



Monthly Monitoring Report

OCTOBER 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

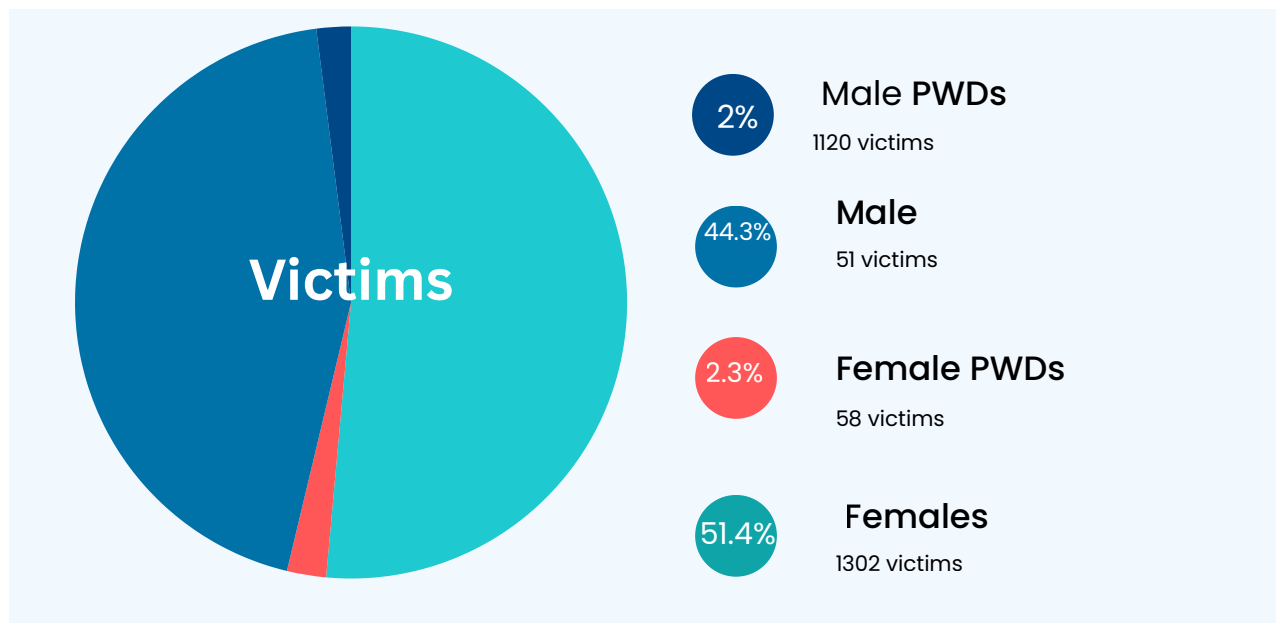
In October 2025, the Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) documented a total of 116 human rights violations across the country, affecting 2,531 individuals, of whom 1,360 were female and 1,171 were male. Among these, 58 women and 51 men were persons with disabilities. The violations recorded included gross abuses such as forced displacements, hate-motivated violence, threats, and physical assault. Additional infringements encompassed restrictions on freedom of assembly and association, curtailment of freedom of expression, unjustified arrests, and inequitable access to government aid and essential social services.

Analysis of perpetrators revealed that ZANU PF supporters were 19.2% of the perpetrators, with the party's leadership at various levels accounting for 12.1%. Local authorities contributed 16.5%, while the Zimbabwe Republic Police and traditional leaders were counted as 15.2% and 9.8% of the violators respectively. Other state actors, including school authorities and security personnel, together accounted for 11.5%, while civilians unaffiliated with any institution represented 14.1%. Members of the MDC-A were responsible for 0.7% of violations.

Provincially, Harare recorded the highest number of violations (38), largely linked to service delivery failures, followed by Mashonaland East (20), Manicaland (16), and Matabeleland North (13). Mashonaland Central and Midlands each recorded 8 violations, Mashonaland West and Bulawayo 5 each, and Masvingo 3.

The "Ten Steps Backwards" section highlights the persistent infringement on citizens' rights due to the failure of local authorities to provide essential services, emphasizing the urgent need for systemic reforms to uphold human dignity, accountability, and sustainable development.

These findings underscore the urgent necessity for inclusive governance, impartial law enforcement, and strengthened mechanisms to protect citizens' rights, ensuring that political, social, and economic development in Zimbabwe is grounded in justice and human dignity.



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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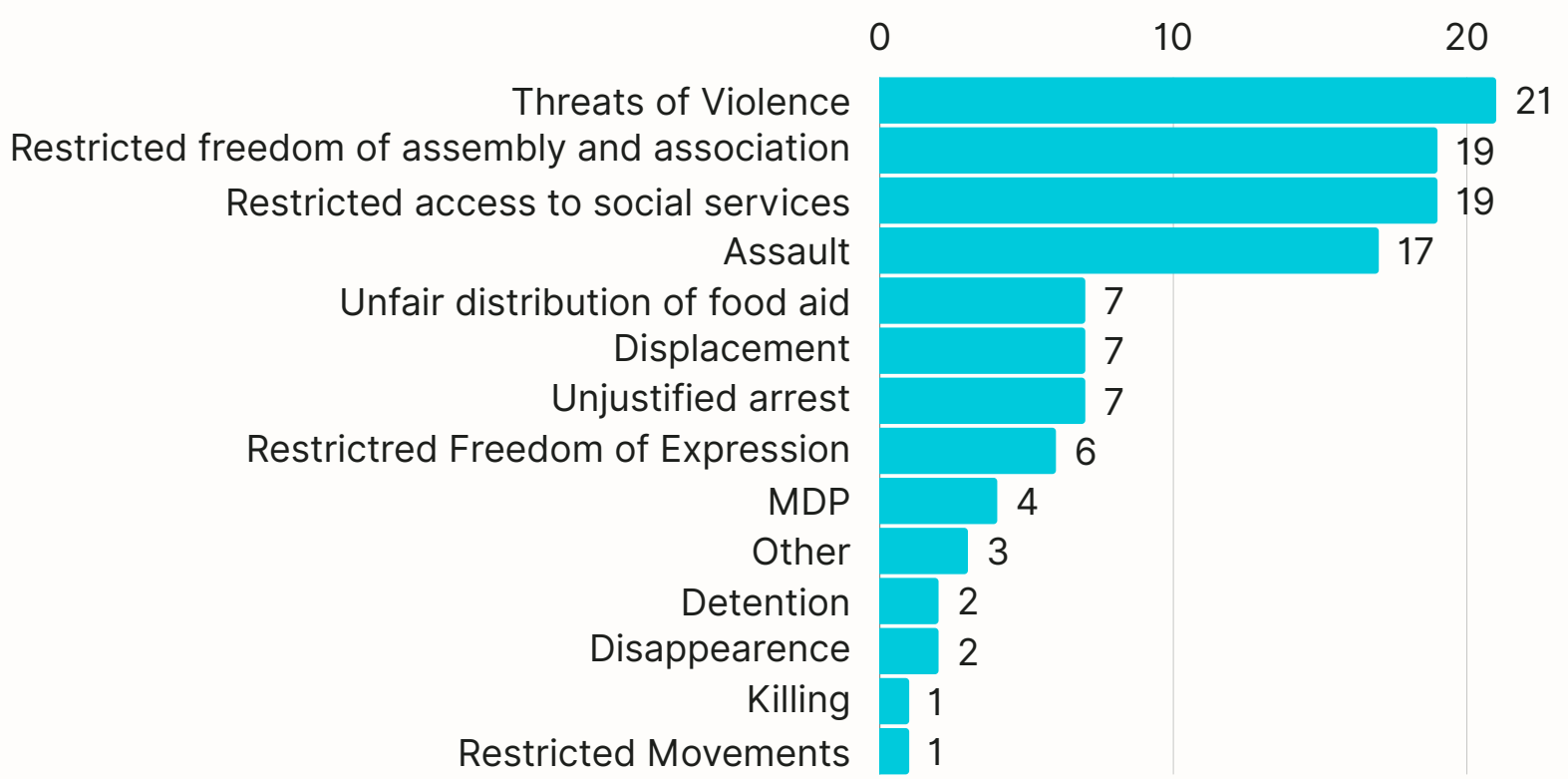
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October Human Rights Violations



FORCED DISAPPEARANCES

In two separate incidents, grave human rights violations relating to forced disappearances, torture, and politically motivated reprisals were recorded. In Mt Darwin South, Ward 21, a woman was abducted by unknown assailants who had initially been searching for her husband, a known political actor linked to Saviour Kasukuwere’s 2023 presidential campaign. The victim was later found dumped in Glendale with severe physical injuries, including signs of torture, indicating deliberate, degrading, and inhuman treatment intended to intimidate and punish perceived political dissent. In the same pattern of politically charged retaliation, an unmarked vehicle without number plates was used to attack a lodge owned by Kasukuwere’s relative, where a conference room and three additional rooms were set on fire after reports circulated that a political meeting had been held at the premises. This act of arson represents a direct violation of the right to property, personal security, and participation in political expression without fear of retaliation. Similarly, in another politically linked incident in Harare Central, a male security guard at SAPES Trust was abducted and briefly detained by unidentified perpetrators who sought to destroy property ahead of a scheduled press conference involving political stakeholders. These incidents illustrate a broader climate of political intolerance marked by enforced disappearances, targeted violence, intimidation, and the systematic suppression of dissent. Beyond the immediate physical harm to victims, such acts instill fear, silence public participation thus affecting the safety and enjoyment of citizens’ political rights.

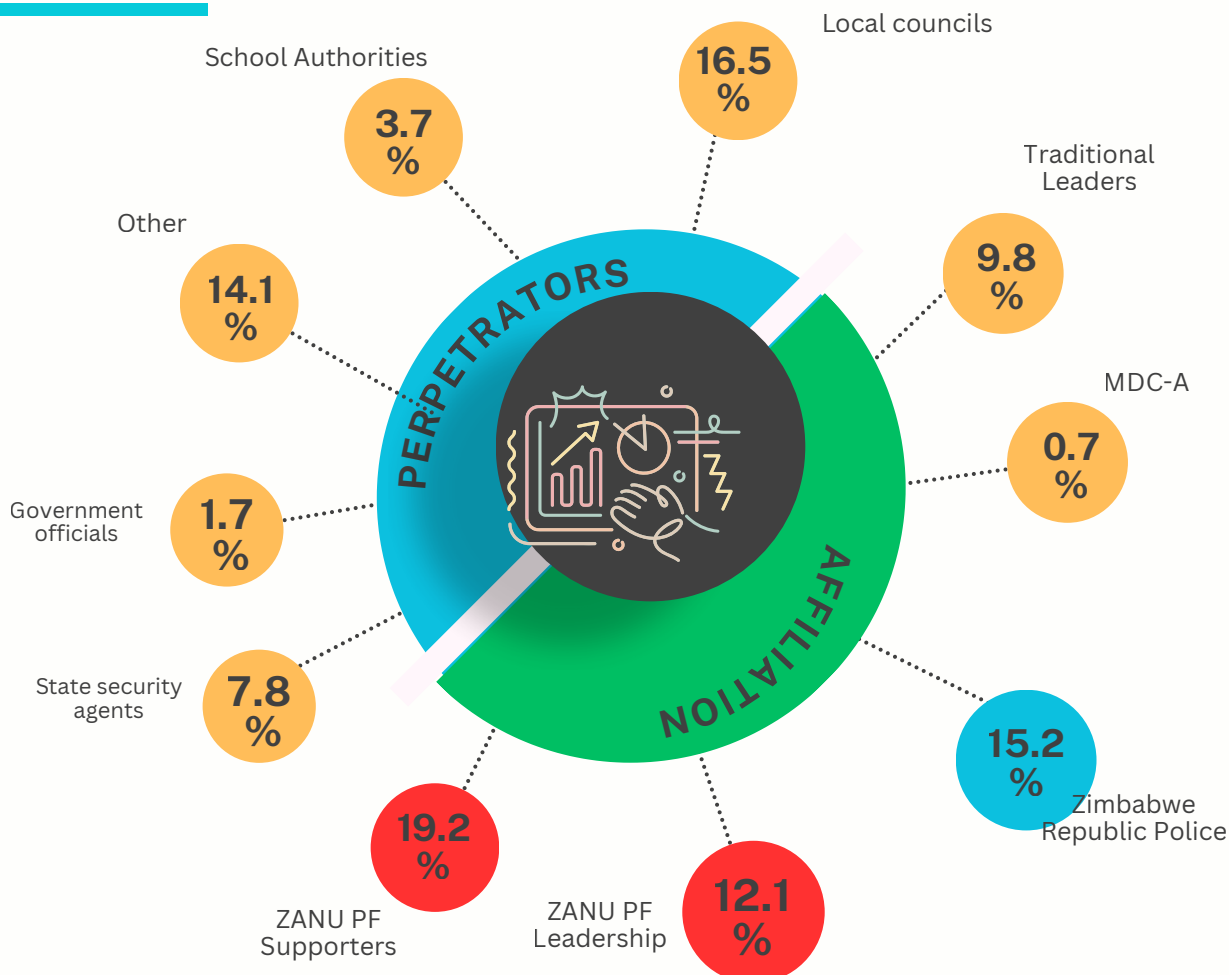
HATE-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

In a grave and deeply concerning incident, a victim from Bulawayo Province lost her life following a brutal mob assault carried out on the basis of allegations regarding her sexual orientation, representing a clear case of hate-motivated violence and discrimination. The victim was transported to Mpilo Central Hospital by police with extensive injuries consistent with severe physical assault, and medical staff reported indications of possible sexual abuse prior to admission. She later succumbed to her injuries, amounting to a serious violation of her right to life, personal security, and protection from torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Prior to the attack, the victim had reportedly faced ongoing stigma and harassment linked to her identity, reflecting persistent patterns of intolerance within the community. Further concern is raised by the disappearance of her partner, who went missing days before the assault, suggesting possible targeted violence against individuals based on real or perceived sexual orientation. This incident constitutes multiple human rights violations, including breaches of the rights to life, dignity, equality, and freedom from discrimination, contrary to Zimbabwe's constitutional guarantees and international human rights obligations. It underscores the urgent need for measures to prevent hate-driven violence, ensure accountability, protect sexual minorities, and promote a culture of tolerance and respect for human rights.

DISPLACEMENTS

In the month of October, seven human rights violations were documented, primarily involving forced displacements, as well as threats of violence, and unlawful arrests, with severe impacts on 16 affected civilians (8 women and 8 men). In Chitungwiza Ward 24, suspected state agents repeatedly visited a woman's home, threatening violence and demanding to see her mother, a known opposition political activist, resulting in both women being forced to leave their residence permanently in fear of violence and victimisation. Similarly, in Seke Wards 5 and 17, traditional leaders and local actors collaborated with ZANU-PF supporters to violate the property rights of women accused of supporting the opposition, with parts of their land sold and threatened with removal, despite their permission to use the land under communal frameworks. In Gokwe South, civilians, including three women and two men, are on the verge of being evicted by a Chinese company claiming authorisation from the Office of President to conduct coal mining activities, causing direct displacement and loss of livelihoods. In Epworth Ward 6, ZANU-PF supporters caused the dismissal of five men from their workplace and threatened them with evictions from their homes. The five were later arrested and accused of misconduct, illustrating the intersection of political affiliation and arbitrary detention. These violations demonstrate a troubling pattern of politically motivated displacement, unlawful interference in private property ownership, and the use of threats and coercion, affecting vulnerable populations across the country.

KEY VIOLATIONS



THREATS OF VIOLENCE, HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION

During the reporting period, 21 violations relating to harassment, intimidation, and threats of violence were recorded, affecting 70 individuals (27 women, 43 men including 1 PWD) across provinces. In Ward 25, Eastview in Goromonzi South Constituency, ZANU PF youths moved around Gazebo Shopping Centre, intimidating business owners who had chosen to keep their shops closed amid fears of unrest linked to anticipated demonstrations scheduled for 17 October. The youths forcibly ordered all businesses to open and threatened those who hesitated with eviction, while one shop owner was physically assaulted and publicly labelled a “sellout” attempting to “tarnish the image of the country,” after he cited security concerns. Attempts to reason with the perpetrators were dismissed, as the group leader further accused him of supporting the CCC, forcing other business owners to operate under clear duress. In Seke Ward 17, a woman reported persistent threats of violence after refusing to attend ruling party meetings and being denied aid based on accusations of supporting opposition politics. Similarly, in Harare Central, a student reported receiving ongoing threats from suspected state agents for alleged involvement with opposition networks. In Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe, a male villager reported being coerced to provide grain contributions despite being persistently excluded from government aid and agricultural inputs, and is now being threatened with unspecified punishment should he continue refusing to attend ruling party gatherings. These cases reflect a systematic use of harassment and intimidation to control political participation, restrict freedom of association and livelihood, and reinforce local power structures, ultimately eroding citizens’ rights and creating a pervasive climate of fear and coercion.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN ZIMBABWE



On 21 October, the Zimbabwe Peace Project joined partners across the continent in marking Africa Human Rights Day, a moment to reflect on our collective journey toward dignity, justice and peace. The day commemorates the adoption of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the landmark commitment that affirmed the inherent rights and freedoms of all African people.

For ZPP, Zimbabwe's participation in this commemoration is significant. Africa Human Rights Day calls on us to look both inward and forward: to acknowledge the progress made, to confront the gaps that persist, and to renew the work of strengthening and protecting the rights every Zimbabwean is entitled to enjoy. We extend our appreciation to the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission for coordinating commemorative activities in Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare and Masvingo. These gatherings created space for dialogue, learning and shared reflection, reminding us that the protection of rights is both a collective responsibility and a shared hope.

This day reaffirms ZPP's ongoing mission. Through consistent monitoring and documentation of human rights trends across the country, we remain committed to working closely with communities, partners and independent commissions to ensure that people are aware of their rights and empowered to defend them. Africa Human Rights Day reminds us that peace is not a single achievement but a continuous practice. It is nurtured through respect, justice and the recognition of every person's dignity.

As we commemorate, we also recommit. Not just in statements, but in daily actions that move Zimbabwe closer to becoming a society where human rights are not merely spoken of but lived and experienced by all.

10 STEPS BACKWARDS

Systemic failures undermine human rights service delivery

Service delivery failures in Zimbabwe have increasingly translated into human rights violations, severely impacting citizens' ability to access basic services and participate fully in development. In October, the Zimbabwe Peace Project documented a total of 10 service delivery related human rights violations highlighting that communities continue to face water shortages, unreliable healthcare, and disruptions in essential public services, often with life-threatening consequences.

In Hwange Central ward 5 at St Patrick's Hospital, for example, patients in maternity wards and surgical theaters have had to rely on buckets for sanitation due to a lack of running water, while ZINWA prioritizes supplying water to Chinese-owned companies over hospitals, creating severe health hazards and undermining the right to health. Villagers protesting the extraction of water from local dams by corporate actors were briefly detained, reflecting the intersection of service delivery failures and violations of civil and political rights. The prosecutors claimed that the five villagers had unlawfully and intentionally engaged in riotous conduct at Kalope Dam by threatening to strike some Zhongjing Helli Energy employees with stones. The prosecutors also alleged that Zulu, one of the villagers, had unlawfully and intentionally indecently exposed herself by removing her dress and exposing her breasts within the view of other persons.

These cases demonstrate that poor service delivery goes beyond inconvenience, it infringes on citizens' rights to healthcare, security, dignity, and participation in economic and social life. For Zimbabwe to uphold human rights, ensuring equitable access to essential services must be treated as a core obligation, not a discretionary policy choice.



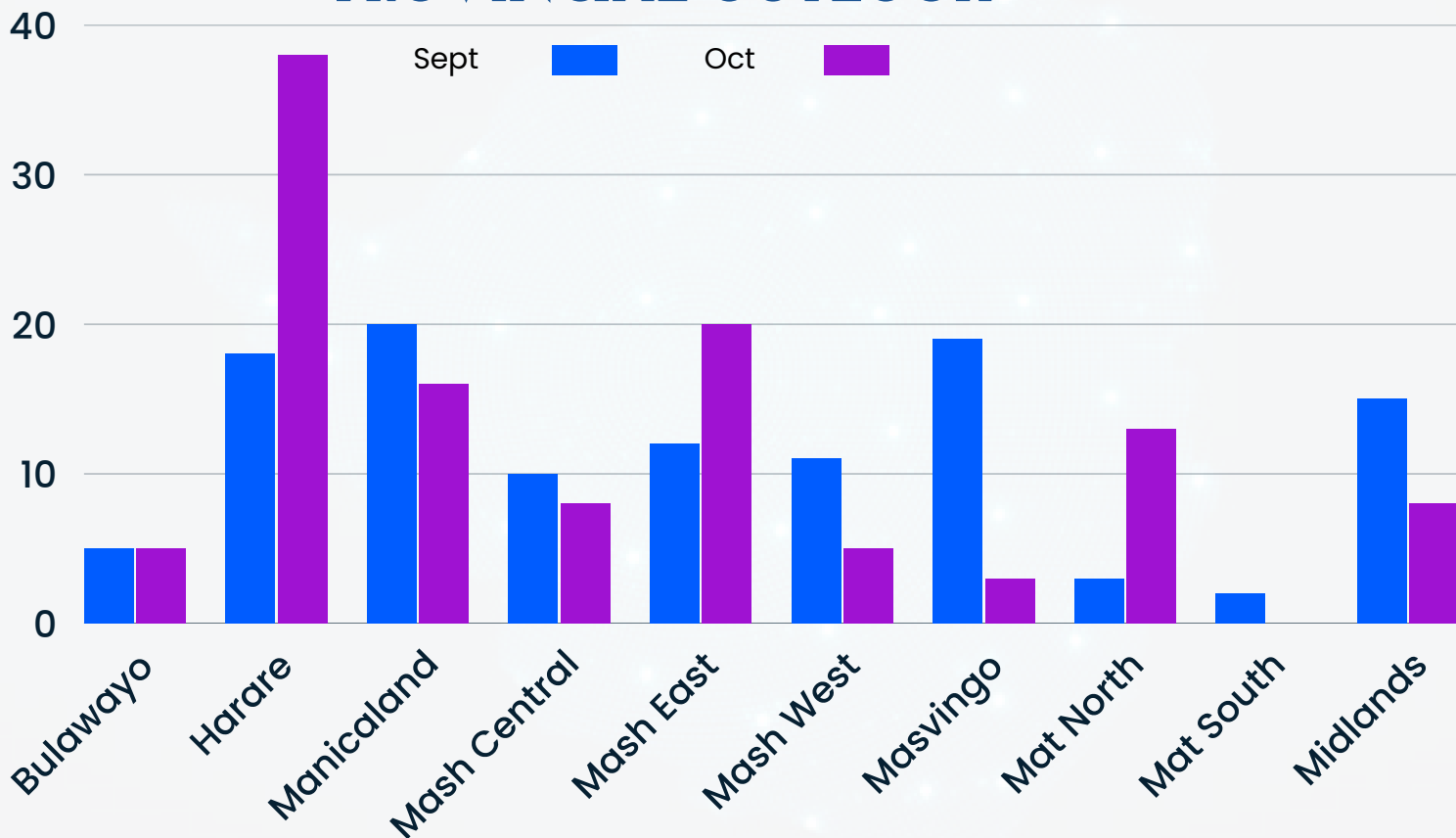
Silencing Dissent: A Sharp Backslide for Freedom of Expression in Zimbabwe

In October, Zimbabwe witnessed a troubling regression in political rights and civic freedoms, marked by a pattern of politically motivated violence and suppression of dissent. On October 30, a seminar room at the SAPES Trust in Harare, set to host a press conference by opposition parties leaders and human rights defenders opposing the 2030 agenda to extend President Mnangagwa's term, was petrol-bombed in the early hours, destroying property and silencing the planned event. When organisers attempted to address journalists outside on the following day, police swiftly dispersed them, reinforcing the message of intimidation.

A similar press conference in Bulawayo titled "Constitutional Crossroads: Citizens Respond to Zimbabwe's Constitutional Crisis" was forcibly aborted after more than a dozen plain-clothed state security agents surrounded the Bulawayo Club, ordered the withdrawal of venue permission, and blocked journalists and participants. Riot police sealed off the area as ruling party activists aided in denying access to speakers, including political and civic leaders.

The cycle of repression deepened with targeted arson attacks, one on SAPES Trust and another on the home of Constitutional Defence Forum member Gilbert Bgwende in Highfield. In Mt Darwin South, a lodge linked to a relative of former ZANU PF leader and 2023 presidential aspirant Saviour Kasukuwere was set ablaze after allegations of a political meeting. The incident was followed by female victim being forcibly disappeared and later found dumped with signs of torture after attackers searching for her politically active husband. These incidents reveal an alarming and deliberate campaign to silence dissent, shrinking the democratic space and eroding fundamental freedoms of expression, association, and assembly among other human rights breaches.

PROVINCIAL OUTLOOK



Harare



In October, Harare Province recorded 38 serious human rights violations, marked by escalating political intimidation, targeted arson, and suppression of civic freedoms. The most alarming incidents included two arson attacks, one at SAPES Trust, where a seminar room was burnt ahead of a scheduled press conference on Zimbabwe's constitutional crisis, and another at the Highfield home of Gilbert Bgwende, a member of the Constitutional Defence Forum, both acts aimed at silencing dissent. The heavy presence of riot police in Chitungwiza around Job Sikhala's residence after a planned birthday celebrations were abruptly postponed also spoke volumes, while factional violence within ZANU PF erupted at Overspill Shopping Centre. Vendors protesting peacefully at Ashbrittle Shops were unlawfully arrested, further undermining freedom of expression and assembly. Meanwhile, ongoing service delivery failures were documented across Harare central, where residents face blocked sewers and unsafe sanitation, violating citizens' rights to a clean environment and dignity. Collectively, these incidents highlight a worsening environment of fear, repression, and governance failure in the capital.

Manicaland

In October, Manicaland Province witnessed 16 documented human rights violations with a pattern of political intimidation, assaults, and failures in service delivery. In one of the most serious cases, a victim in Mutare, was violently assaulted by CID officers who beat him with a broomstick and log over a personal dispute dating back to church, resulting in a broken hand; his wife and children were also threatened, demonstrating gross abuse of power and violations of personal security. Political coercion was evident in Nyanga South, where Ward 15 councillor Panganai Kavenga forced opposition party members to attend a GMB silos rally under threat of losing agricultural inputs. In Chipinge Rural Ward 7, a 17-year-old girl who once eloped returned home, was assaulted and locked away by relatives who used force to restrain her movements, violating her right to personal security. Other incidents included forced political participation, assaults by police and CID officers, and intimidation linked to grain collection, collectively undermining civic freedoms, personal security, and access to essential services.

Bulawayo

In Bulawayo, five human rights violations were documented in October, with the most severe involving the suppression of political expression and a deadly hate-driven attack. A planned press conference by political actors titled “Constitutional Crossroads: Citizens Respond to Zimbabwe’s Constitutional Crisis” was forcibly blocked when state security agents and suspected ZANU PF activists surrounded the Bulawayo Club, ordered the venue to withdraw its permission, and dispersed participants, including accredited journalists. Anti-riot police cordoned off the area, creating a climate of intimidation and effectively silencing dissent. In a separate grave incident, a woman was brutally assaulted and later died after an attack motivated by allegations about her sexual orientation, a case that highlights ongoing discrimination and targeted violence, with her partner also reported missing. The violations reflect shrinking civic space, intolerance of dissent, and inadequate protection of vulnerable groups, undermining rights to life, association, equality, and freedom of expression in Bulawayo.

Masvingo

In October, Masvingo Province recorded three notable human rights violations of displacement, political intimidation, and harassment. In Gutu Ward 6, a woman living with a disability was forcibly displaced from her land by a traditional leader, highlighting violations of property rights and protections for vulnerable persons. In Mwenzi Ward 4, a male resident was accused of organizing the one million men march on 17 October and was assaulted by ZANU PF supporters, sustaining injuries, illustrating politically motivated violence and the suppression of civic participation. Additionally, in Gutu Ward 24, nurses at a medical facility were harassed and intimidated for accepting donated blankets without ZANU PF approval, demonstrating interference in professional and humanitarian activities. Collectively, these incidents underscore the ways in which political power, social vulnerability, and arbitrary authority continue to undermine the enjoyment of rights, including personal security, freedom of association, property rights, and professional autonomy, impeding full participation in community and development processes.

Matabeleland North

In the reporting month, 13 human rights violations were documented with violations ranging from failure to provide service delivery related human rights and unjustified arrest and detention. In Hwange members of the state security organisation and police officers accompanied Chinese investors to forcibly connect a water pump at a local dam, preventing villagers from protesting against the appropriation of community resources. Five villagers were arrested and assaulted by riot police, illustrating the use of force to suppress dissent and restrict civic participation. Compounding these abuses, residents in Hwange Ward 5 faced severe service delivery failures, with a local hospital lacking running water, forcing maternity patients and others to rely on buckets while toilets remained blocked, creating critical health hazards. These incidents reflect violations of the rights to personal security, freedom of assembly, access to essential services, and health, underscoring how state and private actors’ actions continue to undermine citizens’ basic rights and well-being.

Midlands

In October, Midlands Province recorded eight human rights violations, with the most serious involving the denial of the right to peaceful demonstration in Torwood, Redcliff. Parents seeking justice for a child sexually abused by a male teacher at a local school were blocked from holding a lawful demonstration after police refused clearance, citing “security concerns,” effectively preventing community advocacy in a case of serious child abuse. The security concerns were linked to the politically planned demonstrations communicated via social media. Other violations included the forced removal and arrest of vegetable vendors in Shurugwi, where enforcement selectively spared those aligned with ruling party structures, reflecting discriminatory economic repression. In Kwekwe, students’ right to education was undermined at Mbizo High School and Globe and Phoenix Primary School, where learners with outstanding fees had school bags confiscated or were repeatedly sent home, disrupting instruction and disadvantaging vulnerable households. These incidents collectively address the challenges of shrinking civic space, discriminatory governance practices, and erosion of social rights across Midlands communities.

Mashonaland Central



In Mashonaland Central, eight human rights violations were documented, with the most severe involving politically motivated abduction and arson. In Mt Darwin South, a woman was forcibly disappeared and later found dumped with signs of torture after assailants searching for her politically active husband targeted her, demonstrating the continued use of violence to intimidate perceived opposition. In the same constituency, a lodge linked to a relative of a former ZANU PF leader and 2023 Presidential aspirant Saviour Kasukuwere was attacked by unidentified individuals in an unmarked vehicle, with several rooms set on fire following allegations that a political meeting had been held there. Beyond these grave abuses, coercive community control was documented, including villagers in Kazunga and Shamva North being threatened by Village heads of ward 15 with loss of Pfumvudza inputs and forced to pay development

levies or provide labor. Additionally, a female hospital employee in Mvurwi faced politically influenced arrest and detention being accused of undermining the authority of the President. The incident began as a dispute over electricity payments with Derrick Shonhiwa, a ZANU-PF district member, and escalated to the victim’s detention at Mvurwi Police Station. Authorities have framed the disagreement as a challenge to presidential authority, highlighting the politicised nature of the accusations.

Mashonaland East

20 human rights violations were documented in Mashonaland East province. The violations ranged from politically motivated intimidation, forced attendance at meetings, and discrimination in access to agricultural inputs, to forced grain contributions and land dispossession targeting opposition supporters and vulnerable community members. One of the most serious violation involved a senior government minister. In Murehwa East, at Zihute Hall, ZANU PF Provincial Chairperson and Minister, Daniel Garwe openly incited discrimination, instructing village heads to compile lists of all known opposition supporters so they could be chased from their communities, framing them as “house flies.” Such statements fan hate-driven human rights breaches as well as political intolerance. Similar patterns of political exclusion were noted in Mudzi West, where opposition supporters were singled out and denied access to presidential agricultural inputs, while villagers were also coerced to contribute grain under threat of losing future assistance. In Murewa district, over 100 people were forced to attend a meeting organised by the Anti-Corruption Commission. People who were getting in the Centre for other businesses were instructed to attend the meeting first before going about their business. Forced attendances further illustrated the shrinking civic space and the denial of the freedom of assembly and association as enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Section 58. Such violations reflect growing weaponization of aid, land access, and public gatherings to punish dissent.

Mashonaland West

In Mashonaland West, five human rights violations were recorded with the most serious involving politically motivated violence and intimidation. In Chinhoyi Ward 5, a victim was assaulted by unknown perpetrators who accused him of being linked to the planned One Million Men March, a mass demonstration called for by war veteran Blessed Geza, illustrating how political association, real or perceived, continues to trigger targeted attacks. In a disturbing incident in Mhondoro Ngezi, state security agents stormed a girls' soccer team and forcibly confiscated jerseys donated by Member of Parliament Mutsa Murombedzi. The girls were stripped off the jerseys in an attempt to discredit their association with the non-ruling party Member of Parliament, violating their dignity and undermining efforts to promote girls' empowerment and protection from early marriage as well as their freedom of association. Meanwhile, in Zvimba Ward 6, an elected councillor was barred from attending an official district meeting because he belongs to an opposition political party, despite ruling party officials being in attendance reflecting heightened exclusionary governance and the shrinking of democratic space. These violations demonstrate the continued politicization of public life and civic participation.

Conclusion

Based on the October 2025 human rights monitoring data, Zimbabwe experienced a disturbing spectrum of human rights violations that undermined civic freedoms, social equity, and community well-being. Across the country, 116 violations affected 2,531 individuals, including persons with disabilities, highlighting the vulnerability of marginalized groups. Citizens were subjected to forced displacements, politically motivated assaults, hate-driven attacks, and threats of violence, while fundamental rights to freedom of assembly, association, and expression were routinely curtailed. Service delivery failures, including inadequate access to healthcare, water, sanitation, and education, further compounded the deprivation of basic rights, disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, women, children, and opposition supporters. The actions of ruling party supporters, local authorities, police, and traditional leaders illustrate how political power is often leveraged to intimidate, coerce, and control communities, eroding public trust and reinforcing inequalities.

To address these violations, Zimbabwe urgently needs strengthened protection for civic and political rights, equitable and transparent service delivery frameworks, and robust channels for reporting and redress that safeguard victims from retaliation, ensuring that human rights are not only guaranteed on paper but upheld in practice.



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