

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	106
Land:	Zimbabwe
Kilde:	Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland).
Titel:	Recent information on political violence perpetrated by ZANU-PF towards opponents.
Udgivet:	22. november 2012
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	3. januar 2013



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Zimbabwe - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 21 and 22 November 2012

Recent information on political violence perpetrated by Zanu- PF towards opponents

A report issued in November 2012 by the *Zimbabwe Peace Project/ZPP* states:

“As the country’s major political parties gear up in preparing for another electoral cycle, political tensions are slowly rising across the country with 444 cases recorded in October up from the 365 incidents witnessed during the month of September” (Zimbabwe Peace Project/ZPP (15 November 2012) *ZPP Monthly Monitor: October 2012*, p.2).

SW Radio Africa in November 2012 notes:

“Brutal assault on an MDC-T official and his wife, which happened Wednesday night in Kadoma, has fuelled anger among Zimbabweans and sparked fears that political violence is intensifying ahead of elections due next year” (SW Radio Africa (3 November 2012) *Zimbabwe’s MDC party terms attack by ZANU-PF members as “politically motivated”*).

This report also points out that:

“This attack is just the latest in the ongoing violence against anyone perceived to support the opposition” (ibid).

A report published in October 2012 by Zimbabwe Peace Project/ZPP

“Four years after the signing of the GPA on September 15, 2008, the political environment in Zimbabwe remained very tense due to the on-going impasse in the Constitution-making process. However, the month of September witnessed a significant decline in incidents of politically motivated human rights violations with 365 cases down from the 462 witnessed in August. The COPAC led process has stalled: raising political tension and deepening polarization as the partners in the GPA prepare for the Second All Stakeholders Conference with hardened and opposing positions on the COPAC draft constitution which ironically- was co-authored by their representatives in the Constitutional Parliamentary select committee (COPAC). As the political parties prepare for the constitutional referendum and the upcoming elections scheduled for next year, people’s rights continue to be violated. The month under review witnessed both inter and intra-party human rights violations from the country’s major political parties” (Zimbabwe Peace Project/ZPP (15 October 2012) *ZPP Monthly Monitor: September 2012*).

In October 2012 a publication issued by *IRIN News* notes:

“Ahead of parliamentary and presidential elections, the sabotaging of businesses and projects affiliated with Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's MDC party has grown increasingly widespread” (IRIN News (11 October 2012) *Zimbabwe: The politics of suffering*).

In October 2012 a document released by the *Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum* points out that:

“Fundamental rights and freedoms of expression, association and assembly continue to be systematically violated by the Government of Zimbabwe” (Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (12 October 2012) *Statement on 52nd Session of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights*, p.2).

A report released in October 2012 by *IRIN News* states:

“An attack on a political rally by uniformed soldiers is stoking fears of a reprise of state-sponsored violence against NGOs, human rights activists and parties opposed to President Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF in the lead-up to a referendum on a draft constitution and scheduled parliamentary and presidential elections in 2013” (IRIN News (1 October 2012) *Zimbabwe: Security sector reform key to peaceful elections*).

The *United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office* published a report in September 2012 where it is stated:

“The human rights environment in Zimbabwe during the period July to September continued to follow the trend seen over previous months with a decline in violence but increase in concerns around intimidation and targeted attacks” (United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office (30 September 2012) *Quarterly Updates: Zimbabwe*).

In August 2012 a report published by *Human Rights Watch* points out that:

“In Zimbabwe, the government's failure to enact human rights reforms and continuing political repression have raised concerns about the national referendum on a new constitution in 2012 and possible elections in early 2013” (Human Rights Watch (15 August 2012) *SADC: Press Angola, Zimbabwe on Rights as Elections Near*).

References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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