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COI QUERY RESPONSE

ZIMBABWE – INFORMATION ON POLICE CORRUPTION

The *UK Home Office* published a report in July 2024 stating: “The Zimbabwe Republic Police, the primary law enforcement agency in the country, faces significant challenges due to underfunding and poor training. The police also lack appropriate transport facilities to ensure swift mobility, making it difficult for them to respond to calls for assistance. Moreover, the police force is plagued with corruption, as officers often supplement their salaries with bribes from criminals.”¹

NewsDay Zimbabwe in June 2024 reported that: “THE Gokwe business community has petitioned the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) hierarchy to rein in their junior officers in the area accusing them of corruption and conniving with criminals in exchange for freedom.”²

The *US Department of State* Trafficking in Persons report in June 2024 states that: “The government investigated officials allegedly complicit in trafficking crimes; however, corruption and official complicity in trafficking crimes remained significant concerns. Media reported the government convicted a former ZRP officer for facilitating and recruiting Zimbabwean girls to Oman whom traffickers exploited in sex trafficking in Oman and sentenced the officer to 20 years' imprisonment. Observers reported authorities arrested two government officials for allegedly altering birth records in a potential sex trafficking case; the investigation remained ongoing at the end of the reporting period. In the previous reporting period, the government charged a ZRP officer with human trafficking for complicity in recruiting Zimbabwean women for exploitation in domestic servitude in Oman and charged a high-ranking political official with visa fraud related to alleged human trafficking crimes; both investigations remained ongoing. The government did not report taking action on cases from recent years involving potential forced labor on farms either belonging to officials or of children

¹ UK Home Office (15 July 2024) Country Policy and Information Note - Zimbabwe: Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (15 July 2024) Country Policy and Information Note - Zimbabwe: Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (July 2024), p.16

² NewsDay Zimbabwe Day (29 June 2024) Gokwe community petitions police bosses over corrupt juniors

housed in government-funded institutions. Officials accepted bribes to not inspect farms and businesses using exploitative labor practices. Border and port of entry officials reportedly accepted bribes to facilitate unauthorized entry from criminal groups, including individuals who may have been trafficking victims. Violent gangs utilized forced labor in some artisanal and defunct gold mines, operating with impunity due to their connections to police and local politicians who allegedly accepted bribes and allowed workers to enter the mines without oversight.”³

In June 2024 Zimeye mentioned that: “A corruption scandal has been unearthed at the Bulawayo Traffic West Police Station, implicating numerous officers from the highest ranks down to the junior staff. According to an alarming letter addressed to President Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa and other top officials, including Commissioner General of the Zimbabwe Police Services Godwin Matanga, extensive bribery and corrupt practices have been taking place.”⁴

The *US Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* in April 2024 points out that: “The law provided criminal penalties for corruption by officials, but the government did not implement the law effectively or impartially. There were numerous reports of government corruption. The country experienced both petty and grand corruption, defined respectively by Transparency International Zimbabwe as an “everyday abuse of entrusted power by low- to mid-level public officials” such as by police and local officials and “an abuse of high-level power by political elites.”⁵

The *US Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC)* in April 2024 states that: “The law provides criminal penalties for conviction of corruption; however, the government does not implement the law effectively or impartially. Despite government pronouncements, there are numerous reports of government corruption during the year. Experts describe the problem as “catch and release,” where the government arrests some corrupt officials, often those out of favor, without ever convicting them. Corruption in both the public and private sectors persists and is highly institutionalized. The country continues to experience petty and grand corruption alike, defined respectively by Transparency International Zimbabwe as an “everyday abuse of entrusted power by low- to mid-level public officials” such as by police and local officials and “an abuse of high-level power by political elites.”⁶

A report issued by the *World Bank Zim March 2024* in February 2024 notes that: “The 2019 MICS shows that 51.4 percent of GBV survivors sought help from family, 42.8 percent sought help from husbands/partners’ family and 28 percent sought help from the police. The police are the third preferred source of help, after the victim’s own family and husband/partner’s family. During community discussions, lack of confidence in the police, driven by perceived corruption and lack of victim friendly services, were cited as barriers to seeking help.”⁷

Voice of America News in February 2024 mentioned that: “Press freedom monitor groups in Africa are worried after an online investigative publication in Zimbabwe said it will halt its coverage of corruption in the army after receiving “threats and direct pressure” from state security agents. The online publication The NewsHawks said in a statement it will stop pursuing articles on issues of transparency and accountability in the Zimbabwe National Army following “subtle threats and brazen direct pressure from state security agents, particularly military intelligence operatives.” The publication rankled the army recently when it reported that three senior generals were getting at least \$400,000

³ US Department of State (24 June 2024) *Trafficking in Persons Report 2024: Zimbabwe*, p.3

⁴ Zimeye (19 June 2024) *Massive Corruption Scandal Uncovered at Bulawayo Traffic West Police Station*

⁵ US Department of State (22 April 2024) *2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Zimbabwe*

⁶ US Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) (26 April 2024) *Zimbabwe Country Security Report 2024*

⁷ World Bank Zim March 2024 (27 February 2024) *Zimbabwe Gender Based Violence Assessment - Scope, Programming, Gaps and Entry Points*, p.21

for housing but still subsidizing themselves through corruption to get upmarket housing in a price range that was above their pay grade.”⁸

The Zimbabwean in February 2024 reported that: “Chinhamo said corruption within the Zimbabwe Republic Police was rife in Kwekwe.”⁹

In November 2023 *Business Monitor Online* notes that: “Zimbabwe's business community benefits from the country's positive relationships with its bordering markets and membership in multiple important organisations that reduce the likelihood of interstate conflict. Though economically driven crimes like theft are growing more prevalent, terrorism, cybercrime, and other small-scale, violent, and organised crimes also provide a minimal danger. Due to extreme resource restrictions combined with police corruption and inconsistency, companies will need to rely on private protection services.”¹⁰

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Lexis Nexis

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New Humanitarian
Online Newspapers
Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database
Reliefweb
United Kingdom Home Office
United States Department of State
UNHCR Refworld

Contact Information

Refugee Documentation Centre
Legal Aid Board
48/49 North Brunswick Street
Dublin 7
Ireland

Email: research@legalaidboard.ie