

THE FUTURE OF U.S.-ZIMBABWE RELATIONS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH,
GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2015

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH,
GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:57 p.m., in room 2200, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher H. Smith (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. The subcommittee will come to order.

And let me begin by apologizing to all of you, especially our distinguished witnesses, for the lateness. We did have a series of 10 votes. Right?

Ms. BASS. Fourteen.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Fourteen votes. So it took a little time, and I apologize.

Good afternoon.

Zimbabwe is a country, as we know, the size of Montana with a population of nearly 14 million people. However, its mineral wealth gives it an outsized importance. The southern Africa nation is the world's largest source of platinum, gold group-metals, and has significant reserves of nickel, gold, chromium, and dozens of other metals and minerals. Significant diamond reserves were discovered in 2006.

Currently, about 40 percent of the country's foreign exchange is earned from the export of these metals and minerals. But, above all, its people are its greatest resource.

The abundance of such minerals, however, and their exploitation, which has driven the relationship between many in the West and Zimbabwe, since its colonization by Cecil Rhodes of the British South Africa Company in 1889 on behalf of Great Britain, the area once known as Southern Rhodesia has experienced a tumultuous history. The White minority gained self-governance in 1922, and a 1930 Land Apportionment Act restricted Black access to land, making many Africans laborers and not landowners.

In 1964, the White minority government unsuccessfully sought independence from Great Britain and then unilaterally declared independence a year later under White rule. This move sparked international outrage in economic sanctions, and that regime was never widely recognized by the international community, though the support of White ruled South Africa enabled the government to limp along.

Meanwhile, Black opposition to minority rule, which began in the 1930s, erupted in the gorilla war in 1972. Attempts to end the conflict diplomatically failed until the 1979 talks brokered by Great Britain resulted in British supervised independence elections.

The winner of that election was Robert Mugabe, leader of the Zimbabwe African National Union, or ZANU, who at age 91 continues to rule this country in large part through intimidation and manipulation of elections.

As a hero of the independence and majority rule movements, however, Mugabe has enjoyed the support of many other African leaders who have considered him an honored elder and have generally declined to join international efforts to sanction his government. This has placed the United States in an awkward position with limited African support for political and economic reforms that the people so desperately need in Zimbabwe.

Although many observers have credited the Mugabe Government with productive management until fairly recent years, there were political problems from the beginning of his rule. For example, Mugabe fired fellow independence leader Joshua Nkomo in 1982 and then launched a campaign to suppress what his government called a rebellion by pro-Nkomo forces.

The Mugabe regime has been accused of killing thousands of ethnic Ndebele citizens over the next few years to end the supposed rebellion, assisted by military advisers from East Germany and North Korea.

Once one of the leading industrial nations in Africa, Zimbabwe has long been in an economic downward spiral in the 1990s. It began then. Squatters, with the support of the Zimbabwe Government, seized White farms they claim to have been stolen by White settlers in the past. Despite government assurances these farms were not transferred to Black farm workers, but, rather, to cronies of the Mugabe government, euphemistically called veterans, who lacked agricultural experience.

Both Blacks and Whites in Zimbabwe acknowledge that the land policies have been unfair, but the manner of addressing this problem led to serious economic problems for the country. Agricultural production fell, and the manufacturing sector, heavily tied to agriculture, also diminished.

Efforts to squeeze currency from shrinking national reserves, from businesses, coupled with the disastrous requirement that businesses use the fictitious exchange rate, caused retailers to lose money with each and every sale. The effort to close the many vendors who supply tourists with souvenirs and citizens with necessary household items was yet another milestone in Zimbabwe's economic collapse.

By the year 2006, the year-on-year inflation exceeded 1,000 percent. Devaluation of the currency and the subsequent use of foreign currency are credited with eventually preventing a complete economic collapse.

Zimbabwe and the United States have had a tempestuous relationship since that southern African nation emerged from White minority rule. Part of the problem has been resentment by Zimbabwean President Mugabe and his closest advisers against the United States for not supporting their liberation movement, the

backdrop to which was the geopolitical conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States.

Another part of the problem has been the justifiable public criticism of repressive political policies by the Mugabe government by successive U.S. administrations. Consequently, the minimal communications between our two governments have contributed to suspicions and an inability for the U.S. officials to reach out to and be cooperative with Zimbabwe officials.

Successive elections have been the subject of opposition and international criticism for the lack of political space, allowed for those who would challenge the ruling ZANU party. Arrests, incarcerations, torture in custody, beatings at public rallies and demonstrations, and disappearances of government opponents have denied legitimacy to the Zimbabwe election process.

The country's commitment to democratic governance has been further placed in question due to a series of repressive laws preventing freedoms of speech, association, and movement. As if the government's repressive tactics are not troubling enough, political jockeying in Zimbabwe, including the dismissal of Vice President Joice Mujuru, places the succession to President Mugabe in doubt, which puts U.S. policy in question.

Today's hearing will examine current U.S. policy toward Zimbabwe and the prospects for an enhanced relationship, depending on events that have not yet taken place. Of course, in foreign policy, one cannot wait until the crisis materializes in order to create a planned response and have contingencies. A leader nearing the century mark, presiding over a fractious political scene in a country that has experienced political and economic turmoil, creates a situation which planning for positive outcome to regime change must be devised.

Zimbabwe is a country rich in both natural and human potential. Once the resentments of the current old guard have passed and democratic governance can be established, U.S.-Zimbabwe relations can become what they have never been, harmonious and mutually beneficial.

I would like to yield to my colleague, Ms. Bass, for any opening comments.

Ms. BASS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This hearing will allow us to explore important issues that affect our relations with Zimbabwe, including governance and accountability, economic development, and press freedoms and human rights.

I want to thank today's witnesses for participating in this hearing, including Dr. Smith from the U.S. State Department and representatives from civil organizations focusing on the issues of labor, trade, and human rights.

I look forward to hearing your perspectives on developments in Zimbabwe and the country's relationship with us. I also hope to hear from witnesses as to how the U.S. is currently working with either nongovernmental organizations or Zimbabwe civil society groups to support transparency and accountability in governance, increase political space, and improve economic environment.

At the beginning of his tenure, sadly, I mean, Mugabe was praised by many as a force for liberating the Zimbabwean people.

Obviously, the current government has been marked by challenges in suppression of voices, a restrictive electoral process, and a lack of transparency in national elections.

With little opposition, the current administration, as well as the country's Parliament, is overwhelmingly comprised of members of Mugabe's political party, making voices of dissent hard-pressed to have their perspectives and grievances heard.

With President Mugabe as chair of both the Southern African Development Community and the African Union, which, obviously, are key regional bodies for both economic development and governance, I would like to hear from today's witnesses what they think the effect of his leadership will be on both bodies, particularly with so many elections happening on the continent in the next couple of years.

And in terms of U.S. policy toward Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 sets out a range of targeted economic sanctions and restrictions on certain types of aid to the region. Zimbabwe is also currently ineligible for trade benefits under other U.S. initiatives. I would like to know from the witnesses what you feel the impact of those policies have been.

In closing, I would like to recognize and thank our witnesses once again. And I hope to explore the most effective approaches to ensure that we improve U.S.-Zimbabwe relations through supporting its citizens' efforts for increased democratic governance and economic opportunity.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Ms. Bass, thank you so very much.

We are very privileged to welcome a new member of the subcommittee and a new number of Congress, Congressman Daniel Donovan. Just a brief bio on Dan.

He was elected in New York, represents the 11th Congressional District, which encompasses all of Staten Island and southern Brooklyn. Congressman Donovan was elected on May 5 and sworn in on May 13.

A native Staten Islander, Congressman Donovan has dedicated his life to serving the people of New York. He began his career as a prosecutor, serving 8 years under Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau.

Congressman Donovan began serving his native Staten Island in 1996 as chief of staff to then-Borough President Guy Molinari.

I would note, parenthetically, that Guy Molinari and I got elected to Congress in 1980 when Ronald Reagan got elected. So Guy is an old friend, a good friend, but he served as his chief of staff.

In January 2002, he was appointed Deputy Borough President under Borough President James Molinaro. In November 2003, Congressman Donovan was elected Richmond County District Attorney, where he remained in that office for over a decade. He is a member of Homeland Security and Foreign Affairs Committees and now a new member of our subcommittee.

And welcome, Congressman Donovan. I yield to you.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you very much, Chair.

Thank you, Ms. Bass, for your welcoming.

Being a Member of Congress for 3 weeks and this being my first subcommittee meeting, I look forward to hearing from all witnesses. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you very much, my friend Dan.

We now would like to welcome Dr. Shannon Smith, who was appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of African Affairs in May 2013. Prior to joining the State Department, she served as senior policy adviser for Africa and Global Health for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee from 2007 to 2013.

As a senior staffer for Africa, she traveled widely on the continent, leading staff delegations and accompanying the chairman on numerous trips to Sudan and South Sudan, during the process leading up to the 2011 referendum on independence. Prior to her work in the policy area, Dr. Smith was a history professor.

And I yield such time as you may consume.

STATEMENT OF SHANNON SMITH, PH.D., DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Bass.

And welcome, Congressman Donovan.

Thank you for holding this hearing on Zimbabwe and for inviting me to testify before you. We appreciate the deep interest of this subcommittee and are pleased to work with Congress in support of our national interests in Zimbabwe and in the region.

Last month, traveling with my counterpart from the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, I went to Zimbabwe to engage in a series of meetings with our Embassy, the government, opposition members, and civil society. The purposes of the trip were to reaffirm U.S. messages of support for the people of Zimbabwe, to communicate our hopes for democratic reforms and economic development, and to better understand the situation on the ground.

Fundamentally, Zimbabwe remains trapped in a moment of time that has been unfolding for decades. President Robert Mugabe maintains his hold on power, as you noted, as a result of the 2013 elections that were neither free nor fair. The country's economy is failing, driven down not by international sanctions, but by national policies and rampant unemployment. Once a breadbasket for the region, it faces major food security challenges in the months to come.

Political rights remain curtailed. Outright violence has declined compared to previous years, but prominent examples such as the disappearance of activist Itai Dzamara reminds Zimbabweans that their safety is elusive. Both the ruling party and the opposition appear to be fragmenting, adding to an environment of uncertainty and, therefore, unease.

Against this backdrop U.S. interests in Zimbabwe remain the same, a peaceful democratic and prosperous country that provides for its people and contributes to regional stability. To realize our interests, we strongly believe in engagement with government and nongovernment alike, to promote our values, and work together in areas of common concern. We view this ongoing dialogue as part of building the bilateral relationship.

Current circumstances do not merit a change in our policy, but we remain hopeful that in the future they will. We strive to balance our targeted sanctions on those who have impinged upon

human rights and the rule of law with our encouragement of economic reforms and investment.

We stand by the commitments we made to the people of Zimbabwe at their independence in 1980 to work together to promote democratic institutions, equitable economic growth, public health, and food security. To this end, the United States has provided over \$2.6 billion in development and humanitarian assistance to Zimbabwe since its independence.

Zimbabwe's economy, as I noted, is failing. While the country made headway in curbing hyperinflation during the period of the government of national unity between 2008 and 2013, today the economy is again in desperate straits. The civil service wage bill alone eats up an unsustainable 80 percent of total expenditures, leaving very little in the government to run operations or support investments in the country's degrading infrastructure.

The formal economy has shrunk to a small fraction of Zimbabwe's citizens. Unemployment estimates range as high as 80 percent or even higher. To add to the country's woes, poor rains, building on disastrous agricultural policies in past years, are projected to leave millions of Zimbabweans facing food insecurity. The Government of Zimbabwe continues to blame U.S. targeted sanctions for its economic hardships. But, in reality, these bleak conditions were created by the government itself.

The World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index rates Zimbabwe as 171st out of 189 countries in the world. Transparency International also places them in the bottom 20 in its Corruption Perceptions Index. Other barriers to international investment include a lack of clarity about indigenization policies, failures to safeguard property rights, and the uneven application of the rule of law.

Political developments and uncertainties are exacerbating economic problems and vice versa. Internal struggles over possible succession within ZANU-PF, the ruling party, continue to dominate political discourse and impede hopes for reform.

In December 2014, President Mugabe dismissed one of his Vice Presidents, Joice Mujuru, who had long been thought to be a possible favorite to succeed him. This was followed by a series of cabinet shuffles and party expulsions of her perceived supporters.

Within the party, factions are forming as potential successors vie for positions of power. In the meantime, at age 91, President Mugabe remains firmly in charge, and there are no indications he plans to step down.

Zimbabwe's opposition has failed to capitalize on these fissures in ZANU-PF and unite behind a common vision. The opposition has become increasingly splintered itself with new breakaway parties forming under other leadership.

This political fracturing underscores the importance of the United States standing firmly on democratic principles, rule of law and human rights, and encouraging the government and opposition alike to make progress in those areas.

The United States places the protection of human rights at the center of our foreign policy and has longstanding concerns about violations of human rights, including intimidation, harassment, and torture.

The United States remains gravely concerned about reports of the forced disappearance of Zimbabwe and civil society activist Itai Dzamara on March 9. To date, his whereabouts and his well-being remain unknown.

Mr. Dzamara gained notoriety after he presented a letter to the Office of the President and Cabinet in 2014, demanding that President Mugabe step down for failing the Zimbabwean people.

During our recent visit to Zimbabwe, my colleague and I raised this case with the government and in virtually every public and private meeting. The United States stands with Mr. Dzamara and the people of Zimbabwe in defending the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

And for all its challenges—and their numbers are legion—I was struck on this trip once again by the resilience and tremendous capacity of the Zimbabwean people. As one gentleman told me, there is nothing in his country that is not fixable. The United States shares that conviction and that hope.

When I was in Harare last month, several people asked me as well if Americans still cared about what was happening in their country. Hearings such as this are, in fact, proof that we do. So thank you for providing me this opportunity to speak with your subcommittee today. Thank you for holding this hearing. And I welcome any questions that you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Smith follows:]

**Statement by
Deputy Assistant Secretary Shannon Smith
Bureau of African Affairs
U.S. Department of State
before the**

**U.S. House Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee on Africa, Global Health, Global
Human Rights, and International Organizations**

June 3, 2015

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing on Zimbabwe and for inviting me to testify before you. We appreciate the deep interest of this Committee and are pleased to work closely with Congress in support of our national interests in Zimbabwe and the region. Last month, traveling with my counterpart from the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, I went to Zimbabwe to engage in a series of meetings with our embassy, the government, opposition members, and civil society. The purpose of the trip was to reaffirm U.S. messages of support for the people of Zimbabwe, to communicate our hopes for democratic reforms and economic development, and to better understand the situation on the ground.

Fundamentally, Zimbabwe remains trapped in a moment in time that has been unfolding for decades. President Robert Mugabe maintains his hold on power, as a result of the 2013 elections that were neither free nor fair. The country's economy is failing, driven down not by international sanctions but by national policies and rampant unemployment. Once a breadbasket for the region, it faces major food security challenges in the months to come. Political rights remain curtailed. Outright violence has declined compared to previous years, but prominent examples, such as the disappearance of activist Itai Dzamara, remind Zimbabweans that their safety is elusive. Both the ruling party and the opposition appear to be fragmenting, adding to an environment of uncertainty and therefore unease.

Against this backdrop, U.S. interests in Zimbabwe remain the same: a peaceful, democratic, and prosperous Zimbabwe that provides for its people and contributes to regional stability. To realize our interests, we strongly believe in engagement with government and non-government alike to promote our values and work together in areas of common concern. We view this ongoing dialogue as part

of building the bilateral relationship. Current circumstances do not merit a change in our policy, but we remain hopeful that in the future they will. We strive to balance our targeted sanctions on those who have impinged upon human rights and the rule of law with our encouragement of economic reforms and investment. We stand by the commitments we made to the people of Zimbabwe at their independence in 1980 to work together to promote democratic institutions, equitable economic growth, public health, and food security. To this end, the United States has provided over \$2.6 billion in development assistance to Zimbabwe since its independence.

Zimbabwe's economy, as I noted, is failing. While the country had made headway in curbing hyperinflation during the period of the Government of National Unity, between 2008 and 2013, today the economy is again in desperate straits. The civil service wage bill alone eats up an unsustainable 80 percent of total expenditures, leaving very little in the budget to run government operations or support investment in the country's degraded infrastructure. The formal economy has shrunk to a small fraction of Zimbabwe's citizens: unemployment estimates range as high as 80 percent or even higher. To add to the country's woes, poor rains, building on disastrous agricultural policies in past years, are projected to leave millions of Zimbabweans facing food insecurity.

The government of Zimbabwe continues to blame U.S. targeted sanctions for its economic hardship but in reality these bleak conditions were created by the government itself. The World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index rates Zimbabwe as 171st out of 189 countries in the world. Transparency International also places them in the bottom twenty on its Corruption Perceptions Index. Other barriers to international investment include a lack of clarity about indigenization policies, failures to safeguard property rights, and the uneven application of the rule of law.

Political developments and uncertainties are exacerbating economic problems. Internal struggles over possible succession within ZANU-PF, the ruling party, continue to dominate political discourse and impede any hopes for reform. In December 2014, President Mugabe dismissed one of his vice presidents, Joice Mujuru, long thought to be a favorite to succeed him. This was followed by a series of cabinet shuffles and party expulsions of her perceived supporters. Within the party, factions are forming as potential successors vie for positions of power. In the meantime, at 91, President Mugabe remains firmly in charge and there are no indications he plans to step down.

Zimbabwe's opposition has failed to capitalize on the fissures in ZANU-PF and unite behind a common vision. The opposition has become increasingly splintered itself, with new, breakaway parties forming under other leadership. This political fracturing underlines the importance of the United States standing firmly on democratic principles, rule of law, and human rights, and encouraging the government and opposition alike to make progress in those areas.

The United States places the protection of human rights at the center of our foreign policy and has long-standing concerns about violations of human rights, including intimidation, harassment, and torture. The United States remains gravely concerned about reports of the forced disappearance of Zimbabwean civil society activist Itai Dzamara on March 9. To date, his whereabouts and well-being remain unknown. Mr. Dzamara gained notoriety after he presented a letter to the Office of the President and Cabinet in 2014 demanding that President Mugabe step down for failing the Zimbabwean people. During our recent visit to Zimbabwe, my colleague and I raised this case with the government and in virtually every meeting. The United States stands with Mr. Dzamara and the people of Zimbabwe in defending the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

For all its challenges – and their numbers are legion – I was struck once again by the resilience and tremendous capacities of the Zimbabwean people. As one gentleman told me, “There is nothing in this country that is not fixable.” The United States shares that conviction and that hope. When I was in Harare last month, several people asked me if Americans still cared about what was happening in Zimbabwe. Hearings such as this are proof that, in fact, we do.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to speak with your Committee today. I welcome any questions you may have.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Dr. Smith, thank you so very much, and thanks for underscoring the fact that the people are not only resilient, but they have hope. And I think the more we can build on that hope and do whatever tangibly we can do to assist so there is a matriculation from the current crisis to a better day, the better.

And along those lines, I am very concerned, and maybe you can elaborate on that, having just been there and seen on the ground what is happening.

I will never forget, you know, when Andrew Natsios was head of USAID and he worked for years in the emergency response area—made the point—and you said it again when you said how Zimbabwe was a breadbasket—he, too, was beside himself that the early warning indicators are that a famine was in the offing and that starvation and malnutrition was about to go from bad to worse.

And I am wondering if you can give any insights as to the state of play right now. Because we know there are some concerns about food insecurity in Zimbabwe. And what is projected for the next 6 months or so with regards to that situation?

Ms. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Yes. As Mr. Natsios had noted, and as we continue to note, this is a really productive, fertile country, but it is not one with effective production. Its policies have made that certain.

Last year they enjoyed really good rains and they had pretty good harvests. This year that has not been the case. And so the forecasts for maize, in particular, are pretty grim, and there are potentially millions of people in Zimbabwe who may be in need of food assistance.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Are there contingency plans underway, USAID, from a disaster—

Ms. SMITH. There are. Yes.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY [continuing]. Assistance point of view?

Ms. SMITH. Yes.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. And has the early-warning mechanism worked in terms of forecasting what might be needed and when?

Ms. SMITH. I think it has. And I think that they are forecasting what is described as crisis or stage 3 of 5 levels of food insecurity.

So it is a situation in which the international community does have time to respond. And some of the neighboring countries and others can look for support there, but it is very much on our minds.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Now, are we ready, notwithstanding sanctions—because, obviously, humanitarian trumps sanctions, particularly targeted sanctions. Are we ready? Do we have sufficient sources to meet that need, working in concert with our international partners?

Ms. SMITH. To the best of my knowledge, yes.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. If you could get back, you know, for the record with, you know, an analysis of what it looks like, you know, just so that we are helpful, too, on the congressional side, you know, to make sure that we don't get a déjà vu with people suffering from that malnutrition.

[The information referred to follows:]

WRITTEN RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM SHANNON SMITH, PH.D., TO QUESTION ASKED DURING THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Dr. Smith. USAID's Famine Early Warning Systems (FEWS) Network's outlook for April to September 2015 projects significant food gaps in the southern parts of Zimbabwe due to drought. It notes that very poor households in the south of the country typically receive large assistance flows. It further notes that food assistance and cash transfers by the World Food Program (WFP) and the government of Zimbabwe are expected to begin during the outlook period and that the WFP productive asset creation activities for non-labor constrained households will take place from June to October, targeting some 200,000 beneficiaries. The FEWS report also indicates that the Ministry of Social Welfare likely will continue supporting vulnerable households through monthly cash transfers.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Let me ask you, if I could, about when on September 12, 2013, you testified—and Ms. Bass and I were very happy to welcome you then when you provided expert testimony—you made a point that we will not be swayed by the attempts of President Mugabe and his party to blame Zimbabwe's economic misfortunes and disastrous economic mismanagement on the United States and other countries' governments that maintain targeted sanctions on select groups of individuals and entities.

Is that still the case, there is a blame game going on?

And, most importantly, if you could, just for the record again outline those sanctions. What is in place? How targeted are they? And did you hear appeals to change those sanctions when you were there?

Ms. SMITH. Yes, sir. We did. And our policy does remain largely the same. We have sanctions on fewer than 200 individuals or entities, approximately 106 individuals and 70 entities, and they are intended to be targeted. They are aimed at individuals who have disrupted democracy or engaged in corruption and other acts.

The Department of Treasury, the OFAC office, evaluates those situations. The list of individuals itself is considered to be a living, breathing list. We want to examine it periodically. We want to make sure that it is still valid and that if there are people who should be removed or entities or added to it, that is part of the process. But, more fundamentally, it remains the strongest statement, I think, of American values.

Does the Zimbabwe Government continue to blame their woes on it? Absolutely. They attempt to use it as a propaganda tool. And we discussed these questions with a number of people in Zimbabwe, from the business community to civil society, including human rights activists, and opinion in Zimbabwe is divided, there is no question. Even among the human rights community, there are some who argue that, "Well, it is a propaganda tool for the government. So you should consider it."

I think, in our mind, the government's attempts to use it as a propaganda tool don't change the fundamental reasons for which sanctions were imposed. And so then it becomes incumbent on us to offer a counterargument, which we have done. There is no better representative of these values and of the American desire to see the other almost 14 million people in Zimbabwe prosper than our

Ambassador, Bruce Wharton, who does everything he can to promote economic growth outside of that small section of targeted sanctions.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Dr. Smith, in your testimony, you made a disturbing observation that Zimbabwe's opposition has failed to capitalize on the fissures in the ZANU-PF and unite behind a common vision. The opposition has become increasingly splintered.

One, could you elaborate on that? What does that look like in terms of splintering? Is it just a multitude of parties?

Secondly—and my final question—Imani Countess the African Regional Program Director for the Solidarity Center, offers criticism—and I would just like to know what your response is to it—that U.S. funding for democracy, human rights, and governance programs in Africa through the U.S. Agency for International Development has been declining despite extraordinary need, down 40 percent since 2008. And I am wondering if, you know, you can provide some insight into that criticism.

Ms. SMITH. Thank you.

Yes. On the question of the opposition, it is a matter of and record now that the opposition has been splintering, that the Movement for Democratic Change now has multiple Movements for Democratic Change within it under separate leadership. And some of that is about differences of opinion, about differences of leadership. But I think that what is happening is that there is no unifying message at the moment that stretches across these parties.

Certainly young people told us that they were looking for a more unifying message across the opposition and for a vision of where someone would take their country beyond the partisan questions themselves. Those are differences that are going to play out and that is up to the people of Zimbabwe and their leaders on how that goes.

So I think that, for us, it is most important to continue to talk about the broader issues of reform and to continue to support reformers. And the political parties will evolve as they evolve, and we hope that, through that process, they come forward with a real vision for where they want to take their country.

Democracy and governance remains a top priority for our Government clearly in Africa and elsewhere. We all know it is a difficult budget environment, and we are all looking for ways to do more. In Zimbabwe, we have exercised democracy and governance programs through examples such as voter education during a constitutional process so that people in Zimbabwe understood, as the constitution was being drafted and voted on, what that meant for their country.

Other examples of what we are doing with the money that we do have are, for example, connecting women in agriculture with Members of Parliament so that they hear their voices and that they understand that, trying to support civil society in a variety of ways, trying to make sure that those human rights actors have a place to be heard. And so, in spite of a difficult budget environment, we are going to continue to try and do that.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Ranking Member Bass.

Ms. BASS. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just following up on that, I am wondering if there is going to be any reorganization. I mean, I know that there were a lot of initiatives at USAID, and I know there is a change in leadership now. And I didn't know if funds were being reconsidered to increase in the democracy and governance area.

Ms. SMITH. I think I would have to leave that to my colleagues from USAID, but I can ask them to get back to you on that.

Ms. BASS. Okay. You mentioned sanctions and you mentioned the list being fluid. And I was wondering, number one, if there are sanctions against the Vice President and if you could speak a little bit about it.

Ms. SMITH. Yes. The First Vice President is a sanctioned individual. In general, we prefer to talk about sanctions in a broader way than to dwell on the individuals themselves.

But they are based on past acts. And along with the other individuals who are on that list, we continue to maintain.

Ms. BASS. Well, I really would like to understand how that works. I mean, I know, in theory, there is a sanction against an individual. I don't really know what that means. He is not coming to the U.S. So what exactly does that mean? How do you have sanctions against an individual in Zimbabwe?

Ms. SMITH. Sanctions can take different forms. They can take, for example, travel bans.

Ms. BASS. Right.

Ms. SMITH. They can take prohibitions on American enterprise, American businesses or banks doing business with that individual.

Ms. BASS. But how does that really have—I mean, just taking one of the individuals, how does that have an impact if they are not coming to the U.S. and they don't do business? He is the Vice President, for example. So how is that meaningful?

Ms. SMITH. I think the degree to which the government protests the sanctions and the degree to which, in meetings with us and others, that they argue that they should be lifted speaks to their effect.

Ms. BASS. Yeah. Well, but, as you mentioned, there is a lot of different types of sanctions. I understand the economic sanctions. I understand that. And I am sure they are protesting all of the sanctions because everybody does.

But I am just wondering how that actually has an effect. So it is more a political effect than symbolic as opposed to it really hitting them the individual sanctions?

Ms. SMITH. I mean, in our case, these are bilateral sanctions. So they are not global in scope. They can be active in other economic affairs.

But I think they do have an economic effect. They certainly have a political effect. And they have a branding effect.

Ms. BASS. Okay. In recent years, Zimbabwe has strengthened trade and military ties with China, including the construction of a Chinese military base in eastern Zimbabwe.

If you could, speak to that. I think there are obviously security implications for the U.S., for a military alliance between the two countries. But what do we know about that development?

Ms. SMITH. I think the countries clearly enjoy a close relationship. China is active in much of Africa, as you have seen in many places, I know.

Ms. BASS. We often talk about it economically, but not militarily.

Ms. SMITH. And in a country which is suffering from so much poverty, military expenditures in those ways are difficult, it seems to me, to justify.

I think that the Chinese Government, too, is looking at Zimbabwe and certainly on the economic front, asking some hard questions about investing in that country and providing other forms of assistance.

Ms. BASS. They are asking hard. What does that mean?

Ms. SMITH. I think that, like everyone else, they want to know where, for example, Zimbabwe's indigenization laws are going to take them—

Ms. BASS. Right.

Ms. SMITH [continuing]. In terms of investment.

And I think that, as long as that uncertainty prevails, I think even from countries from China, which they have enjoyed a relationship over the years—I think they will find it increasingly difficult to do business.

Ms. BASS. Could you speak to what their current investments are in Zimbabwe, the Chinese? I mean, I am going to ask you some more about the military base in a minute, but—

Ms. SMITH. I don't have dollar figures on them precisely.

Ms. BASS. No. Not the dollar figures. What sectors they are particularly active in.

Ms. SMITH. I think mining in particular. As the chairman noted in his opening statement, it is the biggest business there, and mineral resources and other resources, other extractive industries.

Ms. BASS. Are they employing Zimbabweans on the military base?

Ms. SMITH. I couldn't tell you that.

Ms. BASS. Okay. I mean, you know, one of the characteristics of some Chinese investment is they go over and build roads and build other things, but they employ Chinese, not necessarily folks from the country.

Okay. I yield, Mr. Chair.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you very much.

Mr. Donovan.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

When you speak to the citizens of Zimbabwe, do they know of our support? Do they know that the United States supports them?

Ms. SMITH. I think some do and some don't. If they only listen to the government in Zimbabwe, they would not know.

Mr. DONOVAN. Okay. But when you go there and your colleagues go there, they are aware that we support them?

Ms. SMITH. Yes. And I think there is a lot of appreciation. There was enormous warmth that I found toward the United States in Zimbabwe.

Mr. DONOVAN. I thought I heard in your opening statement that we have given—I think it was \$8 billion in aid. Was that a correct figure? Or something around that figure.

Does that aid get to the people who need it or does their country withhold that from the people who are in need?

Ms. SMITH. No. In fact, we very much direct that aid. It is \$2.6 billion since their independence in 1980. Of that, last year we provided about \$175 million in aid. About two-thirds of that was for health assistance, much of that for HIV/AIDS, also to fight malaria and tuberculosis.

We work through civil society, through nongovernmental organizations, faith-based organizations. Those are our partners who help deliver that assistance.

Mr. DONOVAN. And that gets to the citizens who are in need.

Ms. SMITH. It does.

Mr. DONOVAN. Wonderful.

Ms. SMITH. I think we have saved hundreds of thousands, probably millions, of lives over the years.

Mr. DONOVAN. Wonderful. Wonderful.

Are there other things that we should be doing?

Ms. SMITH. I think it is important that we keep the lines of communication open. I think that we want to maintain a respectful dialogue, and I think that that is one way that we underscore the importance of our message.

It is also important that we continue to provide the kind of support we have and the kind of platform for people who are brave enough to speak up in Zimbabwe to help provide the opportunity for them to do so.

Mr. DONOVAN. And your direct support gives us credibility with the people there?

Ms. SMITH. Yes.

Mr. DONOVAN. All right. Wonderful.

And my last question: Do our allies assist us at all? Are they assisting the people who are in need in Zimbabwe?

Ms. SMITH. Yes. There are a number of countries that are active and providing assistance, sir.

Mr. DONOVAN. Wonderful. Thank you, Doctor.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Donovan. Mr. Clawson.

Mr. CLAWSON. Thanks for coming.

So when I think of Zimbabwe—and I have been to Zimbabwe—I kind of think of opportunity lost. And if I went back to the 1980s or 1990s and I thought of Mugabe and the leadership and would have guessed that we would be where we are today, who would have sensed that. Right?

And so my own thinking and feeling about the country evolves over time, and I am now to the point where I say to myself: Until we have new leadership at the top of the country, why would we do anything besides humanitarian? Am I wrong about that?

And I am not saying we are doing a lot besides humanitarian. But, you know, it feels like not a good—with that leadership, it feels like a place to do the right thing for the people and the humanitarian aspects of it. But, beyond that, pretty hopeless in terms of using our money and resources. Am I right about that?

Ms. SMITH. Well, our policy for a number of years now has been essentially characterized as humanitarian plus, so strict, clear life-saving aid, assistance, such as antiretrovirals for people with

HIV/AIDS or food assistance for someone who is dying or faces starvation.

But at the same time we are also providing some assistance in areas such as trying to create conditions for food security, so promoting some better agricultural practices for small landholders in rural Zimbabwe. I think that is still worth doing.

Mr. CLAWSON. Do you?

Ms. SMITH. I do. Because, if we don't do it, their government isn't going to do it, and no one will. And I think the other thing we are doing is we are laying the foundation for the future and for what comes next in Zimbabwe.

It is a country that could be exporting food. It is a country that could be a source of larger stability in the region. And I think we want to prepare for that day.

Mr. CLAWSON. And so, in preparing for that day, it also feels like, to me, that, if I was a typical citizen in Zimbabwe, I wouldn't really much believe in free markets and capitalism or anything else because a small amount of people keep everything. And so, no matter how hard I work, I don't get a lot to eat and I get sick. Am I wrong about that?

Ms. SMITH. They are really an impressive collection of people, and it is a very entrepreneurial society. It is a country in which, sadly, one of the main forms of economic activity right now is people who are street vendors with almost nothing, trying desperately to make a living.

Mr. CLAWSON. But what percentage of the wealth is kept by just a small amount of the ruling oligopoly, if you will?

Ms. SMITH. An enormous percentage. But to give you an example, the Young African Leaders Initiative has an entrepreneur segment to it where about a third of the people who come as part of the Mandela fellows, come to Washington and to American universities for a number of months.

Zimbabweans participate in that program and they do so with enormous energy and enthusiasm. And they are people who are not—essentially, in spite of all the difficulties of doing business—and they are pretty frank about that—they are not really looking at things through a political lens. They are looking through an economic lens and still seeing their country as a place of opportunity.

It is a country that still very much values education. It formerly had probably the highest levels of literacy on the continent, and they are still quite high. People still really sacrifice to send their kids to school, and they do it because they see it as investing in their future. So they haven't given up on that.

Mr. CLAWSON. Can I have one more question? Is that okay?

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Sure.

Mr. CLAWSON. And what are the conditions of the—I mean, a revenue producer for this country was always the natural resources and the wildlife and so forth. I have read things in the last several years that leave me a little depressed.

How would you characterize the state of the wildlife and the possibility for tourism coming back, et cetera?

Ms. SMITH. Both depressing and still there. That—

Mr. CLAWSON. So not done yet?

Ms. SMITH. Not done yet. And Americans are—

Mr. CLAWSON. Still hope?

Ms. SMITH. Yes, sir. Americans are still the largest single group of tourists from outside of Africa who go to Zimbabwe. Victoria Falls is still an amazing site.

Mr. CLAWSON. Victoria Falls. Yeah.

Ms. SMITH. There are park rangers in Zimbabwe whom I have met who are working desperately to try and preserve the rhinoceros and elephant populations, but they are doing it against long odds.

Mr. CLAWSON. Well, for me and my part, I mean, I appreciate what you all are doing in terms of HIV control and any kind of healthcare assistance because I think it is a wonderful people and a wonderful place and I think they deserve it.

I think they deserve a better ruling class and a better government so all people can participate in the fruits of what free markets ought to do, which is reward those that work hard and are smart about what they do as opposed to those that were born right.

And so, until we have leadership that provides an equality of opportunity, I am not real interested in us spending too much time other than the humanitarian aspects as you describe.

Yield back.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you, Mr. Clawson.

Let me just ask a few final questions, if I could.

First, Ben Freeth of the Mike Campbell Foundation, the executive director, makes a number of very compelling points in his testimony, including the Look East policy, the Chinese and Russian influence, the power of Robert Mugabe as President. And he is currently the Chairman of the African Union, as we know, and the Southern African Development Community, and, as he points out, he wields considerable power and influence on the continent.

My question is: Your assessment of Mugabe's tenure as chairman, especially of the African Union and the Look East policy. I mean, we know that the Chinese Government doesn't give one whit whether or not human rights are followed because they break human rights policies with impunity and violate people's rights like no one else in the world. So they certainly are enablers there, but their Russian influence as well.

And then he also makes the point that I have known about, but it brings it to focus again, and that is, Mengistu, you know, who obviously sought refuge there, as a confidant and close adviser.

And, you know, soon after the devastation of thousands of homes by Mugabe, Greg Simpkins went and spent a week in Zimbabwe, observing this wanton destruction of housing, and it was reminiscent of what Mengistu did when he used food as a weapon and used a scorched earth policy. And one always wondered whether or not Mugabe was following his advisers' advice on that.

And Mengistu obviously is directly responsible for this slaughter of so many Africans, again, using food as a weapon. And those so-called famines were largely manmade, yes, exacerbated by nature, but manmade because he inhibited the ability to feed people, and he even charged huge fees when international donors provided foodstuffs before they even got to their intended beneficiary.

Can you speak to that, Look East, Russia, China, chairman of African Union, and then Mengistu connection.

Ms. SMITH. Mr. Chairman, certainly the government is looking east explicitly, openly. I am not sure the people of Zimbabwe are looking east with the same enthusiasm and——

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Is the opposition?

Ms. SMITH. They have been pretty critical of that. As I said, the opposition has a number of faces now. Now I can't say that—you know, if given the opportunity, some would and some would not, probably. But I think that, particularly from the opposition, there is a much stronger look West viewpoint on the whole.

And, on the other hand, I am not sure that it is, as I said earlier, I am not sure it is a zero-sum game that we are playing there, that regardless of the government's choices, we are going to hold fast to our values. And I think that a number of people in Zimbabwe would much prefer to do business with America, for example, than with China, and we very much hope that they have that opportunity.

Questions of the African Union. Yes. They elected President Mugabe as their chair. And, obviously, that is the choice of the members themselves. On an operational level, it has not particularly affected our ability to work with the African Union.

And, as an example, I would cite our cooperation in fighting Ebola in west Africa. The African Union played a really critical role in that, in providing personnel in an unprecedented way.

And because we work through our Ambassador to the AU and others within the Secretariat and the more operational aspects of the African Union, it has not inhibited our ability to do that and we——

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. But our assessment of his tenure in office?

Ms. SMITH. Clearly, the rhetoric has changed. And there are a number of elections coming up. And so, obviously that is very much on people's minds.

But we have not seen a profound shift in the policies. And, as I said, we can still find important areas to cooperate with the AU as a whole and will continue to do so.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Is there anything that we disagreed with him in terms of his leadership initiatives?

Ms. SMITH. I think certainly we would agree with many of the statements he has made, and he continues to blame the west almost exclusively for, you know, any, probably, problem you can name on the continent.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Even as chairman? Not as President of Zimbabwe, but as chairman?

Ms. SMITH. In terms of speeches, yes. But in terms of concrete policies and the work the AU does across the continent, we have not seen major shifts on that.

And it is a member organization. I think, you know, that the members very much care about the direction of the organization as a whole.

And on the issues of the——

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Mengistu?

Ms. SMITH. You know, that is a classic example of the sort of scorched earth policies in the destruction of 2005, and what you see

today is a quieter pernicious oppression. You see fewer acts of overt violence and destruction than you did.

But the phrase that you often hear is the “harvest of fear,” the idea that past violence continues to cast a shadow over people and that you are going to spend a lot of time looking over your shoulder in Zimbabwe if you dare to speak up.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you. Thank you very much, Dr. Smith.

Ms. SMITH. Yes.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you.

I would like to now welcome our second panel, beginning with Mr. Ben Freeth, Executive Director of the Mike Campbell Foundation. He is from a farming area in central Zimbabwe and was appointed the first regional executive officer for the Commercial Farmers Union in 1996.

In 2007, Mr. Freeth and his late father-in-law, Mike Campbell, lodged complaints against President Mugabe’s Government in the Southern African Development Community’s tribunal for attempting to unlawfully seize their farm, for violating the SADC treaty by denying access to the courts, and for engaging in racial discrimination and violence against White commercial farmers and their farm workers. Mr. Freeth’s main focus is on restoring justice, the rule of law, and human rights in Zimbabwe.

We will then hear from Ms. Imani Countess, who is the Africa Regional Program Director for the American Center for International Labor Solidarity for the AFL/CIO. She is responsible for the overall programmatic and financial management of the program, which includes activities in 15 African countries.

Prior to this position, she served as the Zimbabwe country director for the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs with the responsibility for program development, oversight, and implementation of democracy strengthening programs, donor relations, and representation.

Ms. Countess has previously held positions with the TransAfrica Forum, the American Friends Service Committee, Shared Interests, the African Policy Information Center, and U.S. African Development Foundation.

Mr. Freeth, the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF MR. BEN FREETH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
MIKE CAMPBELL FOUNDATION**

Mr. FREETH. Thank you very much.

It is a great honor to be here. I just got in from Harare a couple of days ago. And I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to put across some of the things that we are experiencing in Zimbabwe at the moment.

I want to start off with a couple of pretty shocking quotes: “The only language a Black man will understand is the language of the gun. The more you kill, the closer you get to your objective.” Second quote: “Our party must continue to strike fear into the heart of the Black man. They must tremble.” And the third quote: “I am the Hitler of the times.”

Imagine a President from the United States of America saying such a thing. These are exact quotes from our President, except you

have to substitute the word “Black” for “White.” “Whites are not human beings,” said our late Vice President.

So I want to talk today a little bit about this issue that we, as White people in Zimbabwe, face because it is an issue that is very real, is very immediate to us, and has affected, obviously, not just us, but has affected a very large proportion of the population of our country.

We have gone through a period with the fastest shrinking economy in world history, in recorded history, in a peacetime situation. We have at this stage got a situation where there is 85-percent-plus unemployment and where for the last 14 years we have needed food aid every single year. We have got a situation where 25 percent of the Zimbabwean population has left our country.

So I want to look at the two tools by which Mugabe has clung to power for all these years, 35 years now. And the two tools that he has used very effectively are race and land. And, like Hitler, he blames all the problems on a particular race, the White people in this case, and then he violently takes the land.

And we have seen how the ruling party has been rewarded with the land, the elite, and how the 2 million farm workers and their families—and millions of others in Zimbabwe—have suffered directly as a result and have become very poor, very fearful, very dependent on international food aid in order to be able to survive.

So on the farms themselves, we are at a stage now where 95 percent of White farmers have been driven off the land in the last 15 years. And those that are still on the land, they face 2 years in jail for committing the crime of farming and living in their own homes in a country that is starving. And I have got many friends right now who are going through court cases for this “criminal” act of farming in our country.

As you rightly said, Chairman, my father-in-law took our President to court on this issue of racism on the land and he got a final and binding judgment from the SADC Tribunal, the regional court that did cover ¼ billion people in southern Africa—which said that racial discrimination is taking place in Zimbabwe and that racial discrimination must stop.

So later, when the Zimbabwe Government ignored that judgment and was found in contempt of that court on three different occasions, we finally have a situation where our President manages to get that whole court closed down.

So the ¼ billion people in southern Africa cannot approach a court of last resort when their justice systems fail them. So a lot of people are being affected by what is going on here.

One of the things that our President did sign up to in 1991 was the United Nations’ International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Unfortunately, what we need is a state which is also a signatory—and most of the states around the world are signatories to that international convention—to make a complaint to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in the United Nations so that that committee can then go and investigate.

And what we saw in Operation Murambatsvina, where those 700,000 homes were destroyed by the state bulldozers, was the

United Nations did come in and, within a very short period, that whole exercise was actually stopped.

Last month, our President said to the 15 states in southern Africa, "I give poison not for you to swallow, but to give to someone else." And he went on, "The wrath of South Africans needs to be more directed toward the Whites." So we see this racial poison being spread through the region.

And, interestingly, I was with the European Union senior diplomat about 3 weeks ago, and I asked him to come along to a commercial farm where there were 300 families that were going to be losing their livelihoods.

And I said, "You need to come and witness it because no one from the Embassies in Harare wants to actually come out to witness these things that are going on time after time, year after year, month after month, day after day, on the farms."

This farmer is just on 40 hectares that they have got left, but there are 300 families that derive their livelihoods from it.

And the senior diplomat said, "Is it a Black-owned farm or a White-owned farm?"

And I said, "It is a White-owned farm."

And he said, "Find me a Black-owned farm where this is happening and I will come out."

In the United States, I have been very impressed by the moral manner in which Americans like to deal with immoral situations, and we all admire Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement.

I believe that it is time that the United States made a complaint to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and asked for an investigation because I believe very sincerely that silence is the sound either of tacit approval or of cowardliness, and neither of those things are what I believe the United States believes in.

So I am here as a witness. You have seen my paper, which brings into account all the various things that have been happening over recent years. But that, I believe, is something tacit, something that the United States can actually ask for in order to create some sort of accountability within the system.

I am passionately wanting our country to go forward. We all want our country to go forward. But at the moment it cannot go forward so long as the system of racism is allowed to thrive because our President is able to do it without any censure from the rest of the world. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Freeth.
[The prepared statement of Mr. Freeth follows:]

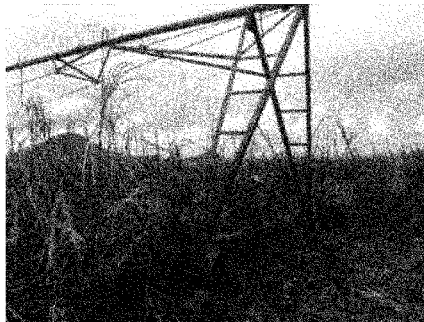


**The future of US and Zimbabwe relations
– and the precarious future of Zimbabwe**

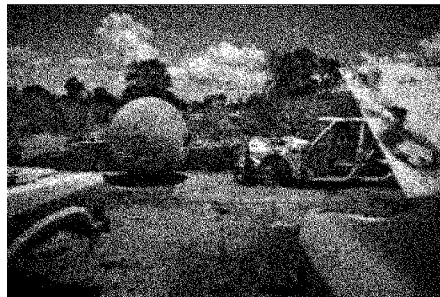
BY BEN FREETH – Executive Director of Mike Campbell Foundation

**An Overview for the Home Committee on Foreign Affairs at US Congress
3 June 2015**

*"Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but
destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country."*
William Jennings Bryan (1860 – 1925)



A wantonly destroyed centre pivot irrigation system on a former commercial farm
Photo courtesy Farmer's Weekly magazine (SA)



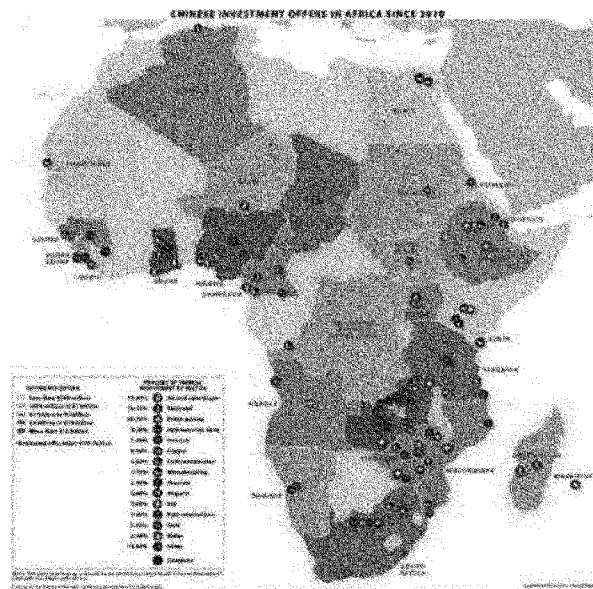
*The derelict yard of the Cold Storage Commission (CSC) in Bulawayo which used to export high
quality beef to Europe. Photo courtesy Robin Hammond/Panos*

OVERVIEW: KEY POINTS

THREATS

1. **The Power of President Robert Mugabe:** President Mugabe is currently Chairman of the African Union and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), so he wields very considerable power and influence on the continent.
2. **Potential terrorist threat:** Zimbabwe's geographical placement makes it a hub for the rest of southern Africa. It is therefore strategically important that democracy is allowed to function and that terrorist and other undemocratic forces do not take over.
3. **Chinese and Russian Influence:** The Chinese and Russian influence continues to grow as investment is stifled from any other sources. Economic linkages between the United States and Zimbabwe need to be strengthened in order to reduce this disturbing trend.
4. **"Look East" Policy:** As a result of Zimbabwe's "Look East" economic policy, adopted in 2003, trade between Zimbabwe and China increased to nearly US\$1.2 billion in 2014 (January-November). China is now the biggest source of imports for Zimbabwe, with cheap Chinese products threatening the survival of local industries. This has resulted in significant Chinese investments in various sectors, including mining, telecommunications, infrastructure, agriculture and retail.

CHINESE INVESTMENT OFFERS IN AFRICA SINCE 2010



“Meanwhile China quietly takes over Zimbabwe” – to view larger map and read full article:
<http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2014-03-02/meanwhile-china-quietly-takes-over-zimbabwe>

ECONOMIC CRISIS

1. **Economic status at independence:** When Zimbabwe became independent in 1980, the country had a diversified economy, well-developed infrastructure and an advanced financial sector. Thirty-five years later, it is now one of Africa's poorest countries.
2. **Economic shrinkage:** Since 2000, the economy has continued to shrink, and the fallout is impacting negatively on the region. The country is being battered by political instability, poor harvests due to land nationalization, liquidity shortage, collapsing industries and job losses from business closures – all linked to lack of security of tenure and lack of rule of law.
3. **Underperformance of economic drivers:** Zimbabwe's short-term economic outlook is now bleaker than at any time since the hyperinflationary meltdown of 2007/8, due to the underperformance of its main economic drivers—industry, agriculture, mining and tourism. GDP could contract by 5% this year.
4. **Government's bloated wage bill:** A study published by the Development Bank of Southern Africa in April 2013 found that the Zimbabwean government employed an estimated 250,000 people, generating a wage bill of more than US\$960 million. This worked out at more than 70% of revenue collections, 60% of the total budget, and more than 15% of GDP.
5. **Government spending is 29.3% of GDP:** State enterprises are strongly subsidized, and taxes and tariffs are some of the highest in the world. State regulation is costly to companies, and starting or closing a business is slow and costly. The labour market is highly regulated, so hiring a worker is cumbersome and firing one is difficult and often hugely expensive.
6. **Unemployment:** More than 85% of people are unemployed, including professionals, former farm workers and highly skilled commercial farmers, university graduates and students who have been forced to drop out of school because parents cannot afford the fees.
7. **Diaspora Remittances:** Diaspora remittances remain a critical source of liquidity in the market and are vital for destitute family members. The Reserve Bank estimates that Diaspora remittances into the country currently stand at around US\$1.7 billion and gravitating towards US\$2 billion (translating to above 50% of exports) per year, with around 50% (US\$840 million in 2014 and US\$790 million in 2013) coming through local formal banking channels.
8. **Domestic and foreign debt:** As of April 2015, domestic and international debts have escalated to US\$ 9.9 billion, without any possibility of repaying them.
9. **Foreign Direct Investment:** Zimbabwe has lagged behind regional peers in FDI, with neighbouring Zambia receiving US\$8 billion between 1980 and 2013, and Mozambique US\$16 billion. Zimbabwe only received US\$1.8 billion.
10. **Infrastructural decline:** The sustained and severe deterioration in the quality of infrastructural assets stems from very inadequate levels of public expenditures for routine and periodic maintenance, especially in power, water and sanitation, and transport.

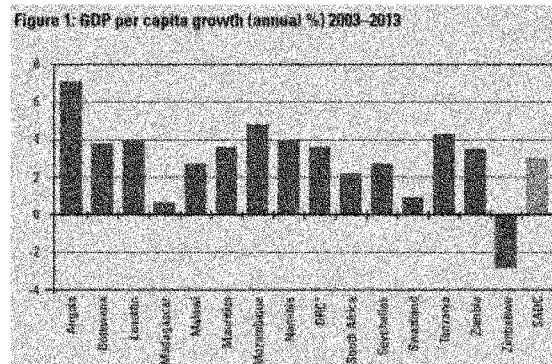
Engineers have started on a US\$330 million rescue marathon to prevent the "catastrophic failure" of Kariba Dam, one of the biggest man-made dams in the world. The World Bank warns that a potential wall collapse threatens the lives of about 3-million people in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique.

11. **The Heritage Foundation's 2015 Index of Economic Freedom:** Zimbabwe is the most repressed economy in sub-Saharan Africa and in the bottom five worldwide – 175 out of 178 countries - due to government intervention, policy inconsistency and corruption. It is ranked lowest in Africa, even below the war-ravaged Central African Republic, and ahead only of Venezuela, Cuba and North Korea.ⁱ
12. **World Bank Group's Doing Business Index for 2014:** In this index, which measures how conducive the regulatory environment is for starting and operating a local firm, Zimbabwe ranked 171 out of 189 countries.ⁱⁱ
13. **Comparative data: At Independence from Britain in 1980:**
 - Economy: Zimbabwe had the second largest economy in southern Africa*
 - GDP: Zimbabwe had the third highest GDP per capita in southern Africa
 - Exports: Zimbabwe was the world's largest exporter of tobacco, after the USA
 - Gold production: Zimbabwe was the world's sixth largest gold producer
 - Currency: Z\$1 was worth US\$2.

*The Southern African Development Community (SADC) comprises 15 countries.

13. **GDP per capita growth – SADC Region [2003-2013]:** Zimbabwe was the only country to record a per capita income decrease, ie 2.8% annually over the same period. (See graph below)

Comparative GDP of the 15 countries in the SADC region [2003-2013]:



Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/worlddevelopment-indicators>, accessed 22 October 2014

14. **Import/Export imbalance:** For the period January to November 2013, total exports stood at US\$3.3 billion as against imports of US\$7.2 billion. The declining growth in exports was a reflection of the overall slowdown in real economic activity in the wake of endemic company closures.

ZIMBABWE'S MAIN ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTORS IN 1998:

The situation today in the industrial, mining, tourism and agricultural sectors is as follows:

INDUSTRY – 2015

The Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries warned government last year that de-industrialisation had reached “catastrophic levels with dire consequences for the country’s struggling economy”.

1. **Business closures:** Zimbabwe’s manufacturing industry, which once employed more than 200,000 people, now accounts for only 93,000 jobs. The Central Bank reports that 4,600 businesses have closed in the past three years.
2. **Indigenisation threat and racism:** Foreign investors continue to face uncertainty relating to the Indigenisation Act and the toxic Section 72 of the new Constitution. [Section 71 purports to protect private property, but this right is annulled in Section 72 when applied to agricultural land. This section was struck down by the SADC Tribunal but there has been no attempt by the Zimbabwe Government to comply with this Judgment].

MINING – 2015

1. **Mining industry shrinks:** The mining industry in Zimbabwe, the world’s third-biggest platinum producer, is shrinking due to lower metal prices, lower capital and FDI inflow, high cost structures, sub-optimal royalties that have to go to government and shortages of power.
2. **Diamonds:** Zimbabwe is the world’s fourth-largest diamond miner, producing an estimated eight million carats annually, with potential to supply 25% of global demand. However, due to fraud, corruption and non-compliance, there is little to show for its diamond wealth. In 2012, during the tenure of the coalition government, Finance Minister Tendai Biti (MDC party) was forced to slash the country’s national budget to US\$3.4 billion from US\$4 billion after receiving US\$41 million instead of a targeted US\$600 million from diamond sales. As a result of massive plundering, the vast alluvial fields have now been virtually depleted, resulting in significant retrenchments.

TOURISM – 2015

1. The Central Bank says tourism is one of the major drivers of the economy this year, but the domestic market is envisaged to remain depressed, exerting further pressure on rates and margins for the hospitality industry. In 2014, tourism contributed approximately 10% to GDP. However, the tourism sector operates well below its potential, ranking 115 out of 141 countries in a recent study on tourism (World Economic Forum: Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2015).
2. Despite Zimbabwe having magnificent natural resources, between 1999 and 2013, overseas arrivals to Zimbabwe declined by over 50%. It is estimated that tourist arrivals to Zimbabwe could have grown to over 14 million per annum based on trends to 1999, but arrivals for 2014 were only 1.88 million.

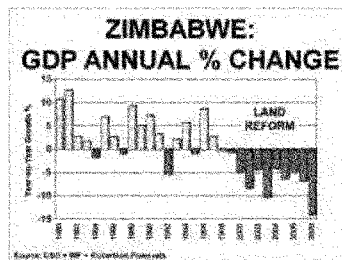
AGRICULTURE – 2015:

THE “FAST TRACK” LAND NATIONALISATION PROGRAMME AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

1. **Agriculture [prior to 2000]:** From 1980 to 2000 [i.e. the 20 years prior to the fast track land nationalisation programme which has decimated the commercial farming sector] Zimbabwe had a food surplus in all but three severe drought years. The country was both self-sufficient

and a net food exporter. Every year since 2000 (post-land nationalisation), there has been a food shortage. Corn (maize) is now imported from Zambia where many former Zimbabwean commercial farmers have resettled and set up successful farming enterprises.

2. **Fast track land nationalization programme [2000] – the reasons:** Mugabe's corrupt and parasitic ruling clique had by 1999 seized all organs of state and his ZANU PF government was extremely unpopular. In February 2000, when Mugabe lost a referendum to change the constitution (which would have further entrenched his power), an urgent new strategy was required to retain power. The violent land invasions were therefore initiated to neutralise the farm worker vote by stopping any opposition members campaigning on the commercial farms, and by causing intense fear throughout the rural areas. Despite this, ZANU PF effectively lost the 2000 elections to the newly formed Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party and it was only the appointment of 30 seats from among the chiefs that gave Mugabe control of Parliament.
3. **Land nationalisation – dependence on imports:** The land nationalisation programme has resulted in a critical dependence on imports. Approximately 1.8 million tonnes of maize [corn] are required annually to meet the country's needs against the current national yield of less than half that. Every year since 2000, there has been a food deficit. In 2013, the UN appealed for more than US\$100 million dollars to feed 1.7 million people. In 2014, the World Food Program (WFP) warned that 2.2 million people would require food aid.
4. **Land nationalisation– smallholder production:** The increase in smallholder production is wholly inadequate to feed Zimbabwe and has come at the cost disrupting the link between Zimbabwean agriculture and industry. It has further undermined state revenue, making it impossible to provide support to successful smallholders.
5. **Land nationalisation – displacement:** A decade and a half since the land nationalisation started, up to 70,000 households - perhaps 350,000 people - remain displaced, living in poverty on the urban peripheries of cities and towns. But the total displacement is far greater. Over two million in the farm worker community and among the urban poor did not receive land and became economic migrants, mainly to South Africa and Botswana.
6. **Land nationalization and resettlement will not solve unemployment:** With a mere 700,000 people (only 14% of the workforce) currently employed in the formal economy, land resettlement cannot and will not solve the country's unemployment problem.
7. **Land nationalisation – impact on GDP:** Zimbabwe's real GDP fell 40% from US\$6.6 billion in 2000 to US\$4.1 billion in 2010, while real per capita incomes in 2011 were 37% lower than when Zimbabwe finally gained independence from Britain in April 1980. (World Bank)



Zimbabwe's GDP annual percentage change after farm nationalisation and property rights destruction in 2000

8. **“Land nationalisation” programme – the costs:** In 2009, estimated costs of the land nationalisation included US\$2.8 billion in international food aid on an emergency basis, nearly US\$12 billion in lost agricultural production since the start of the farm invasions in 2000, and a potentially far higher figure in compensation. Less than 1 % of farmers have had any offer of compensation for the taking of their homes and livelihoods.
9. **“Land rentals” to pay back white commercial farmers:** In May 2015, the government announced that it would soon start collecting land rentals from new black farmers to help compensate white farmers whose farms were taken, many of whom are now destitute. However, based on approximately 11 million hectares at US\$3 per hectare, the proposal is totally unrealistic. As one calculation suggests, this could take a couple of centuries, even at a zero interest rate, factoring in no administration costs and assuming 100% collection rate.

INVESTOR CONFIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Investor confidence:** Before confidence can be restored, security issues need to be addressed, especially relating to the lack of property rights in the constitution, the rule of law breakdown and the freeing up of the economy. The regulation, control and theft from investors continues to severely damage the economy. Zimbabwean economist John Robertson predicts negative economic growth of minus five percent by the end of 2015.

BAD GOVERNANCE AND CORRUPTION

1. **Bad governance:** As President Obama pointed out in July 2013, bad governance continues to destroy the economy – which used to be one of the wealthiest on the continent.
2. **Transparency International Global Corruption Perceptions Index for 2014:** Zimbabwe was ranked 156 out of 174 countries. Transparency International noted that a poor score was likely a sign of widespread bribery, lack of punishment for corruption and public institutions that did not respond to citizens’ needs.ⁱⁱⁱ
3. **Corruption and patronage:** The increasing rate of corruption and scandals has drained the country’s resources, worsening from the early 1990s and spiralling out of control from 2000. Since then it has morphed into a powerful patronage system under the President.
4. **Corruption - cost to economy:** The Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (Zimra) estimates that corruption drains US\$2 billion from government coffers annually while the African Development Bank suggests the impact of corruption on the economy is in the region of US\$10 billion. These estimates are based on direct economic costs.
5. **Corruption – Marange diamonds:** According to Partnership Africa Canada (PAC), a group campaigning against “blood diamonds”, diamonds worth at least US\$2bn were stolen by Mugabe’s ruling elite, international dealers and criminals between 2008 and 2012. PAC noted that revenue which could have revived the ailing economy from the world’s largest diamond producer in 2014 had been channelled into a “parallel government” of police and military officers and government officials loyal to Mugabe.
6. **Corruption and tax evasion:** Cases of corrupt operating partners and government officials accepting bribes – which result in unscrupulous politics and tax evasion - are rife in the Marange diamond industry. In 2013, the Zimbabwe finance minister stated that the Treasury had not received any tax revenue from Marange operations that year.

DESTRUCTION OF JUSTICE SYSTEM AND RULE OF LAW

1. **Destruction of Justice System:** After taking control of his own justice system, allowing the invasion of the Supreme Court and hounding senior judges out of office, Mugabe has been instrumental in destroying the regional justice system which was there to protect democracy, human rights and the rule of law for nearly a quarter of a billion people in southern Africa through the SADC Tribunal. Closed down by the SADC Heads of State in 2012, the Tribunal is now unable to hear any cases from SADC citizens. He also continues to work against justice delivery in Zimbabwe by allowing court orders to be ignored with impunity.
2. **World Justice Project - Rule of Law Index for 2014:** Zimbabwe was ranked 97 out of 99 countries. This index measures the rule of law using 47 indicators organized around 8 themes: constraints on government powers, absence of corruption, open government, fundamental rights, order and security, regulatory enforcement, civil justice, and criminal justice.^{iv}
3. **The International Criminal Court:** Mugabe is part of the group of African dictators wanting to ensure the ICC cannot arrest or try them for any of their crimes.

DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY RIGHTS

1. **Destruction of property rights:** Every year since property rights were destroyed in the commercial farming sector in 2000, international food aid has been required to prevent mass starvation. Due to the collapse of the commercial farming sector and the destruction of irrigation schemes, hundreds of thousands of people will die if not given food aid this year. Zimbabwe's agriculture can be fixed by changing the Constitution to give security of tenure; and re-introducing the rule of law through a non-partisan justice system.

FOOD CRISIS

1. **Reliance on imported food:** Thirty-five years after independence, Zimbabwe, which was a major regional food exporter, now imports at least 80 percent of the food it needs to support an estimated population of 14 million people. On former commercial farms across the country, there are no longer crops, fences or livestock, the infrastructure has been looted and the buildings are derelict.
2. **Maize (Corn) forecast:** Zimbabwe's staple maize (corn) production is forecast to drop by 49 percent this year due to the poor rains, the destruction of irrigation systems and the chaotic farm situation. The latest forecast for the 2015 harvest is down to 700,000 tons but estimates made from satellite data by food security agencies suggest a crop as low as 300,000 tonnes. This is far less than the 1.8 million tonnes required to feed the population annually.
3. **Cost of imported corn:** Government has belatedly admitted that it will have to import 700,000 tonnes of corn which would cost US\$168 million at current prices. The World Food Program is looking to source US\$60 million to prevent widespread starvation in the region.

ELECTIONS

1. **Elections:** Zimbabwe has not had free and fair elections since 2000 when President Mugabe realized for the first time that his ZANU PF party was in danger of losing power to the newly launched Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party.

The Khampepe Report, commissioned by former South African President Thabo Mbeki on Zimbabwe's disputed 2002 elections, was only released in November 2014 after a protracted court battle. There is no doubt the elections would have been won by the MDC if they had been free and fair – which the Khampepe Report confirms they were not. Foreign observers from democratic countries are not welcome at Zimbabwe elections and elections are a sham.

2. **The March 2015 by-elections:** At an election rally to launch his wife's political campaign, it was clear that Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa would not tolerate a ZANU PF defeat. Emulating Mugabe, he warned that "Everyone will vote at their polling station and we know who will vote at which polling station, voting has a pattern, it is not like death which just comes....." He said headmen should lead their people to the polling station, while party chairmen would follow behind and watch that everyone voted.
3. **Xenophobic violence:** The recent xenophobic attacks and tension in South Africa will only increase as more and more people leave Zimbabwe due to the economic collapse, food insecurity and the ever prevalent fear factor. Up to a quarter of the Zimbabwe population has voted with its feet and left Zimbabwe, the majority escaping to South Africa.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

1. **African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) report:** In 2006, the ACHPR, which had until then been silent about the growing evidence of systematic human rights abuses in Zimbabwe, condemned Mugabe's human rights record in a hard-hitting report.
2. **Violations of human rights laws and the rule of law:** The ACHPR found that the Mugabe government had violated the African Union's charter, as well as other international laws including the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. The ACHPR also expressed concern over the lack of respect for the rule of law and the growing culture of impunity.
3. **Forced evictions:** The ACHPR report called on the Harare government to repeal several repressive laws, to stop forced evictions immediately – an estimated 700,000 people were made homeless by the Operation Murambatsvina evictions during winter 2005 - and to allow full and unimpeded access to international aid to help the victims.
4. **March 2008 election violence:** The March 2008 run-off election was preceded by a wave of shockingly brutal human rights violations that resulted in the murder of more than 200 people. At least 9,000 people were injured from torture, beatings and other violations. As many as 20,000 people – some of whom were denied treatment in government facilities - eventually received treatment. Tens of thousands more were forced to flee their homes.
5. **Human rights violations 2015:** March onwards witnessed a spike in human rights abuses characterised by excessive use of force by the police in quelling protests. On March 9, 2015, Itai Dzamara, a freelance journalist and pro-democracy activist courageous enough to want to lead a pro-democracy demonstration, was abducted by suspected agents of the State before he could do. His whereabouts are still unknown and it is feared he has been murdered.
6. **Deaths and covert threats:** The economic hardships facing the country manifested in violent food riots by inmates at Chikurubi Maximum Prison this year. Although there were only few cases of overt political violence, there was a surge of covert forms of violence, notably threats, intimidation, and the partisan distribution of food as well as farming inputs.

7. **Racial Discrimination:** During the 1980s Gukurahundi genocide, over 20,000 people from the minority Ndebele group – men, women and children - were starved and brutally murdered. From the year 2000, more than 95 percent of white commercial farmers have been violently evicted from their homes and businesses, with this racial persecution systematically persisting with racial laws, and a system of impunity through partisan police.

HEALTH CRISIS

1. **Health care at independence in 1980:** At independence, Zimbabwe had one of Africa's best health services. In the thirty years since then, it has taken dramatic steps backwards, and is now one of the most health deprived countries in the world.
2. **Doctor/population ratio:** Zimbabwe has suffered immensely from a brain drain of doctors. There are now 1.6 doctors for every 10,000 people. Most government rural health centres are manned by only two doctors who have to perform multiple tasks. Linked to this, there are an average of seven nurses and trained midwives for every 10,000 people in the country.
3. **Health care unaffordable:** The government's inability to adequately fund public health has forced hospitals to deny the poor access to health care and patients are left to die because they cannot afford tertiary care services. Service providers also have withdrawn their services or are demanding cash up front.
4. **Health care donor funding:** The crumbling public health sector currently receives most of its funding from the donor community under the Health Transition Fund (HTF), a US\$435 million multi-donor pooled fund established in 2011 and set to expire this year. By the end of July 2014, the government had disbursed less than 20% of the budget money allocated to public health. From 2003 to mid 2014, Zimbabwe received more than US\$707 million from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. In 2013, the Fund approved a US\$555 million grant to fight the three diseases between 2014 and 2016.
5. **Health care and corruption:** Health service delivery has also been crippled by corruption, notably the theft of drugs and equipment from hospitals, and the flouting of tender processes by hospital officials for personal gain. The migration of trained labour has hit this sector more than any other.

EDUCATIONAL CRISIS

1. **Educational crisis:** With unemployment on the increase, escalating school fees and an acute shortage of qualified teachers, Zimbabwe's once revered education system is in crisis. In 2013, close to 13,000 children were forced to drop out of school, a shocking 43 percent increase on the previous year. The government currently employs about 20,000 unqualified teachers, nearly a fifth of the teachers on the payroll. Thousands of qualified teachers have left the country to escape the economic collapse and relentless ruling party harassment during elections.
2. **Educational sector reliance on donors:** In 2014, despite Mugabe's anti-British and anti-Western rhetoric, his government appealed to Britain's Department for International Development (DfID) to fund school fees for one million impoverished children – about a third of the country's pupils. Britain, Germany and other European donors paid for more than 13 million text books for schoolchildren when the unity government took over.

POLITICS, THE POWER STRUGGLE AND THE NEW VICE PRESIDENT

1. **Mugabe's relationship with Mengistu:** The former Ethiopian dictator, Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, has been Mugabe's close and constant confidant since being given refuge in Zimbabwe. The cornerstone of Mengistu's brutal attempt at social engineering was "land redistribution". Mengistu is also believed to have been the brains behind Operation Murambatsvina. This was a ruthless demolition campaign that destroyed 700,000 homes in 2005, overtly claimed to be a slum clearance operation, but covertly designed to reduce the opposition MDC's urban power base.
2. **Ruling party power struggle and Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa:** The ongoing, ruthless power struggle within ZANU PF and the purging of potential successors is divisive and highly damaging for the country and the economy. Emmerson Mnangagwa, Mugabe's powerful new Vice President and heir apparent, who was Minister of State Security during the Gukurahundi genocide (1982-1982), has a reputation for ruthlessness. In 2013 he was appointed Minister for Justice and Legal Affairs.

Mnangagwa is also a key member of Joint Operations Command (JOC). Partnership Africa Canada report, "Diamonds and Clubs" (June 2010), describes the members of JOC as "the high priests of Zimbabwean politics, the final arbiters of tough decisions, and the architects of every single government-sponsored act of repression from the Gukurahundi massacres in Matabeleland, to the farm invasions, to successive episodes of election-related violence.

3. **Mnangagwa and Beijing:** Mnangagwa has close ties with Beijing and is reported to receive financial and political backing. China has reportedly set aside a US\$1 billion loan facility for Zimbabwe's economic resuscitation under a Mnangagwa presidency, should it materialise.
4. **Mnangagwa – "trained to kill":** Mnangagwa's ongoing threats, made in public and reported in the media, are of great concern. For example, during February 2015, while threatening two multi-million dollar investors in the country, he reminded them that he "was trained to kill", a statement likely to frighten away investors. At the commissioning of a water treatment plant in Masvingo during April 2015, Mnangagwa said if he was God, he would deprive MDC supporters of oxygen so that they would all die because they were anti-revolutionary.

CONCLUSION: "Zimbabwe's growing instability is exacerbated by dire economic decline, endemic governance failures, and tensions over ruling party succession; without major political and economic reforms, the country could slide into being a failed state," wrote the International Crisis Group (IGS) in a report dated September 29, 2014.

"The current situation is not sustainable," noted the IGS. "Zimbabwe is an insolvent and failing state, its politics zero sum, its institutions hollowing out, and its once vibrant economy moribund... A major culture change is needed among political elites, as well as commitment to national as opposed to partisan and personal interests".

What is it that caused the fastest shrinking economy in the recorded history of the world in a peace time situation? What is it that brought the second most industrialized country in sub Saharan Africa (after South Africa) into a state of 85% unemployment?

What is it that made the bread basket of southern Africa into a country that would have had widespread death by starvation if food aid had not come in from the USA and the West every year for the last 14 years? What is that has caused an estimated 25% of the entire Zimbabwean population to flee the country of their birth in such a short period of time?

At the root of it is the breakdown of the rule of law and the discrimination that has allowed Mugabe's political elite to greedily grab or destroy homes, businesses and other assets from opposition members or people with a white coloured skin. They then asset strip them and leave the workers poor, hungry and dependent on the ruling party and international food aid for their survival so that they can be controlled and manipulated for political ends.

The racial record of the Mugabe regime is dire: first there was the racially inspired genocide of the 1980s when the current regime murdered an estimated 20,000 Ndebele people. Then there is the white population in Zimbabwe which has been depleted in numbers by approximately 90 percent. In the last 15 years the white population on the commercial farms has been systematically and lawlessly driven off their farms and is now less than 5 percent of what it was; and the ethnic cleansing of those rural areas continues. The last 5 percent of white farmer, who are persistently terrorised or criminalised, face two years in jail for committing the "crime" of farming their land and living in their own homes on those farms - in a country that is starving.

My father in law, Mike Campbell, was abducted and severely beaten – and later died. The reason was that Mike took President Mugabe to court in the regional court of the SADC Tribunal on the racial discrimination issue – and because we as white people are constitutionally denied the right to a day in court when our homes and livelihoods are violently and systematically stolen without compensation. Mike got a final and binding judgment in 2008 which confirmed that racial discrimination was taking place in Zimbabwe and had to stop. Despite that, not a single signatory country to the International Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination [ICERD] has asked the Committee for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination [CERD] to investigate the continued violation of the ICERD by the Zimbabwe Government.

In 2012, after the Zimbabwe Government was found in contempt of court President Mugabe put pressure on the SADC Heads of State to close down the entire court, depriving a quarter of a billion people in 15 southern African countries of a court of last resort when the justice systems fail them in their own countries.

In his capacity as both the current African Union Chairman and the Chairman of SADC, Mugabe has recently told SADC: "I give poison not for you to swallow but to give to someone else" - the poison being racial hatred, and the "someone else" being white people.

I have been impressed by the moral manner in which so many people in the USA wish to try to deal with immoral situations. The Zimbabwe Democracy Act needs to remain in place and be strengthened. At the same time, in the spirit of Godly truth and the Martin Luther King civil rights movement ethos, it is important that the USA makes a complaint to CERD and asks for an investigation of the Zimbabwe Government.

Until non-discrimination, property rights and the rule of law are restored to the people of Zimbabwe, hunger, deprivation and regression will continue to be the order of the day. Racial discrimination takes a nation into a never ending spiral of hate and recrimination. There is no way forward while it is allowed to continue. Silence is the sickening sound of tacit approval.

Ben Freeth
Executive Director
The Mike Campbell Foundation
Website: www.mikecampbellfoundation.com

30 May 2015

¹ The Heritage Foundation's 2015 Index of Economic Freedom:
<http://www.heritage.org/index/ranking>

ⁱⁱ World Bank Group Doing Business Index:

<http://www.doingbusiness.org/rankings>

ⁱⁱⁱ Transparency International Global Corruption Perceptions Index for 2014:

<http://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/results>

^{iv} World Justice Project Rule of Law Index for 2014:

<http://data.worldjusticeproject.org/>

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Ms. Countess.

**STATEMENT OF MS. IMANI COUNTESS, REGIONAL PROGRAM
DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA, THE SOLIDARITY CENTER**

Ms. COUNTESS. Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass, and members of the subcommittee, on behalf of The Solidarity Center, thank you for the invitation to testify.

The Solidarity Center is an international NGO that promotes and protects worker rights globally, with programs in more than 60 countries. In Africa, we work with unions, worker associations, research organizations, and community groups in 15 sub-Saharan countries, including Zimbabwe, where we have a more than 15-year partnership with the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions and its allied research and worker associations.

We appreciate the subcommittee's continued interest in Zimbabwe, particularly given the deleterious governance, economic, and humanitarian situation in the country. Zimbabwe's economy is in deep decline, making it harder for average Zimbabweans to work and live and leaving them less and less confident in their future. The government consistently fails to address the basic needs of its people.

Most workers earn salaries far below the poverty level. And many workers, even in the formal sector, go for months without receiving their wages. Drought in many parts of the country has resulted in severe crop loss, and the 2015 harvest is expected to be the worst in 5 years, exacerbating the struggle to survive in this country where nearly three-quarters of the population live below the poverty line.

According to recent data from ZimStat, the number of people in informal jobs, unstable, poor-paying, and low-quality work, has risen to 95 percent. Especially troubling is the recent finding that more than 96 percent of Zimbabwean youth, ages 15 to 24, are in informal employment. Essentially, this means that Zimbabwe's army of informal economy workers compromises the main engine of economic activity in the country. Yet, government response has been steady attempts to raise taxes on informal workers.

While economic decay has thrust many workers into the informal economy, others leave Zimbabwe and become economic migrants, where they face xenophobic violence, low pay, high levels of informal work, and poor working conditions. Labor unions and pro-worker economists in Zimbabwe tell us that, to prevent a full-fledged economic collapse and begin the process of rebuilding, the Zimbabwean economy requires serious reforms.

Forward-looking U.S. policy should seek creative ways to support government and civil society actors both in the country and the subregion who can advocate for and help implement the structural reforms to leverage inclusive and pro-poor growth. Such an approach is key to the country's ability to arrest economic decline and establish a new social contract where stakeholders, including government, labor, and business, place sectarian interests aside and focus on the immediate crisis.

At the same time, informal workers both in Zimbabwe and migrants throughout the region would benefit from programs de-

signed to assist with their struggle for economic well-being and dignity as well as their organizing and advocacy activities.

It is essential that the United States ramp up its support for rule of law and democracy programs, including human rights, worker rights, and constitutionally based electoral reform and for the 2018 elections, in order to ensure that members of the country's community-based mass organizations are fully prepared to engage as informed voters, election monitors, and civic educators.

It is significant to note here that U.S. funding for democracy, human rights, and governance programs in Africa through the USAID has been declining despite extraordinary need, down 40 percent since 2008. Entire missions in Africa have no DRG funding. Funding for Zimbabwe is inadequate to the challenge.

Another important component of U.S. foreign policy toward Zimbabwe has been support for communities struck by natural disaster, disease, and hunger. For more than a decade, the U.S. has been a leader in humanitarian support, and that should continue.

It is also timely to begin to explore and put in place policies that are more directly framed not only by Zimbabwe's special circumstances, but, also, by the strategies required by Africa as a whole.

While Zimbabwe faces a unique set of governance challenges, the country, like the rest of Africa, requires coherent and comprehensive policies that will ultimately lead to inclusive and sustainable economic development, respect for human rights, and gender equality.

Across the continent, nations have at least rhetorical consensus on the criticality of industrialization and the need to create coherent national, regional, and continental industrial policy frameworks.

The first challenge of U.S. policy is to ensure that it is working in concert with these broader frameworks, which are geared toward creating economic development that is inclusive, sustainable, and a generator of decent jobs.

In a country that seems to be on the brink of economic collapse, this recommendation may seem premature. However, through targeted assistance and diplomacy, it may be possible to forge a new social contract with actors willing to put aside partisan politics.

Lastly, while the international community was deeply disappointed in SADC's unwillingness to be guided by its own internal policies during the 2013 elections, it remains an important regional body and should be viewed as a central partner of the United States as it formulates policy toward Zimbabwe.

Continued diplomatic efforts, along with support for regional advocates, can exert bottom-up pressures on governments, particularly on issues pertaining to elections, governance, and democratic practice.

Thank you. Thank you for this opportunity.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you very much, Ms. Countess.
[The prepared statement of Ms. Countess follows:]



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**Imani Countess, Africa Regional Program Director
Solidarity Center**

**Testimony before the U.S. Committee on Foreign Relations
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International
Organizations**

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

THE FUTURE OF U.S.-ZIMBABWE RELATIONS

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the Solidarity Center, thank you for the invitation to testify at this hearing: *The Future of U.S.-Zimbabwe Relations*. The Solidarity Center is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) that promotes and protects worker rights globally, with programs in more than 60 countries. In Africa we work with a broad cross section of unions, worker associations, research organizations and community groups in 15 sub-Saharan countries, including Zimbabwe. The Solidarity Center has a more than 15-year partnership with the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and its allied research and worker associations.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's continued concern about U.S. policy toward Zimbabwe, particularly in light of the deleterious governance, economic and humanitarian situation in the country. The forward focus of this hearing is particularly timely.

Zimbabwe's economy is in deep decline, making it harder for average Zimbabweans to work and live, and leaving them less and less confident in their future. The government consistently fails to address the basic needs of its people. According to economists with the Labour and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe (LEDRIZ), Zimbabwe's fragile economy is characterized by "high external debt, policy discontent, massive and increasing deindustrialization and informalization." Most workers earn salaries far below the poverty level, and many workers—even in the formal sector—go for months without receiving their wages. Drought in many parts of the country has resulted in severe crop loss, and the 2015 harvest is

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expected to be the worst in five years, exacerbating the struggle to survive in this “food poor” country where nearly three-quarters of the population lives below the poverty lineⁱ.

Dr. Godfrey Kanyaze, LEDRIZ’s director, has identified troubling parallels between conditions today and those that existed in the chaotic period following disputed 2008 elections, including “profound similarities in the distressing economic performance and dysfunction” of both yearsⁱⁱ.

Economic Parallels in the Zimbabwe Economyⁱⁱⁱ

2008	2015
Receding Zimbabwe dollar era	Multi-currency period
Hyperinflation last measured at 341 million in July	Disinflation / deflation
De-industrialization and informalization	De-industrialization and informalization
Emergence of non-communicable diseases, including cholera	Emergence of non-communicable diseases
Bank closures	Bank closures and rising non-performing loans at 16%
Collapsing Zimbabwean dollar	Liquidity crunch
Violent elections and repression	Factional fights within the ruling party

While economists raise concerns about the direction of the national economy, a recent AfroBarometer survey of 2,400 randomly selected participants shows that the majority of Zimbabweans believe their lives are worse off today than three years ago and that the country is going in the wrong direction.^{iv} In the poll, selected participants were asked a series of questions to measure “the incidence of lived poverty.”^v The responses paint a sobering picture of what the economic decline means at the individual level. The survey reports that in urban areas, 33 percent had gone without food at least once this year, 52 percent had gone without medical care and 59 percent had gone without water. Rural residents report similar difficulties: 56 percent had gone without food at least once, 59 percent without medical care and 42 percent without water. Close to two-thirds say “unemployment is the biggest problem government should address.”^{vi}

According to the latest data from the Zimbabwe Statistical Agency (ZimStat), the number of people in informal jobs—unstable, poor-paying and low-quality work—has risen from 80 percent in 2004 to 84.2 percent in 2011 and 94.5 percent in 2014. Especially troubling is the 2014 Labor Force Survey finding that more than 96 percent of Zimbabwean youth ages 15–24 are in informal employment.^{vii} Essentially, this means that Zimbabwe’s army of informal economy workers comprises the main engine of economic activity in the country. The government has responded to this reality with steady attempts to raise taxes on informal workers, particularly market vendors and commercial traders.

In Zimbabwe, many workers in the informal economy are organized and members of the Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (ZCIEA), which was formed in 2002 to respond to job losses in manufacturing and agriculture. ZCIEA’s membership includes 150 associations and has formal ties to the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU). In response to government attempts to raise taxes, with no increase in social protection or public services, ZCIEA began a campaign to highlight official harassment of informal workers and to note that most laws enabling violations of civil and worker rights date back to the colonial era. As part of its efforts, ZCIEA is demanding that those laws be replaced, and that informal workers

be included in national-level labor relations dialogue and negotiations, and collective bargaining at the municipal level. ZCIEA and its affiliates are frontline activists, as they work with municipalities to negotiate services, advocate for social protections and economic opportunities.

While many workers have been thrust into the informal economy as the country's economy decays, others leave Zimbabwe and become economic migrants in South Africa, another fraught option for working men and women. The recent spate of xenophobic attacks in South Africa is but one indication of the complex challenges these migrants face. In addition to the threat of violence, Zimbabwean migrants also face low pay, high levels of informal work and poor working conditions. A 2013 Working Paper for the World Migration Report found that migrants in South Africa do not trust authorities and feel that the state does not guarantee their safety, with women feeling vulnerable, particularly to HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence.

Labor unions and pro-worker economists in Zimbabwe tell the Solidarity Center that, to prevent a full-fledged economic collapse and begin the process of rebuilding, the Zimbabwean economy requires serious reforms. Forward-looking U.S. policy should seek creative ways to support government and civil society actors—both in the country and the sub-region—who can advocate for and help implement the “structural reforms to leverage decent work-rich, inclusive and pro-poor growth.”^{xviii} Such an approach is key to the country's ability to arrest the economic decline and to establish a new social contract where stakeholders place “sectarian interests” aside and focus on the immediate crisis. Key stakeholders include government, labor and business.

Also on the economic front, Zimbabwe needs to strengthen its banking sector, improve management of natural resources, clarify its indigenization policy and take serious steps against entrenched corruption. The United States can play a positive role by encouraging the government of Zimbabwe, key stakeholders and Southern African Development Community (SADC) members to address these critical issues.

At the same time, informal workers, both in Zimbabwe and migrants throughout the region, would benefit from programs designed to assist with their struggle for economic well-being and dignity, as well as their organizing and advocacy activities.

DEMOCRACY PROGRAMS, HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AND HEALTH

In addition to increased U.S. attention to key stakeholders in Zimbabwe's economic reform process, it is essential that the United States ramp up support for rule of law and democracy programs, including human rights, worker rights and constitutionally based electoral reform. According to the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, “most human rights defenders, like trade unions and civic organisations have been severely weakened due to economic decline as well as brain drain.”^{ix} Moreover, it is not too early to begin the process of identifying appropriate support in advance of the 2018 elections in order to ensure that members of the country's community-based, mass organizations are fully prepared to engage as informed voters, election monitors and civic educators able to “promote inclusiveness, transparency and accountability.”^x

It is significant to note here that U.S. funding for democracy, human rights and governance (DRG) programs in Africa through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been declining despite extraordinary need, down 40 percent since 2008. Entire missions in Africa have no DRG funding. Funding for Zimbabwe is inadequate to the challenge.

Another important component of U.S. foreign policy toward Zimbabwe has been support for communities struck by natural disaster, disease and hunger. For more than a decade the United States has been a leader in humanitarian support, and that should continue. Zimbabwe does not have the capacity to feed its people. With the threat of serious food shortages on the horizon and in consideration of Zimbabwe's fragile health system, international assistance remains critical.

American support for HIV/AIDS programming has been particularly significant. HIV/AIDS continues to affect more than 15 percent of the population, and the virus has orphaned nearly 1 million children. The combination of poverty and HIV/AIDS has a particular impact on women who care for the sick, and see their household economies collapse and their health weakened as a result of the virus. With international support, Zimbabwe does have a strong HIV/AIDS response that provides free screening, counseling and medicines for those living with the virus. U.S. support should continue and, if possible, expand.

THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

Moving forward, that above-mentioned mix of policy approaches remains important. However, it is timely to begin to explore and put in place policies that are more directly framed not only by Zimbabwe's special circumstances, but also by strategies required by Africa as a whole. While Zimbabwe faces a unique set of governance challenges, the country, like the rest of Africa, requires coherent and comprehensive policies that will ultimately lead to inclusive and sustainable economic development, respect for human rights and gender equality.

On the economic front, as was noted during the 2014 U.S./Africa Leaders Summit Civil Society Forum, trade and investment strategies designed to promote industrialization and structural transformation that advance decent work with fundamental worker rights, social protection floors and gender equality should be an essential component of U.S. policy toward Africa.^{xi} Across the continent, nations have at least rhetorical consensus on the criticality of industrialization and the need to create coherent national, regional and continental industrial policy frameworks.^{xii} The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), of which Zimbabwe is a member, adopted a new framework on industrialization in 2014. Governments have agreed that accountable and transparent management of the continent's vast mining resources should establish the financial foundation for these reforms. The first challenge of U.S. policy is to ensure that it is working in concert with these broader frameworks, which are geared toward creating economic development that is inclusive, sustainable and a generator of decent jobs. In a country that seems to be on the brink of economic collapse, this recommendation may seem premature. However, through targeted assistance and diplomacy, it may be possible to forge a new social contract with actors willing to put aside partisan politics.

CONCLUSION

As Zimbabwe's economic crisis continues, Regional economists and Zimbabwe labor unions and workers are looking for U.S. policy that includes strong support for:

- Those actors able and willing to put aside partisan concerns and forge a new social contract that can focus much needed attention to the crisis
- Human rights defenders
- Community-based, mass organizations that are working to educate and organize citizens around a rights-based culture
- Organizations operating within the dominant portion of the economy—informal actors. Stronger protection for informal economy workers can have a positive impact on the flow of economic migrants
- Ongoing and exacerbating humanitarian needs and the country's health systems

Lastly, while the international community was deeply disappointed in the SADC's unwillingness to be guided by its own internal policies during the 2013 elections, it remains an important regional body and should be viewed as a central partner of the U.S. as it formulates policy toward Zimbabwe. Continued diplomatic efforts, along with support for regional advocates can exert bottom-up pressures on governments, particularly on 'issues pertaining to elections, governance and democratic practice.'^{xiii}

Thank you for this opportunity.

NOTES

- ⁱ World Food Program, "Zimbabwe Overview." Accessed June 1, 2015. <https://www.wfp.org/countries/zimbabwe/overview>
- ⁱⁱ Godfrey Kanyaze, "The Zimbabwean Economy: Are We Going Back To 2008?" (paper presented at a Public Seminar of the Mass Public Opinion Institute, Harare, Zimbabwe, March 25, 2015).
- ⁱⁱⁱ Kanyaze, "The Zimbabwean Economy: Are We Going Back to 2008?"
- ^{iv} Afrobarometer survey. Findings from Round Six Survey in Zimbabwe. May 18, 2015. <http://www.slideshare.net/Afrobarometer/zim-r6-presentation1>
- ^v Charles Mangongera, "Findings Influenced by 'Margin of Terror'," *Zimbabwe Guardian*, May 15, 2015, <http://www.theindependent.co.zw/2015/05/15/findings-influenced-by-margin-of-terror/>. Accessed May 31, 2015.
- ^{vi} Mangongera, "Findings Influenced by 'Margin of Terror'".
- ^{vii} Godfrey Kanyaze, email message to author, May 29, 2015.
- ^{viii} Mangongera, "Findings Influenced by 'Margin of Terror'".
- ^{ix} Japhet Moyo, email message to author, May 29, 2015.
- ^x Godfrey Kanyaze, email message to author, May 29, 2015.
- ^{xi} "Promoting Decent Work: Priorities for U.S. and African Leaders, Civil Society and Private Sector Stakeholders," (Discussion Note for the U.S./African Leaders' Summit Civil Society Forum Promoting Decent Work Discussion, Washington, D.C.), August 4, 2014.
- ^{xii} SADC doc section 2.1.2.
- ^{xiii} Japhet Moyo, email message to author, May 29, 2015.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. And just let me ask a couple questions in regards to labor rights in Zimbabwe.

Are they respected? Are there independent trade unions? Do they have influence?

Ms. COUNTESS. That is three questions.

Trade unions have influence. Labor rights are, by and large, not respected. When you have such a small amount of workers formally employed—and we are talking 10 percent to 15 percent of workers are employed in the formal economy—and you have a country in deep decline, the incentive for companies, for manufacturers, to actually respect labor law is very, very low.

And what we have seen in those places where collective bargaining agreements do exist, workers do have some legal ability to negotiate and hold companies accountable. But, unfortunately, what we have seen is that literally every week companies are closing in the country and, as companies close, they totally renege on their obligations to those workers, pensions, severance, et cetera. They totally renege on those obligations.

And also what we have seen are more and more examples of companies that just are not paying their workers, where, literally, you have people going to work every day in the hopes that they might get an allowance or, you know, transportation assistance at some period in time.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. As Mugabe looks east, as Mr. Freeth points out in his testimony, and China increasingly dumps goods and manufactures—do you find that that further lowers the standards for laborers?

Ms. COUNTESS. Absolutely. What our partners have found in their assessments of Chinese-owned mines, factories and so forth is very low adherence to current labor law, much less international standards. Many Chinese mines, for example, are not unionized. They do not allow a union presence. And the treatment of workers and the working standards are extremely low.

In terms of the dumping of products, there have been, I would say, probably over the past 10 years various campaigns in Zimbabwe, citizen-driven campaigns, opposed to the dumping of products which are generally of very, very poor quality and relatively expensive, given the quality. There is a high degree of dissatisfaction with the products that are basically forced upon the people of the country.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. And, finally, does Zimbabwe get a bad deal vis-à-vis China in terms of the precious metals and the like that they send to Beijing versus what they get back in terms of either barter or money?

Ms. COUNTESS. We would have to get back to you with specifics on that. My impression, based on the information that we have to date, is that Zimbabwe has entered into fairly dangerous territory in the sense that, in several of the more recent agreements, it has essentially used the future, the unknown wealth in the ground, in order to access loans from the Chinese Government.

And so it is putting in place a pretty serious debtor relationship when that country is already literally billions of dollars in debt to international organizations as well as various countries.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Mr. Freeth, if I could just ask you—and I would agree with you that, no matter who practices it, racial hatred is always deplorable. Whether it be from a Black or a White or a White to a Black, it doesn't matter. All racism is deplorable.

And I am wondering, do you find any empathy or sympathy from the opposition, like MDC-T, Tsvangirai, and others who might form a government in the future, who would see that the seizure of farmland and farms, as you pointed out—if you could elaborate a little bit, you know, the idea of spending 2 years in jail for farming, what is that about? If you stay on your own farm, you can end up going to jail?

And I remember, when the seizures were occurring, Tony Blair was absolutely outspoken. I spoke about it as well. I wasn't the only one. But in terms of a complaint, as signatories to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, is there a reason why the UK has not brought a complaint itself as signatories as well? But, again, if you could, is the opposition at all empathetic to what has been experienced by the White farmers?

Mr. FREETH. On the opposition side, there is obviously sympathy. They say that, if they got back into power, they would immediately ensure that commercial agriculture could go forward, irrespective of whether you are White or Black, and that the laws that in place at the moment would be taken away.

At the moment we have got a constitution that under section 72 says that, at a strike of a pen, your property can be taken away and, if you then are still on that land, it becomes state land immediately. It doesn't matter about compensation or anything like that. If you are still on that land, you then face 2 years in jail. So the law is very much there.

And the MDC say, yes, they would take those laws away, they would ensure that such laws that were struck down by the SADC Tribunal are not there any longer. You know, there is no constitution in the world that actually allows for such draconian measures against property rights.

As far as the United Kingdom wanting to make a complaint is concerned, I have had discussions with various people in the United Kingdom administration. And the feeling is that, because they were the colonial power, it is not really for them to do it. Mugabe would have a field day with his propaganda if they were the ones who made the complaint.

But a country that has no colonial history, like the United States, obviously, it would be a lot easier to be able to do that.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you.

Ms. Bass.

Ms. BASS. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Countess, you heard—and I would ask you the same thing, Mr. Freeth—the questions I was asking about sanctions of individuals.

And I was just wondering what you thought of the current U.S. policy and its impact, in general, but, also, the sanctioning of individuals.

Ms. COUNTESS. Based on the feedback that we received from our partners, the general U.S. policy to Zimbabwe is appreciated and

respected. As Dr. Smith noted, it has been characterized as humanitarian plus, so a high degree of emphasis on ensuring that people's basic needs are met.

However, our partners are also very deeply concerned about what might be a serious decline in terms of U.S. support for human rights and democracy and governance. As I noted in my testimony, there has been a significant drop in funding in democracy programs in USAID, a 40-percent drop since 2008. When we look at the countries in Africa that have significant democracy and governance funding, we are only looking at three: South Sudan, Nigeria, and Liberia.

So when you look at the human rights and democracy challenges facing many countries in Africa, particularly Zimbabwe, this is a serious issue. And we appreciate the subcommittee's openness to hearing these concerns and encourage a deeper consideration.

Ms. BASS. Why do you think that is? I mean, why is our funding—I mean, I am surprised, actually. I didn't realize it was those three countries. And then, on the humanitarian side, does our funding get where it is supposed to go?

Ms. COUNTESS. My understanding, as Dr. Smith said, is that the funding, humanitarian aid, does go where it is supposed to. USAID is very good at distributing basic foodstuffs. And you can visit rural areas, as I have in Zimbabwe, and see the cooking oil cans that say "Gift from the U.S."

Ms. BASS. I see.

Ms. COUNTESS. Right? So I think that those resources do get out. The decline in DRG support is surprising to us as well. We would certainly like to see it increased.

It is important, we think. Not only does it send a very strong and real message of what sort of bucks behind U.S. values and U.S. rhetorical support for democracy—

Ms. BASS. That reduction is internal to USAID. Correct?

Ms. COUNTESS. That is my understanding.

Ms. BASS. Right. It is not that we have cut the funding?

Ms. COUNTESS. Correct. That is my understanding.

Ms. BASS. Or, rather, maybe it is their implementation of how we fund it or not. But, anyway, I was trying to get some clarity on that.

I know that in the Zimbabwean Constitution there is supposed to be a gender commission. Does one exist?

Ms. COUNTESS. To my knowledge, a gender commission might exist. But I think the next question is: Does it function?

Ms. BASS. There you go.

Ms. COUNTESS. And this is part of the problem, I think, facing the Zimbabwe Government as a whole. Because the political infighting, both in the ruling party as well as the opposition, has been so all-consuming, basic government functions simply have been ignored to the detriment of the country, with the biggest problem, obviously, being in the economy.

However, as I said in my testimony, what our partners say to us is that there are individuals, there are Parliamentarians—there is a possibility to create a new social contract with those individuals that have responsibility for certain portfolios, but who are willing

to look beyond the partisanship, who recognize how deeply in trouble the country is.

And I think, if we can encourage our policymakers to move beyond our role in any partisanship and to support and promote dialogue, particularly with those institutions that are actually functioning, then maybe we can begin to see at least the framework for a different situation in the future.

Ms. BASS. Would you agree with Dr. Smith that the opposition is so fractured that they are ineffective?

Ms. COUNTESS. Yes.

Ms. BASS. At this point you don't see any viable alternative?

Ms. COUNTESS. At this point I don't see a viable alternative today. But there are discussions going on. Morgan Tsvangirai, for example, has been going around the country, engaging in grassroots conversations.

We don't know what the future will hold. I know that the MDC Renewal has also been split even further. There are individuals that are forming new parties. There are rumors that, within ZANU, individuals who have been forced out will form a new political party.

There is a lot of conversation going on and maneuvering behind the scenes, and we don't know. But at this point in time what is very, very clear is that no one in power seems to be working on behalf of the people of Zimbabwe and certainly not the working people.

Ms. BASS. Thank you.

And, Mr. Freeth, what did you think in terms of current U.S. policy and the sanctions?

Mr. FREETH. I think it is very important that it is retained. You know, the European Union—

Ms. BASS. Retained.

Mr. FREETH. Retained. Yeah.

Ms. BASS. I just wondered if it's effective.

Mr. FREETH. The European Union has made the experiment of trying to re-engage, and they have taken all targeted restrictions off against everyone, apart from the President and his wife.

And, meantime, we have these things like Itai Dzamara disappearing. We have the continued takeover of properties, the retention of draconian laws. There does not seem to be any quid pro quo taking place.

And so, until we see that the European Union actually is having success in negotiating a better environment for Zimbabweans, I think it is important—just like on the school grounds where there is a bully, you have to actually confront that bully and say, "Listen, we can't accept this."

Ms. BASS. Well, just so you know, I was not asking that in terms of whether they needed to be lifted. I just wanted to know the impact.

But I also wanted to follow a little bit the chairman's questions in terms of allies that you have within the opposition. I think we have kind of established that the opposition is not that viable of an opposition.

But what about outside of Zimbabwe in terms of other African countries? Are there allies? And then, also, outside of Britain, are

there European or other countries that are working with you in terms of what you are trying to do?

Mr. FREETH. Well, obviously, Botswana is a country that is an ally in terms of the fact that it has got a very good record.

Ms. BASS. Right.

Mr. FREETH. It is right on our border. And the President of Botswana, Ian Khama, is going to be taking over as Chairman of the Southern African Development Community.

Ms. BASS. Good.

Mr. FREETH. So we hope that that will create some change in terms of the way that the countries around us respond to what is going on in Zimbabwe.

I think the civil society itself is moving very much in the right direction. For example, where the SADC Tribunal is concerned, there are quite a few different countries taking their governments to court on the basis that it was totally unconstitutional what the leaders did in destroying this court without any legal or democratic process. And so the law societies are taking their governments to task. And that is encouraging. You know, that is important.

We battle. I think there seems to be something about the aura of our President that stops people from really wanting to take him on in any way. At the age of 91, he is obviously an elder statesman. On the African continent, he is currently Chairman of the African Union, Chairman of SADC. He has this aura about him that seems to be so persuasive in stopping people from confronting the things that are wrong, and this is one of our biggest problems in Africa.

Ms. BASS. One final question is: What would you like to see as the solution? Because you made reference—I think you were making reference to the constitution, but it didn't seem as though you have faith, basically, with a new government, that the constitution would actually be upheld. What do you see as the ultimate solution?

Mr. FREETH. Well, the ultimate solution is, obviously, a democratic government coming into being and respecting the rule of law and property rights and ensuring that the people's God-given abilities are able to be realized. But until that happens, I believe that we have to use whatever measures we can to put pressure on the current regime to ensure that that situation can eventually materialize—and never to lose hope.

The people of Zimbabwe want something different. They want change. They want a democratic force to come into power where their God-given potential can be released in the country. We believe very strongly that Zimbabwe can grow very dramatically and very quickly when that time comes. But until that time comes, we will continue to regress.

So, in the meantime, I believe strongly that we need to invoke the various conventions that our President has actually signed up to and put pressure, for example, through the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which is the United Nations convention which the U.S. has signed up to and Mugabe has signed up to, in order to create some form of accountability.

This culture of impunity that our ruling elite continue to be able to get away with all the time needs to stop eventually, and some

form of accountability is so critical to stop criminals from carrying on committing criminal acts.

Ms. BASS. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Mr. Donovan.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Chairman.

I just have two questions. And my 88-year-old mother would be very disappointed in the way she raised me if I didn't ask Ms. Countess first. But my question is for both of you.

For the people that you represent, the workers, what more could our country do? And for yourself, for the farmers, what could our country do to help you and help those people in need?

And my second question, follow-up, is: Unless there is a change in the regime and the government, will any of those measures that you are going to suggest to us—would they be effective unless there is a change in government?

Ms. COUNTESS. In Zimbabwe, we work with, as I mentioned, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions. We also work with an organization called the Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations, ZCIEA. The reason I mention ZCIEA is because it is an association of associations that work with that vast army that I talked about, so everyone from the petty traders to women in construction, to cross-border traders and market vendors.

Because even in this very difficult time, people do seek to organize themselves. They do seek to negotiate a better deal with their communities, leaders with their municipalities, and so forth. And so, as we provide technical assistance, help them build their capacity to carry out their own agendas, not only do they find success, but they also develop new confidence and are able then to tackle bigger issues.

So in terms of the answer to your question does any of this work really make a difference without a change in government, it absolutely makes a difference, absolutely makes a difference. Because the kind of small successes that our trade union partners and our informal economy partners find are, for example, in a marketplace, negotiating with a community leader to ensure that that marketplace has toilets and access to water.

In terms of our union partners, the kinds of successes that we are talking about are workers getting their fair share, their negotiated rights and benefits within certain circumstances, either in terms of a termination or a full-blown retrenchment. We are talking about unions having the ability to carry out their role within the tripartite structures of government.

So unlike other parts of civil society, unions are able to sit with government, with business, in various institutions and establish things like wages at a sectorial level or a national level, national health policy, Social Security and so forth, the extent to which through our assistance—and I mean us, the United States—is the extent to which we can continue and build upon the work that we are already doing. What we do then is to help stem the tide, forestall a full-blown economic collapse, and forestall the decimation of all institutions in the country.

This is critically important. Zimbabwe is in the middle of southern Africa. What do you think will happen if that country im-

plodes? What do you think will happen in South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, if that country implodes?

Part of the reason why I think the U.S. has been so quick, for example, in 2008, to jump on the cholera epidemic in Zimbabwe was because diseases spread. They do not hold to national borders.

So you really don't want for a variety of reasons to see that country fall apart. And for us, as trade unionists, we are committed to maintaining our partnerships with our brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe.

Mr. CLAWSON. If the gentleman will yield.

[Audio malfunction in hearing room.]

Mr. CLAWSON [continuing]. Is why you have a refugee crises in other countries—

Ms. COUNTESS. Yes.

Mr. CLAWSON [continuing]. And the xenophobia and the violence directed toward those refugees. But those same very neighbors of those countries that you just listed, I have been to all those countries, done business in a lot of those countries. They select this guy as their head guy. Europe stays on the sidelines. So, realistically, what, you know, what do we do?

I mean, I am all for humanitarian help. But these same countries that you said will be impacted by the implosion are sitting it out while White people, Black people, women, men, poor, everybody gets hurt by this guy.

So if what you said is true—and I don't doubt it—why does everybody sit this one out when this guy needs to go?

Ms. COUNTESS. Democracy is a funny thing.

Mr. CLAWSON. You are not calling any of this democracy. Right? None of us bet on a union contract or a constitution or any piece of paper. Every bet we ever make is on people.

Ms. COUNTESS. SADC leaders voted on Mugabe. And that is their process. That is their decision. It wasn't the people of southern Africa that made that decision. There was no region-wide vote on who would become the head of SADC. Those leaders that represent those countries made a decision, and that is their decision.

Part of the political reality that also has to be factored into U.S. policy is that, while we are now talking about Zimbabwe and its governance issues, there is a very real fear that some years down the line we might be talking about a governance crisis in South Africa, that we might be talking about governance crises in other SADC nations.

And so one of the reasons why many in civil society throughout the region have placed such a high degree of emphasis on Zimbabwe is because you have to take a stand somewhere. You can't just write one country off of 12 million people.

Mr. CLAWSON. So why did those leaders of states of those countries vote for this guy? What is the reason for that? Corruption likes corruption? What is the reason?

Ms. COUNTESS. I would say that they have similar interests.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you very much, Ms. Countess.

To remind Mr. Freeth, I was just curious about what our country could do that we are not doing now to further the rights of the farmers in Zimbabwe.

And would your suggestions, the measures that you think the United States should be taking that they are not doing now, be effective if the current government was still in place?

Mr. FREETH. I think the big thing is: How do you create accountability in a country where you go to the police station because someone has got a bit of paper and has decided to take over your home and take over your livelihood and the police say, "No. We can't help you because this is political"? How do you create accountability in that situation where you have an international court judgment in your favor—and my father-in-law was actually killed in obtaining that court judgment—or as a result of going to court against the President and the government just refuses to recognize that judgment?

I think the answer is we have to lay in place systems of accountability for the future. Obviously, we recognize that, while we have got someone who doesn't want to adhere to the rule of law, we have got a huge problem. But what we need to do is lay the foundations of justice and righteousness for the future, which we all want to build on in the future so the country can go forward.

So I believe that there are measures that we can take to document things that are taking place, that we can invoke international conventions, that we can ensure that whatever can be done within the limited scope of our own justice system is done.

Farmers at the moment and farm workers don't have any money any longer to fight their own legal cases. So through Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights and those kinds of organizations to help people in those positions where injustice is placing them and they can't actually defend themselves, it is very important that those people are able to in some way defend themselves in their situations.

But it is. It is a very difficult situation to know how to help people in this crisis. But we have to just look at whatever instruments that we possibly can to create accountability. And so to get committees to come out to Zimbabwe, see with their own eyes what is taking place, to get the Embassy to go out to situations out of the Harare bubble, as we call it, to see situations, this is really critical. It is really important.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Just one final question: What does a seizure look like? It is not just one. It will be several. Where are the farmers? I mean, are some in jail? Have some emigrated elsewhere? Are they just simply impoverished? And the workers that very often are equally displaced, if my understanding is correct, where do they go?

As I think both of you mentioned, and I have been following it myself, which is why I asked Dr. Smith several questions along these lines. Is Zimbabwe heading toward another manmade famine because of a totally reckless and irresponsible and wrong policy toward people who own those farms? Where are they?

And if you would just speak a little bit about the court. What kind of proceeding was it? Was it before multiple judges? And what is the enforcement power or was—Mr. Clawson—what was the enforcement power of the court itself? Is it more of an admonishment

or do they have a standing in countries where judgments are meted out?

Mr. FREETH. Okay. First of all, what does a takeover look like. Essentially what happens is someone comes along with an offer letter signed by the minister. He says, "I am the new owner of this farm."

And, basically, what then happens is he can then get very violent, as they did in our case. Many of our workers were severely beaten. They had fractured skulls, broken bones, people thrown into fires, police coming out, putting workers who had been beaten up into high-security jail, and just creating absolute mayhem.

The police then also get involved. And there is a prosecution process if you refuse to get off. And the trial can go on for a very, very long time. I know farmers who have spent more than 100 days in court at their trials. And it is very, very painful going through a trial. Facing 2 years in a Zimbabwe jail is no joke.

So people obviously get drained financially. A hundred days in court is a lot of money in lawyers' fees. They get drained emotionally. And when they eventually have to leave the farm, they very often leave with nothing.

I mean, in our case, all our tractors were stolen, all our crops were stolen, our generators, our pumps, our irrigation equipment. All our wildlife was killed. We had a safari lodge. That was burnt down. Our house was burnt down. My parents-in-law's house was burnt down. Various workers' houses were burnt down.

So it is a pretty dramatic thing that takes place on the farm when these situations occur, and it creates an environment of absolute fear in that whole area so that no one wants to in any way oppose the government in the future.

The farm workers normally remain on the property mostly. Many of them were migrant laborers that came down three or four generations ago from Malawi and Mozambique and Zambia in the heyday of Zimbabwean agriculture. But they have lost all touch with their families back there. They have got no communal land to be able to go back to.

So they mostly remain on the farms where they can and eke out an existence, which is incredibly frugal. They don't have money to buy seed. They don't have money to buy fertilizer. They are normally allowed to plant a little bit of maize and that sort of thing around their houses. But they cannot then send their children to school. They cannot feed themselves properly. And that is a huge percentage of our population. So it is a massive problem that has unfolded over many years.

As far as the SADC Tribunal is concerned, this was a court that was set up through the Southern African Development Community Treaty that was eventually put into place. The treaty was signed in 1992. But the SADC Tribunal eventually only opened for business in—the judges were appointed in 2005, ten judges from different southern African countries. And at any one time, five judges would sit at a particular hearing.

So the process that took place in our situation was the Zimbabwe Government agreed to allow whatever judgment came out of the SADC Tribunal. They said they would adhere to that. They argued the case. They finally in the final hearing wanted to defer the case.

And when we went for a contempt later on, they actually walked out of the courtroom.

But they argued the full case. And the SADC Tribunal then made their judgment, all five judges, on November 28, 2008. And the judgment is there. It is a final and binding judgment. But, unfortunately, the Zimbabwe Government did not accept that judgment.

We went on to register the judgment in South Africa. And we had a cost award against the Zimbabwe Government. So we attached a house belonging to the Zimbabwe Government in Cape Town. And the Zimbabwe Government suddenly realized that it wasn't just a bit of paper that they could tear up. It actually meant something. And so they suddenly came and they paid the lawyers' fees and stopped the auction taking place of that Zimbabwe Government house.

But to this day they have not adhered to the judgment on the ground and allowed the people who should be allowed to carry on farming to do so. And so we are in a situation at the moment where we have got the judgment, but there are no teeth to actually adhere to it.

There were various provisions in the treaty for sanctions to be able to put by the other Southern African Development Community countries against Zimbabwe, but they did not choose to follow that route and, rather, dissolved the whole court.

And that is why the various law societies in the Southern African Development Community are taking their governments to court and saying, "You can't do that. You can't just, because you don't like the court, close it down to the citizens of southern Africa."

So I think it is very important for the people of southern Africa that that court is in place, and whatever can be done to support initiatives to resurrect that court are very important.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. How long has it been defunct?

Mr. FREETH. Since 2012. And what they are saying now is that they are going to—well, they have put together a new protocol that will allow state-to-state conflicts to be adjudicated upon, but no individuals are able to approach the court. So from one year to the next, the court will simply not sit.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. That sounds like an inferior remedy to me, not having people to have access to such a tribunal. Thank you.

And we will follow up on your recommendations, both of yours. So many excellent ones. We will scope out the idea of approaching the administration to see—because, as the executive branch, it would be their call—to bring an action as a member state to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

It has been my experience that there is often a reluctance on the part of the executive branch, but it is worth pursuing. And I thank you for that recommendation. Of course, even if they came down and came down strongly in your favor, which I think the facts would lead inexorably to, their enforcement powers are very limited as well.

But it would at least create a surge, especially in a post-Mugabe government, when, as part of reconciliation, justice is being looked

at very clearly as well. There should be justice for all. And I thank you for so eloquently stating your case, but the case of so many others.

I do have a question: How many farmers are there that have been dispossessed of their farms?

Mr. FREETH. There were about 4,500 White commercial farms. And it is difficult to say, but probably a couple of hundred still eking out a living in some way.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. And are there farmers still in prison?

Mr. FREETH. They imprisoned some people. But, basically, people got out. What the magistrate would normally say or normally does is say, "You need to get off the farm. If you are back on the farm in any way at all, then we will put you in jail," so a suspended sentence.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you.

You know, one of the joys of serving in Congress is that there are so many diverse individuals with tremendous backgrounds in law enforcement, humanitarian work.

It is good to have an experienced prosecutor now joining our subcommittee, Mr. Donovan.

Thank you so much again. And I look forward to working with you going forward.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:45 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

**Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International
Organizations**
Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ), Chairman

June 3, 2015

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held by the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations in Room 2200 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at <http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov>):

DATE: Wednesday, June 3, 2015

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: The Future of U.S.-Zimbabwe Relations

WITNESSES: Panel I
Shannon Smith, Ph.D.
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Bureau of African Affairs
U.S. Department of State

Panel II
Mr. Ben Freeth
Executive Director
Mike Campbell Foundation

Ms. Imani Countess
Regional Program Director for Africa
The Solidarity Center

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations HEARING

Day Wednesday Date June 3, 2015 Room 2200 Rayburn HOB

Starting Time 2:58 p.m. Ending Time 4:42 p.m.

Recesses 0 (to) (to) (to) (to) (to) (to)

Presiding Member(s)

Rep. Chris Smith

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ☒

Executive (closed) Session ☐

Televised ☒

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☒

Stenographic Record ☒

TITLE OF HEARING:

The Future of U.S.-Zimbabwe Relations

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Karen Bass, Rep. Daniel Donovan, Rep. Curt Clawson

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: (Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ☒ No ☐
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: (List any statements submitted for the record.)

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____

or

TIME ADJOURNED 4:42 p.m.

Gregory B. Sisk
Subcommittee Staff Director