabwe's path forward requires a commitment to respecting human rights, constitutionalism, and ending state-sponsored repression. Without these fundamental changes, the country risks further descent into authoritarianism, with devastating consequences for its people and prospects for peace.