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ZIMBABWE YOUNG CHRISTIAN STUDENTS (Z.Y.C.S.)

(Affiliated to International Young Catholic Students) IYCS

IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE AND THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS

Zimbabwe Young Christian Students (ZYCS) is a Catholic affiliated Organization . Our values founded in the bible and the Catholic Social Teachings challenge us to partake life of the poor and those living under oppressive systems because it is with these people and for those people Christ lived and Died .

We write this letter with great concern over the Government's reaction over the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference's pastoral letter headed "The March is not Ended " . This letter was urging the Government to mend the Broken Social contract through a mutual respect of Human Rights and not treating every complaining voice as an enemy . It is regrettable that Government did not take the letter a reminder to establish common good and instead rushed in to dismiss it vehemently and through the Minister of Information Mrs Monica Mutsvangwa they questioned the integrity of the Bishops .As the Zimbabwe Young Christian Students (Z.Y.C.S)we would like to state that we stand in Solidarity with our Shepherds .

The letter they wrote indeed outlines issues that have been widely affecting everyone especially we the Youths as well as our aspirations and yearnings . Zimbabwe Young Christian Students feels emboldened that our shepherds have sought to remind us that they are with us in this difficult time .

As the youth we are facing a bleak future, hundreds of our members are dropping out of school each year due to worsening economic conditions. The ones who manage to graduate, it is into a jobless economy driving them into destitution and all sorts of activities which erode their dignity. We are not asking for much! We are asking for the chance to live in a functional economy with opportunities for all, where we can actively put to use our skills and talents for the development of our beloved country. Several of our members are living in fear, while some cant wait to leave the country. This is not the Zimbabwe we want?

Life in Zimbabwe has become like the jungle where the Survival of the fittest rule applies . It has only been 2 years after the last election but the situation has reached its worst . A kid said "mukundikwadza nembambaira " .People laughed but he expressed pain at a tender age . A country where people have learnt to embrace pain and suffering with jokes and laughs about it . Life before and after Independence is now the same it seems like we were freed from white oppression and then diving into Black oppression . Things are actually worse: a collapsing economy, a more polarized community, unemployment, a crippled health care system. The arrests and detention of journalists and other activists have become rampant. We reiterate President E.D Mnangagwa's words, 'The culture of long, drawn-out prosecutions and the catch and release syndrome must come to an end.'

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As an Organisation which is student driven we raise concern on the current happenings where we see that since the closure of schools in late March Schools and Higher and Tertiary Institutions have been conducting online classes whereas this resolution was done without the consideration of students who live in remote areas where 1. there are network challenges 2. The data prices in Zimbabwe are very high supposedly having the most expensive data in Southern Africa . Calls to the Government to strike deals with Telecommunications companies for subsidized data fell on deaf ears .

In the midst of such a predicament, young people are called to become faithful citizens and take part in building the Body of Christ for The March Is Not Ended! For you are Christ – like (1 John 3:2) therefore nourish the Body of Christ by being informed by the Catholic Social Teachings and do away with your privilege of connection to the branches of power. Pick up your mat (John 5:8) and stand for justice – seek the Common Good.

Zimbabwe Young Christian Students invites young people to become faithful Citizens and

- Be vigilant in holding all public office bearers accountable in their own spaces
- Actively engage in both formal and informal dialogues that sought to fix the Zimbabwean crisis
- Shun, fight and speak out against corruption in the spaces we are

WeSpeakOut and FollowUpOurReports

As young people we can not continue to be spectators – we are the ones with a present that is being challenged and a future robbed .

#TheMarchIsNotEnded

