

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ISSUES AND CONCERNS OF THE COMMAND ELEMENT COMMUNICATED TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF ZIMBABWE, AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ZIMBABWE DEFENCE FORCES, CDE R. G. MUGABE, THROUGH THE FATHER FEDELIS MUKONORI TEAM IN THE TWO DAYS FROM THE 15TH TO THE 16TH NOVEMBER, 2017.

INTRODUCTION

This Report summarizes main issues to emerge from communication, both mediated and direct, to the President of Zimbabwe and Commander-in-Chief of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, Cde Robert Gabriel Mugabe, by the Command Element following an operation mounted by the Zimbabwe Defence Forces in the early hours of Wednesday, 15th November, 2017. The sequel to that operation, dubbed "Operation Restore Legacy", was a morning meeting called by the Commander of the Defence Forces (CDF), General C.G.D.N Chiwenga, at the Army Headquarters at Josiah Magama Tongogara Barracks (JMTB), formerly KGV, comprising the Command Element (including Police, Prisons and the President's Department), the Chief Secretary to the President and Cabinet, Dr M.J.M. Sibanda, Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, Dr Mariyawanda Nzuwah, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Joey Bimha, Secretary for Information, Media and Broadcasting Services and Presidential Spokesperson, Cde George Charamba. Later, Father Fidelis Mukonori joined the same meeting.

Broadly, the CDF explained the rationale behind the Operation stressing that this was not a military take-over of Government, but a time-bound Operation meant to extricate the President of Zimbabwe and Commander-in-Chief of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces from negative elements who encircled and had developed tentacles around him, thereby over threatening his legacy and interfering with the proper execution of his duties as Leader of the ruling Party, Zanu-PF, and as President of the Republic of Zimbabwe. Explaining that the Command Element had had several meetings with the President at which it had repeatedly expressed grave concern over this negative development, especially on the defence and the upholding of the ideals and vision of the National Liberation Struggle; on his Legacy and symbolism as the only surviving leader from that epochal Struggle; as the founding father of the Zimbabwe Nation; on the electability of the ruling ZANU-PF Party in the impending 2018 Harmonized Elections and, on the preservation and reproducibility of the whole ethos of the National Liberation Struggle as the dominant, enduring and governing idea in and for Zimbabwe, the CDF requested both the Chief Secretary and Chairman of the Civil Service Commission to help with a quick return to normalcy in respect of the functioning of the three pillars of the State, namely the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary. The Operation would not interfere with the normal functioning of society and was only targeting criminal elements who, over the years, had surrounded the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces, thereby stifling the proper running of the Party and Country.

The CDF also requested Father Fidelis Mukonori to assist with restoring contact and communication with His Excellency the President, Cde R.G.

not a military take-over of Government or a challenge to the Constitutional position and authority of the President as Head of State and Government, and Commander-in-Chief of the Zimbabwe Defence Force. Rather, the Operation was meant to prop the authority of the President and buttress his Constitutional roles in running the affairs of both the Party, ZANU-PF, and the Nation of Zimbabwe. Equally, it was reported to the President that the Command Element undertook to ensure the safety and welfare of the entire First Family both in the present and for all times. The Command Element pledged loyalty to the President and expressed reverence to him as the only surviving leader from the epochal National Liberation Struggle; as the founding President of the Nation of Zimbabwe and, above all, as a symbol and personification of the founding process, the Struggle for National Liberation and Independence. Operation Restore Legacy had been prompted by grave concerns on the part of the Command Element to threats to the integrity, role and legacy of the President posed by a cabal of negative, counter-revolutionary elements who for long had hung around him, and who appeared to take advantage of his advanced age to besmirch his impeccable legacy as a living icon of the Struggle, while systematically destabilizing and misdirecting the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), itself the Party of Struggle and National Liberation, and who interfered with the smooth functioning of Government and related institutions critical to the sustenance and endurance of the ethos of Struggle. The goal of the Operation was thus to extricate and redeem the Principal from this cabal which encircled him and which threatened his image in the public eyes, through its acts of wanton corruption and ambitions. The drastic intervention had been prompted and necessitated by repeated

representations made to His Excellency the President by the Command Element, but which appeared checkmated by the said cabal whose strength and influence on the President, the Party, Government and the First Family seemed to grow by the day, at the expense of the ethos, the ideals, values and traditions of the National Liberation Struggle, and at the expense of the President's otherwise hallowed legacy as a symbol of the freedom struggle and a renowned Pan-Africanist. More worrisome were the divisive, manipulative and vindictive acts by the same cabal which threatened the electability of ZANU-PF in the impending 2018 Harmonized Elections, thus raising the spectre of an electoral defeat which harkened to the 2008 Electoral Crisis and more broadly, to a similar fate suffered by Zambia's founding UNIP in the early 1990s. The President was informed that it was the view of the Command Element that the activities of the group, if left unchecked, threatened broader social cohesion and thus National Security and Stability.

Destabilization and subversion of the Ruling ZANU-PF Party.

The President was informed of the grave concern of the Command Element over the methodical subversion by the same cabal of established Party hierarchy, processes, procedures and values, all in ways that divided and destabilized ZANU-PF from within. Specific mention was made of the wanton suspensions, and destabilization of Party structures across all but one Provinces by the same group in the hope of rigging intra-party electoral results in order to influence the forthcoming Extraordinary Party Congress whose outcomes would be rendered illegitimate in the eyes of members and supporters already

riled by the open and wanton arbitrariness which characterized the management of Party affairs. The ongoing purging of Party officials across the country, including senior officials holding leadership positions in Government, threatened overall stability in the Party and in Government. Against such a baneful background, the Party risked creating conditions for the rise of "Independent" candidates in the forthcoming National Elections drawn from its embittered members, thereby dividing its vote to its own detriment and against its own electoral prospects. Feedback from the over 2 000 Commissars comprising retired senior officers from the Army already embedded in communities across the country pointed to worrisome, widespread disaffection and malaise within the Party, against its leadership, its decisions and management style. Presidential Interface rallies had been manipulated and stage-managed to create a veneer of normalcy and Party popularity on the ground. In reality, these rallies deceptively involved same faces bused to different venues, or ordinary citizens force-marched to these meetings against their will. The Operation by the Military was thus meant to reinstate bona fide party processes for legitimate outcomes. It was the wish of the Commanders to ensure that the President presided over clean and just Party processes in the run-up to the Congress, all for legitimate outcomes. It was the view of the Command Element that all Party members needed to be allowed to participate in elective processes leading to the Congress, without being blocked through trumped-up charges and arbitrary suspensions. Further, the Command Element said while the President's view that the Party leadership would come from the people (through processes of Congress) was unimpeachable, in reality, Party processes had been badly interfered with as to render Congress outcomes predetermined.

and thus lacking in legitimacy. This rendered the President's well-meant protestations against arbitrary appointments appear to sound hollow and even deceitful, to the extent that the said acts of interference were being carried out in his name and that of members of his Family.

Threats to National Cohesion and Unity

The President was informed of the Command Element's acute concern with strident and persistent messages by high-ranking Party officials that threatened National Cohesion and Unity. Recalling the baneful legacy of violent conflicts and divisions in Zimbabwe's recent past, the Command Element sought to draw His Excellency's attention to the fact that the National Liberation Project of Nation-Building stood imperiled by the said recklessly divisive talk by high-ranking Party officials which threatened the country with what the Command Element termed "hondo yemarudzi", the war of linguistic tribes and regions. Such a discourse which was traceable to the divisive cabal, threatened the country with a throwback to the era of conflicts which this time around, was bound to be more complex and more widespread as to rip the Nation apart. In any case, ZANU-PF needed to muster votes from all provinces for a resounding victory, and thus could not afford alienating entire communities and regions through divisive political rhetoric.

Economic Crisis and non-fulfillment and execution of Public Projects

His Excellency was advised of the Command Element's reading of the dire economic situation obtaining in the country, and which posed a real threat to National Security and the overall electability of ZANU-PF.

Noting the unfulfilled promises made in the 2013 Harmonized General Elections, the Command Element expressed fears that ZANU-PF faced another election without evidence of real economic recovery by way of completion of flagship projects, or pointers to the general amelioration of the socio-economic conditions of an expectant voting populace. The President was informed that it was the view of Command Element that most of the Projects which would have taken off had stalled because of divisions caused by the said cabal which, apart from causing general paralysis in the execution of projects and programmes, was also extorting and demanding kickbacks from such projects. Apart from the Kariba Power Project, the ZANU-PF Government had little else to show. Much worse, acts of corruption had alienated many in the country, and Zimbabwe's all-weather friends like China who found little or no acknowledgment from Zimbabwe's Foreign Policy thrust and concrete day-to-day economic decisions. A sore project, the President was told, was the Dualisation of the Beitbridge-Chirundu Project which had long stalled, much as the President had been led to commissioning it several months ago. Another sore project was the Solar Project sited in Gwanda which had been mired in, and stalled by, endless controversies.

Non-fulfillment of Commitments to, and sidelining of, War Veterans

His Excellency was informed that no benefits promised to the War Veterans following an indaba with them more than a year ago, had materialized. The integration of War Veterans into operations of both Party and Government was still outstanding. What seemed to be happening instead was a systematic removal and alienation of War

veterans from all levels and programmes of the Party and Government, thereby deepening the isolation of the President from his wartime associates and ethos. Although legal instruments were being finalized on gratuities of serving War Veterans, the general attitude promoted by the counter-revolutionary cabal undermined a sense of belonging for the Veterans. Even Veteran Commissars seconded to the Party by the Military had been dropped or sidelined. This did not bode well for the future of the revolutionary culture in the Party which now seemed controlled by well-known corrupt counterrevolutionaries.

Abuse of Office and Hierarchy by the Cabal

The President was told of the Command's concerns over Party officials who overreached their official designations for selfish, arbitrary and ambitious ends. Examples included the Secretary for Science and Technology, Professor Jonathan Moyo, who had morphed into the driving ideologue of factional politics known as G-40, itself at the heart of the mayhem in the Party. Through his baneful influence over Party structures, and especially over the Secretary for Administration and the National Political Commissar, Professor Moyo, whom the Command Element described as a deserter from the struggle and party to negative forces behind the infamous 1978/79 Internal Settlement, and as an agent of a hostile State, had exerted a negative and disproportionate influence in the Party and in Government. He had also created the bogey of "Lacoste" faction as a counterpoise to his G-40 faction. His association with the First Family, both direct and indirect, constituted a grave threat to national security, apart from undermining the standing of the First Family in public eyes. The President was informed of the

Command Element's frustration following repeated and well-substantiated representations against the Professor revealing that he was in the employ of hostile States, and was a nucleus of espionage activities in the country (Wikileaks Reports being cases in point). Other cited examples of portfolio and hierarchical distortions pointed to the Women's and Youth Leagues, both of which had overrun the Main Wing of the Party. The President's attention was drawn to the Command Element's criticism of the way the National Political Commissar was executing Commissariat work. Instead of healing differences and benignly correcting erring cadres in the Party, his style of running the Commissariat Department was overridingly vindictive and judgmental, thereby worsening tensions in, and alienation from, the Party.

Perception of protection of offenders by the First Family

His Excellency the President was informed of the anger and frustration of the Command Element following confirmed reports that both the ruling Party's National Political Commissar, Cde Xavier Kasukuwere, and Secretary for Science and Technology, Professor Jonathan Moyo, and their families had been granted refuge at the First Family's Blue Roof Residence. The President was informed that the Command Element regarded the two and Cde Chombo as key members of the cabal it blamed for misleading the President and threatening his legacy, as well as for the mayhem in the Party. The Command Element also alleged that the three were part of criminals who, in spite of facing overwhelming charges of corruption, had defeated the course of justice by exploiting their proximity to the First Family. The President was told

that Professor Jonathan Moyo faced charges of abusing the Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund (ZIMDEF), but had used various dilations and other subterfuges to delay or even forestall his day in court. Cde Chombo had aided and abetted the abuse of ZIMDEF funds by authoring a letter that allegedly sought to exonerate the Professor. All three faced charges related to the abuse of residential land and stands in many suburbs in Harare and in different parts of the country. The seriousness of the matter was underlined to the President when he was told the Command Element expected him to release the two, failure which it may even consider plucking them out of Blue Roof, with the attendant consequences. The President was also told of the fears on the part of the Command Element that the duo's continued stay at the Blue Roof represented its lingering hold and influence on the First Family at a time when delicate attempts were underway to reopen clogged channels of communication between the President and the Command Element. The Command Element, the President was advised, feared the duo would continue to negatively influence the ongoing communication between the two sides. Equally, the Command Element's assurances that all arrested officials would be delivered to the Police for due process, was communicated to the President.

Repeated Attacks on Seniors

Also drawn to the attention of the President was the Command Element's extreme concern and displeasure at the culture of open disrespect of seniors in the Party, including public humiliation, chastisement, innuendos and even direct denunciation of officials at Interface Rallies, contrary to the dictates of decency, respect and

comradeship in the Party. This insidious culture of disrespect and public confrontation demeaned the Party and its personages in the eyes of the people.

Undermining of official communication through the Press and social media

Concern of the Command Element regarding the integrity and management of information and decisions of the Party was drawn to the attention of the President. There was a generalized tendency of preempting or ventilating decisions of the Party, the thinking of the President, and discussions and decisions of Government through the social media. Much worse, serious pending decisions or intentions of the Party and Government would be leaked to the Press and social media as rumours, only to be validated by subsequent actions. All this created an atmosphere of uncertainty, insecurity and victimization in the Party and Government. It also suggested an unofficial inner ring which enjoyed a position of privileged knowledge, on the basis of which it terrorized the broad membership in the Party and Government. This undermined the dignity and sincerity of the President, including the credibility of his decisions.

Provocations against the Defence Establishment

The President and Commander-in-Chief was informed that his Command Element felt painfully irked and provoked by repeated attacks on the Military, including public charges of conspiracy of a violent overthrow of the Constitutional Order and physical threat to the

president and his Family. The Command Element had put up with such repeated abuses and charges, which themselves had created bitterness within an already disgruntled rank and file. Such irreverent comments coming at a time when the welfare threshold in the military had markedly declined, threatened discipline in this very sensitive Organ of the State. For Commanders coming from the Struggle, such charges were particularly painful given both their longstanding loyalty and commitment to the safety of His Excellency the President, both before and after Independence.

Insecurity of Tenure within the Zimbabwe Defence Force and the weeding out of the core corps of War Veterans

The President and Commander-in-Chief of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces was alerted to growing anxiety within the Command Element arising from well-publicized threats of dismissals or arbitrary retirement of wartime commanders from the Zimbabwe Defence Force. Particularly riling to the Command Element, the President was told, was the fact that such pronouncements came from individuals who fell outside the Defence Establishment and Defence Chain of Command, but who delightfully abused claimed proximity to the Commander-in-Chief and/or the First Lady. The Command Element made reference to a list circulated by a Party Official in the Harare Province, one Mashayamombe, pointing to a planned systematic elimination of veterans from the Command Structure. Such threats which could no longer be discounted or treated lightly in the context of the atmosphere of generalized purging in the Party, and a strident anti-war veterans rhetoric, suggested a systematic attack on the ethos, values

and culture of the Struggle which needed to be nurtured in the Security Establishment as a permanent legacy and philosophy guiding the Command Element for all times. The President and Commander-in-Chief was informed of the precipitously declining numbers of war veterans in the Command Structure as a result of natural attrition and previous retirements. This, coupled with the fact that officers with combat experience deriving from various post-independence operations, whilst numerically significant, were still in need of command exposure, argued for a gradual and well thought-out Command transition in the Military, if the country was to retain its defence and offensive capabilities, as well as retain its liberation struggle-time philosophy and ethos. The Commander-in-Chief was informed that only the positions of the Commander of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, Commander of the Zimbabwe National Army, Commander of the Airforce of Zimbabwe, Commissioner-Generals of Police and Prisons and Correctional Services, and the Director-General of the Central Intelligence Organization, had term limits in terms of the reigning Constitution. However, the Command Element could not understand why there seemed to be an attempt to invoke the term-limit clause retrospectively, and in ways that selectively applied to the Security Establishment only. The Command Element is of the view that apart from focusing on only those posts with Constitutional term limits, regard had to be given to the fact that the new constitutional dispensation ushered in 2013 gave everyone occupying such constitutionally abridged posts a new countdown date.

Undermining of Inter-Agency Cohesion within the Security Establishment.

His Excellency the President and Commander-in-Chief was informed of a serious attack on Inter-Agency Cohesion within the National Security Establishment by the aforementioned cabal which appeared to have influenced key departments of National Security. The impact had been the virtual collapse of the National Joint Operations Command (NJOC) through which issues relating to National Security were dealt with collectively, and jointly presented to the Head of State. This vital structure had given way to narrow departmental reports and debriefings which not only misrepresented the overall National Security situation, but also provided a conduit for briefings to the Commander-in-Chief that were based on self-serving falsehoods and character assassinations calculated to settle vendettas. The obtaining selective access to the Commander-in-Chief had undermined the spirit of intelligence-sharing and collegiality which all along had underpinned the institution of the National Joint Operations Command. On this score, the Command Element blamed the Police Commissioner-General, Cde Augustine Chihuri, and the former Director-General of the Central Intelligence Organization (now Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs), Rtd General Happyton Bonyongwe.

Concern over claims of Treason arising from both the Monday, 13th November, 2017 Press Briefing and the Wednesday 15th November, 2017 Operation Restore Legacy.

The President and Commander-in-Chief was informed of concerns of the Command Element over dangerous claims of treasonable conduct arising from a public expression of their disavowal of the state-of-affairs in the country and the Party expressed at the Press Briefing of 13th

November, 2017, and the subsequent Operation mounted two days later. The Command Element cited a Press Statement by the Minister of Information, Media and Broadcasting Services, Ambassador S. K. Moyo, which was issued in his capacity as the Spokesperson of the ruling party, and an address by Youth League Secretary Chipanga, both of which alleged high treason. They also claimed that the new Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, was crafting a legal instrument meant to indict the Commanders for both actions. The noble intentions behind the actions had to be acknowledged to quash fears of indictments in the future.

Rumours of preparations for a counter-operation led by the Police and Rtd General Bonyongwe.

The President was informed about mounting tension and concern within the Command Element triggered by a mobile communication message attributed to the new Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, and former Director-General of the Central Intelligence Organisation, Rtd General Happyton Bonyongwe, to Air Marshal Parrence Shiri who is in Dubai on official business allegedly urging him to fly back to join in efforts towards a counter-operation whose backbone would be the Police Force commanded by Commissioner-General Augustine Chihuri. It was drawn to the President's attention that Commissioner Chihuri had not attended the inaugural Wednesday morning meetings, or any thereafter. His Deputy, Deputy Commissioner-General Godwin Matanga, had only attended the inaugural Wednesday morning meeting, after which he did not turn up for the rest. Instances of friction between the Military and the

Zimbabwe Republic Police were also drawn to the President's attention, culminating in what appeared to be a withdrawal of the Police Force from policing duties at least in the National Capital, Harare. The President was informed that the Command Element had made it clear that a counterforce against their operation would constitute an escalation which was bound to lead to a bloody outcome.

Disinformation and Falsehoods amidst the Operation.

The Mediating Team was able to provide the President with facts which dispelled rumours and falsehoods which continued to swirl around the whole operation. These included claims that three deaths had been reported when Finance Minister and ZANU-PF Secretary for Administration was arrested at his home during the Operation; claims that the Commanders had evacuated their families to safety ahead of the Operation; claims that CDF Chiwenga had made a diversion and stop-over in South Africa en-route to Zimbabwe from China, in order to meet with the dismissed former Vice-President Emmerson Mnangagwa and his team thought to include Cde Christopher Mutsvangwa and Zimbabwe's Ambassador to South Africa, Ambassador Moyo. More critically, the Mediating Team informed the President that the Operation by the Command Element was not calculated for a top leadership change in the Party and country, a process which had to be left to the Party and its Organs running in a fair, clean and just way, all of which had to be superintended by the President himself without undue influence. However, the President was told, hard decisions could not be stalled any longer, and had to be made in the interest of the survival of the Party and its revolutionary traditions.

Fear of the development of a vacuum in Government, and prolongation of the Operation

Amidst reports of ministers reportedly fleeing or attempting to flee the country, coupled with various suspensions of Party Officials who are also Government Ministers, the President was advised on the Command Element's fear of a vacuum developing in Government Ministries, thereby impairing the delivery of essential services, to the detriment of national security and stability. The President was told of Ministers who had attempted to skip the border through different points. He was also told of Ministers who were in a state of limbo as a consequence of suspensions or threats of dismissal from the Party. Both factors had created a situation of paralysis in Government which could trigger unrest or a generalized revolt in the country. Equally, the President was told of the Command Element's anxiety to call off the Operation so soldiers could go back to their barracks, in favour of a return to normalcy. However, the President was further advised, the Command Element would not scale down its operations until all the criminal elements had been accounted for, and the way cleared for the President to resume his functions and role without undue influence.

Clear Roadmap for the Party and Country

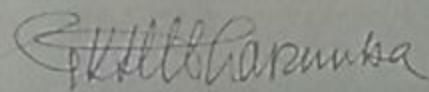
His Excellency the President was briefed on the Command Element's anxieties over mounting uncertainties surrounding the future of the Party and country should he decide to take a rest and retire. The Command Element's view was that the current programme of

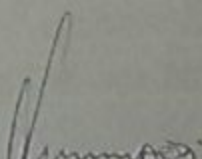
victimization through manipulative suspensions and dismissals did not inspire confidence in a harmonious succession process. Hard decisions had to be made whilst there is still time, including weeding out negative elements from the Party, while planning for the survivability of ZANU-PF and its revolutionary ethos and legacy well into the future.

Attachments to this report are:

- Signed "Talking points for CDF's meeting".
- Statement by Youth League Chairman, Kudzanayi Chipanga, denouncing the CDF.
- Statement by Youth League Chairman, Kudzanayi Chipanga, retracting his denunciation of the CDF and linking the First Family to the original statement of denunciation.
- Transcript of edited statement by Kudzanayi Chipanga aired on ZTV on 15th November, 2017.

Father Fidelis Mukonori S. J.


Secretary George Charamba


A/DG Aaron Nhepera

Mediation Team, Harare

17/11/17