

libertas

RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY'S NEWSLETTER

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Prix **JOHN HUMPHREY** *pour la liberté*
Freedom Award
2008

THE 17TH JOHN HUMPHREY FREEDOM AWARD has been presented to Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) for their steadfast commitment to seeking justice for victims of human rights abuses in Zimbabwe, in spite of the highly threatening environment they work in day after day.

Founded in 1996 by a group of lawyers, the non-profit organization is made up of a small team of very efficient attorneys and a network of about 200 part-time volunteers from the legal community. The organization's core objective is to foster a culture of human rights and respect for dignity in Zimbabwe. The passion that drove the formation of ZLHR continues 12 years after its foundation.

ZLHR representatives go to police stations to have activists released, appear in court with opponents of the government and openly condemn the abduction, harassment and arbitrary detention of countless individuals. Their activities include a number of components, such as training and general education so as to increase awareness of human rights among Zimbabweans. "Achieving this goal is the ultimate victory," said Irene Petras, Executive Director of the organization.

ZLHR has implemented a programme to provide legal support for human rights defenders facing prosecution. About 1,500 Zimbabweans turn to the organization each year, and ZLHR lawyers have won every case since the beginning of the programme. Ms. Petras credits this perfect record to the heroic perseverance of the lawyers and to the fact that there is seldom sufficient evidence to uphold charges. "Legal prosecution is a form of persecution," said Ms. Petras.

Recognition from the international community

The international community has recognized the courageous work of ZLHR. In 2006, then Executive Director Arnold Tsunga, who in 2008 became Director of the African Regional Programme of the International Commission of Jurists, received the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders and a Human Rights Watch recognition for his extraordinary courage and commitment to human rights. In 2007, he was presented with the United States Secretary of State Freedom Defenders Award. Otto Saki, a ZLHR lawyer, received the Reebok Human Rights Award in 2006. The organization receives support from development agencies from the European Union, the Netherlands, Canada, HIVOS and NORAD.

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Rights & Democracy
20 years

Rights & Democracy is a non-partisan, independent Canadian institution created by an Act of Parliament in 1988 to promote democratic development and to advocate for and defend human rights set out in the International Bill of Human Rights. In cooperation with civil society and governments in Canada and abroad, Rights & Democracy initiates and supports programmes to strengthen laws and democratic institutions, principally in developing countries.

Message from the President

EVERY DAY, news from around the world reminds us how people are willing to risk their lives for the fundamental rights that we too often take for granted. Since I became head of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (Rights & Democracy) in June, not one week has passed without democracy and human rights being challenged in any of the 15 countries we have prioritized for action.

The public agency I head was established 20 years ago. Parliament at the time believed that Canada needed to be in a position to support individuals and organizations who work hard to ensure respect for human dignity. The conviction of our elected officials, which is shared by Canadians, is just as true today as it was in the late 1980s. However, a great deal of work still needs to be done, especially in times of economic crisis, when authoritarian regimes use such a crisis as a pretext for isolating themselves from the outside and exercising even greater control over their populations.


Rights & Democracy plans to continue, on behalf of Canada, to carry out the international mandate it was given by Parliament, by maintaining a presence in some of the more challenging countries located in conflict areas or facing extremely precarious situations or whose citizens are oppressed by ruthless dictators, such as Afghanistan, Burma, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Haiti.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which came to reflect the hope of people to live in dignity and enjoy human rights. A fellow Canadian, John Peters Humphrey, Law Professor at McGill University, worked on the first draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In his honour and in recognition of his significant contribution to humanity, Rights & Democracy established the John Humphrey Freedom Award to recognize the work of individuals and organizations in Canada and abroad, who, through their work, embody the values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As we mark the 60th anniversary of the Declaration, Rights & Democracy is presenting the 2008 John Humphrey Freedom Award to the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights organization (ZLHR), a perfect candidate for the award.

ZLHR is now among the 17 award recipients that have, each in their own way, marked our institution and the lives of Canadians who met with them on the cross-country tour that preceded the award ceremony on December 10, the official anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We have the utmost respect for these extraordinary men and women. This award is our humble way of expressing our greatest admiration and sincere friendship.

Since 1996, ZLHR has played a leading role in the promotion and protection of human rights for citizens under the most difficult circumstances across Zimbabwe. These men and women could have chosen to practice law for their own personal benefit but instead preferred to take sides with the victims of abuses for which no monetary compensation is ever awarded. Their determination to work anonymously within the framework of the existing legal system, under the Mugabe regime's own laws, can only exemplify the regime's own weaknesses and contradictions. Smart and effective. Lawful and peaceful.

Given the brutality of the Mugabe regime and its total disregard for international human rights, organizations such as ZLHR are the last hope for countless Zimbabwean citizens seeking recourse against state-sponsored abuses and persecution. Its determined, non-violent struggle against impunity and repression needs Canada's support. We must be steadfast in our support and we must stand up with ZLHR and others like them in demanding justice and a return to democracy for Zimbabwe. 



Rémy M. Beauregard

The professionalism and dedication of the ZLHR are remarkable. With the harmonized elections in 2008, ZLHR was one of the leading organizations to defend the democratic rights of Zimbabweans and to speak out against politically motivated violence and repression. As the economic hardship increases in Zimbabwe, affecting the everyday life of ZLHR members directly, the Government increasingly resorts to violent repression against civilians and activists, to which the ZLHR responds with legal arguments. The presence of ZLHR members in police stations, prisons, hospitals, and court rooms has not gone unnoticed. First, by the Government, whose security agents threatened ZLHR members with arrest, beatings, even death. Threats

that unfortunately materialized on several occasions. [...] The seriousness of these threats have not discouraged the ZLHR members to pursue their activities and to defend oppressed human rights activists, knowing their own life is at risk.

**Letter of reference
from Roxanne Dubé**

Ambassador of Canada to Zimbabwe

Harare, April 15, 2008

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN ZIMBABWE: A VOICE FOR THE COUNTRY'S OPPRESSED

Tiseke Kasambala, Senior Researcher, Africa Division, Human Rights Watch'

IN A SPEECH at the inaugural session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva on June 21, 2006, Zimbabwe Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Patrick Chinamasa accused local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on human rights and governance of being "financed by developed countries as instruments of their foreign policy," and called for the Human Rights Council to produce a framework which "prohibits direct funding of local NGOs." The minister's statement typified the hostile working environment that human rights defenders in Zimbabwe operate in. In the past eight years, the government of Zimbabwe, in an effort to conceal its poor human rights record and prevent criticism of its actions, has become increasingly intolerant of the work of human rights defenders and has actively sought to silence them.



Human rights defenders have played a vital role in exposing the human rights violations that have taken place in Zimbabwe. Their work has become increasingly important as the government has closed down space for political activity, and intensified its repression of political opponents and government critics. Human rights defenders have been instrumental in creating a legitimate space for the protection and promotion of everyone's rights, and organizing peaceful public displays of protest about human rights issues. The absence of the rule of law in Zimbabwe, and the prevalence of force over democratic dialogue in the country, has posed huge obstacles for the work of human rights defenders.

For example, in the aftermath of general elections in March 2008, Human Rights Watch documented widespread abuses, including beatings and torture, by supporters of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), youth militia, war veterans and army officers against real and perceived supporters of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). ZANU-PF supporters and their allies were implicated in the killings of at least 163 people and the torture or mistreatment of over 5000 others. Tens of thousands of people were driven from their homes and fled the violence. These abuses took place with almost complete impunity, with police often failing to investigate the abuses or arrest suspected perpetrators. During this terrible period of fear, repression, and violence Zimbabwe's human rights defenders were the sole sources of information on what was happening in the country. They courageously documented the violence and reported on it, and provided legal and medical support to the victims of the violence.

Human rights defenders: natural targets

Not surprisingly, the determination of human rights defenders to expose human rights abuses, and create conditions for the respect of human rights, has made them natural targets for the Zimbabwean authorities. The

government has sought to undermine and curtail their work by violating their rights. Additionally, because the defenders have criticized the government's actions, they are viewed as political players and supporters of the opposition MDC. As the minister's statement in this article exemplifies, the government of Zimbabwe has repeatedly expressed the view that certain human rights organizations are being funded by foreign governments to oust the ruling party from power and effect "regime change." The government has often branded human rights defenders as "traitors," "subversive" and "foreign-controlled." As one courageous human rights lawyer told Human Rights Watch, "The police believe that human rights advocates want to topple a democratically elected government. Anything that is likely to link to human rights is construed as an attempt to change the government."

The government has severely curtailed the space for human rights defenders to operate through laws and policies that have placed draconian

restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly and association such as the Public Order and Security Act, the Miscellaneous Offences Act and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Human rights defenders are constantly subjected to harassment, arbitrary arrests, assaults and torture by the police, intelligence agents and other government officials. Human rights organizations are also subject to intrusive and unwarranted state surveillance of their operations.

The sustained harassment and vilification have had a chilling effect on the operations and lives of human rights defenders. As one activist told Human Rights Watch, "If you constantly have to appear in court on unnecessary charges it can be draining. If you look behind you and see that a car has been following you for days, or the phone keeps ringing and someone tells you they will kill you, it is bad. The family also suffers. My wife is always on tenterhooks because of my work. If she sees a car she doesn't know parked outside of our house, she is scared."

A need for international protection and recognition

It is for bravely defending the rights of Zimbabweans and providing a voice to the country's oppressed citizens, despite threats and attacks against them, that human rights defenders in Zimbabwe deserve international protection and recognition. Like all human rights defenders around the world, they are entitled to enjoy the rights and freedoms recognized in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), regional instruments such as the African Charter, and national law. They should be free to carry out their work without interference and arbitrary restrictions. It is for the vital contribution they make to communities, and their work in strengthening civil society that they should be protected and supported. *ℓ*

RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

Michael Wodzicki, Deputy Director, Policy, Programmes and Planning¹

RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY has promoted human rights and democratic development in Africa for over 20 years. Our programmes in Africa strengthen democratic institutions where they exist and support their creation where they do not. We support local actors to use national, regional, and international human rights norms to advance human rights in their own countries.

Human rights are violated in Zimbabwe with almost absolute impunity by elements of the regime. Rights & Democracy supports the struggle against such impunity by working with the Zimbabwe Exiles Forum (read Gabriel Shumba on refugees in South Africa on page 5), based in South Africa, to document human rights abuses committed by the regime. This material is used to advocate for the rights of victims at the appropriate regional and international legal fora, as well as in Canada.

Côte d'Ivoire has been in political crisis since 2002, following an armed uprising that split the country in two. Rights & Democracy therefore supports the development and capacity building of non-partisan civil society organizations, through the Regroupement des acteurs ivoiriens des droits humains (RAIDH), a coalition of NGOs dedicated to the defense and promotion of democracy. This coalition has become a leading voice in denouncing human rights violations and advocating for the creation of an independent electoral and national human rights commission.

Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement, signed in 2005 between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army, has resulted in the creation of new human rights mechanisms in the country. In partnership with the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies and with the support of the Government of Canada, Rights & Democracy supports the development and strengthening of one such mechanism, namely the South Sudan Human Rights Commission.

Rights & Democracy has also developed a partnership with Mauritania's National Human Rights Commission. We are the only Canadian human rights

organization working in Mauritania. We support training for Commission members and staff on the mandate of an independent human rights commission, on investigating human rights violations, and on women's rights, amongst other subjects.

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been a priority country for us since 1990. While the DRC's first largely free and fair elections in 2006 generated much optimism for the future, the country faces enormous challenges moving forward. The Eastern province of North Kivu is again embroiled in conflict, which has displaced millions and resulted in grave human rights violations. We therefore work with partners in Kinshasa, the capital, to build the human rights capacity of government and civil society organizations across the country. Rights & Democracy also works with women's rights organizations in Eastern Congo to fight impunity for crimes of sexual violence, bringing such crimes to the attention of national, regional, and international judicial bodies.

Our institution's work with its partners to obtain justice for women survivors of sexual violence has also allowed us to make meaningful contributions to the Special Court in Sierra Leone, the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. We have worked to ensure that these bodies prosecute crimes of a sexual nature as crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide, where appropriate, and have also worked to ensure witness protection.

Finally, Rights & Democracy links its work and expertise at a national level with efforts to support Africa's regional mechanisms of human rights protection. In cooperation with African, international, and Canadian partners, and with the support of the Government of Canada, we support regional Pan-African institutions such as the African Commission for Human and People's Rights and non-governmental organizations such as the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies. ²

¹ mwodzicki@dd-rd.ca.



A Zimbabwean purchases bread in Harare in September 2008 for Z\$30,000, the equivalent of US\$2. To ensure their survival in an unpredictable environment, shops and service providers quote three different prices for the same item for shoppers buying in cash in the local currency, cash in foreign currency and those using credit cards. (Desmond Kwande/AFP/Getty Images.)

XENOPHOBIA GREET'S ZIMBABWE'S REFUGEES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Gabriel Shumba, Executive Director, Zimbabwe Exiles Forum¹

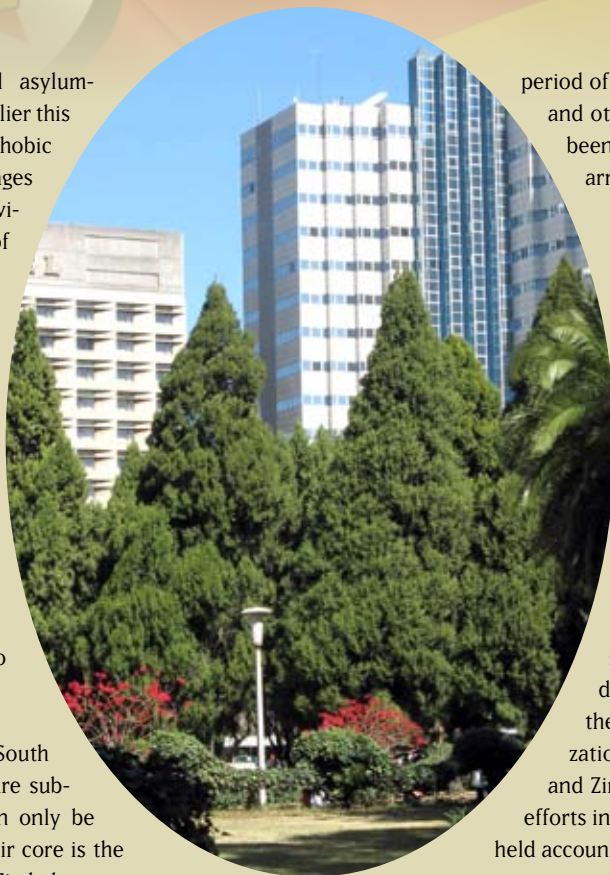
THE PLIGHT OF REFUGEES and asylum-seekers in South Africa took a deadly turn earlier this year with the outbreak of widespread xenophobic violence that left 70 people dead. Horrific images of this brutality were carried on national television, including the unforgettable footage of one South African mob—women and children included—cheering and chanting while a man was burned alive.

Zimbabweans were one of the refugee groups targeted by this violence, along with Somalians, Sudanese, and citizens of Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi and Mozambique. Zimbabwean refugees and asylum-seekers currently number more than three million in South Africa, a figure that continues to grow as the economic and political situation in Zimbabwe continues to deteriorate.

Despite Zimbabwe's close associations with South Africa, Zimbabweans seeking refuge there are subjected to conditions and attitudes that can only be described as degrading and inhuman. At their core is the popular belief among South Africans that Zimbabweans are stealing their jobs, increasing crime and spreading HIV/AIDS. Such resentment and hostility is helping fuel the indiscriminate deportation of 4,000 Zimbabweans every week. In 2007, about half a million Zimbabweans were deported.

The promise of the so-called power-sharing deal signed in September by Zimbabwe's two main political rivals, Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF and the Movement for Democratic Change led by Morgan Tsvangirai, has encouraged already hostile and corrupt home affairs officials in South Africa to adopt an even more aggressive attitude toward Zimbabweans claiming asylum. All claims from Zimbabweans are now being denied, despite clear evidence that many are victims of ongoing political violence and other human rights abuses.

Zimbabweans fleeing the multiple terrors of their failing state usually do so by wading across the crocodile-infested Limpopo River. They risk marauding gangs of criminals who rob them and have even killed some for the little money they have on them. On a recent mission to the border town of Musina, Zimbabwe Exiles Forum representatives interviewed one woman who had been kidnapped by criminals and repeatedly gang raped over a



period of two weeks. She is in dire need of counseling and other health services. Similar crimes have also been alleged against the South African police and army patrols assigned to the border.

In Musina, ZEF also discovered open camps where an estimated 4,000 Zimbabweans were living after the South African government ordered their removal from Catholic and Anglican churches that were providing them with sanctuary. A similar camp exist in the middle of South Africa's capital, Pretoria, mere minutes from the seat of government—the heart of democracy in South Africa.

South Africa has led efforts to shield President Robert Mugabe from international censure for crimes against humanity and is now disregarding the rights of Zimbabweans fleeing the atrocities of his regime. Civil society organizations like Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights and Zimbabwe Exiles Forum are at the forefront of efforts in both countries to ensure that authorities are held accountable to their human rights commitments. *ℓ*

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At the international level, at the African Union, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Southern African Development Community fora, ZLHR has condemned the Zimbabwean government's management of human rights and has drawn attention to the country's poor record in this regard.

"The ZLHR is a leading, home-grown civil society organization in Zimbabwe whose prominent and visible human rights based work in a very difficult environment is highly commendable," said Roxanne Dubé, the former Canadian Ambassador to Zimbabwe, who nominated ZLHR for the John Humphrey Freedom Award.

In awarding the 2008 John Humphrey Freedom Award to Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Rights & Democracy helps increase the visibility in Canada of the organization and the cause it defends, and gives ZLHR the opportunity to establish partnerships with local Canadian human rights organizations in the cities on the award tour. *ℓ*

¹ *gabmrech@yahoo.com, www.zimexilesforum.org.*



ZIMBABWE LAWYERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Irene Petras, Executive Director, Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, is seen during an Institute for a Democratic Alternative for Zimbabwe (IDAZIM) media briefing in Pretoria, South Africa, April 2008. (AP Photo/Waldo Swiegers.)

ZIMBABWE LAWYERS for Human Rights (ZLHR) has been at the forefront of the struggle to promote and protect human rights in Zimbabwe, and to ensure that the government adheres to international standards such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

To achieve its goals, ZLHR has set up seven different units that cover Public Interest Litigation; Human Rights Defenders; Human Rights Training and Public Education; International Litigation; HIV/AIDS, Human Rights and the Law; Prisons; and Publications and Information.




Andrew Makoni, lawyer for ZLHR and for Zimbabwe's main opposition party Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), addresses a press conference in Harare in April 2008. (STR/AFP/Getty Images.)

- ZLHR has been instrumental through its **Public Interest Litigation** unit in providing legal services to victims of police and other state agents' brutality.
- Through this project and the **Human Rights Defenders** project, ZLHR has been at the forefront of the fight for the recognition of the rights of human rights defenders who have been arbitrarily arrested and whose lives remain under threat from a government determined to suppress forces opposed to it.
- The struggle for human rights can be won by raising awareness of human and people's rights among the citizens of Zimbabwe and the region. As such, ZLHR has been conducting human rights defenders workshops, through its **Human Rights Training and Public Education** programme, to build the capacity of human rights defenders, both professionals and those within grassroots communities.
- The organization has also taken up cases before international tribunals through the **International Litigation** unit where domestic

remedies have proved to be ineffective or unavailable. The legal system, penetrated and abused by the government, has made it almost impossible for victims to obtain recourse in cases filed against the government at the national level.

- Zimbabwe is a country challenged by high HIV rates. Most people living with the disease have not been able to access basic treatment yet it is their right. The **HIV/AIDS, Human Rights and the Law** programme was established to provide legal support services to people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS and to provide education on the relationship between HIV/AIDS and human rights.

- In 2007, the organization launched its latest **Prisons** project which seeks to use lawyers to carry out field visits to prisons and other places of detention throughout the country, establish the conditions under which prisoners are being held, and work with prosecutors and magistrates to address problems of overcrowding and ensure that all prisoners are provided effective access to justice.
- The public has been kept informed of all developments in the country's human rights arena through ZLHR's **Publications and Information** unit whose function is to provide educative, reliable resource materials, and to generate and develop human rights jurisprudence to ensure better justice delivery.

ZLHR has observer status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, affiliate status with the International Commission of Jurists, forms the Secretariat of the SADC Lawyers' Association Human Rights Committee, and administers the SADC Human Rights Defenders Forum. 

ZIMBABWE AT A GLANCE

Facts and Figures

Capital: Harare

Population: 13,400,000 (2007); four million people have left the country, mainly for South Africa

Gross National Income: US\$340 per capita (2006)

Human Development Index: 151 out of 177 countries (2005)

Gender-related Development Index: 130 out of 157 (2005)

Life Expectancy (2006): 37 (men); 34 (women)

Literacy Rate: 89% (2004)

Ethnic groups: African 98% (Shona 82%, Ndebele 14%, other 2%), mixed and Asian 1%, white 1%

Religions: African Christian 50%, Catholic and Protestant 25%, indigenous beliefs 24%, Muslim and other 1%

Languages: English (official), Shona, Ndebele

Independence: April 18, 1980



were killed, 5000 tortured or mistreated, and tens of thousands of people forced from their homes. Consequently, Tsvangirai pulled out to protect his supporters, saying that if Mugabe would not accept defeat, there was no point in taking part in a sham election.

The Political Situation

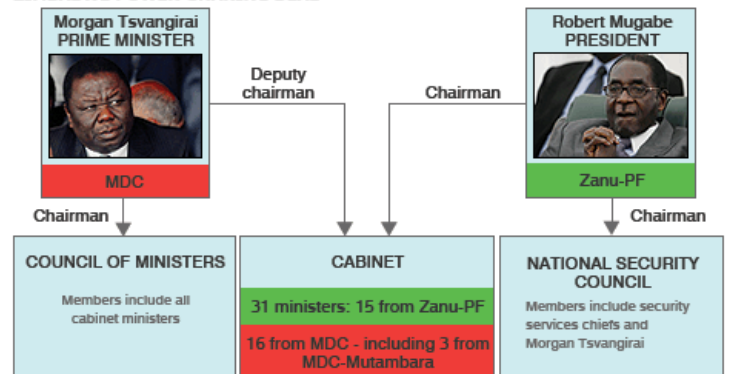
President Robert Mugabe and the Zimbabwe African National Union—Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) have ruled Zimbabwe since its independence in 1980. Championed as the first black leader of a post-colonial Zimbabwe, Mugabe initially exhibited respect for the economic and social rights of its citizens, wanting to gain acceptance by the international community. In the late 1990s, he became increasingly eccentric and autocratic, abusing human rights, mismanaging the economy, and silencing the opposition. The forcible seizures of mostly white-owned commercial farms to benefit landless Zimbabweans caused economic turmoil and led to chronic shortages in food and basic goods and services.

In 2000, Zimbabweans saw the birth of the strongest opposition party to date in Zimbabwe, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Following the 2000 elections and subsequent drop in the ruling party's popularity, Mugabe responded with widespread and systematic torture, killings and other crimes against humanity to maintain his grip on power. Zimbabwe, once considered the jewel of Africa, began to face an economy in crisis, rampant inflation, poverty, unemployment, political repression, and fuel and food shortages.

In the March 2008 general elections, both President Mugabe and the leader of the MDC, Morgan Tsvangirai, claimed victory. Although Tsvangirai gained more votes, election officials said neither candidate had gained the 50% needed for victory, so a run-off was called for June 27. The opposition reported that during the electoral process at least 163 MDC activists

In September 2008, in an attempt to resolve Zimbabwe's deepening economic and political crisis, Mugabe and Tsvangirai signed a power-sharing agreement. Under this agreement, Tsvangirai would become prime minister and head a new council of ministers, effectively running the country on a day-to-day basis. Mugabe would continue to chair cabinet meetings and head the armed forces, while Tsvangirai would have responsibility for the police.

ZIMBABWE POWER-SHARING DEAL



Source: BBC NEWS

As we go to press, negotiations between the two have stalled over the division of cabinet posts. And the opposition MDC and neighbouring Botswana are calling for new elections.

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ZIMBABWE AT A GLANCE

The Economic Situation

Zimbabwe's economy, once one of Africa's strongest, is now collapsing under the weight of the country's political crisis, 85% unemployment rate, hyper-inflation, decline in foreign investment, food and fuel shortage, and escalating HIV/Aids crisis. In the past decade, the large scale eviction of white farmers and land reform efforts have cut in half agricultural production, and hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent on the war in the Congo since 1998. According to Zimbabwe's Central Statistical Office, inflation has sky-rocketed to 231 million per cent, the highest in the world. Such hyperinflation occurs when the price of goods rises while the value of money declines. In July 2008, one US dollar was equivalent to a trillion Zimbabwean dollars. The government's efforts, such as price controls, printing more money, and slashing 10 zeroes off its currency, have failed to curb inflation. Zimbabweans are only permitted to withdraw Z\$50,000 a day from the banks. The cash-strapped population is struggling to meet basic needs and has turned to bartering for goods as their money becomes worthless. The UN has warned that more than 45% of the population could need food assistance by early 2009. ¹

Sources

Human Rights Watch World Report 2008; University of Minnesota Human Rights Library; Canadian International Development Agency; The World Bank Group; UNICEF; Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR); Zimbabwe Exiles Forum (ZEF).



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RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY

1001 de Maisonneuve Blvd. East, Suite 1100
Montréal, Québec, Canada H2L 4P9
Telephone: 514-283-6073 • Fax: 514-283-3792
dd-rd@dd-rd.ca

www.dd-rd.ca

JOHN HUMPHREY FREEDOM AWARD

RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY presents the John Humphrey Freedom Award each year to an organization or individual from any country or region of the world for exceptional achievement in the promotion of human rights and democratic development. The Award consists of a speaking tour of Canadian cities to help increase awareness of the recipient's human rights work. It is named in honour of the Canadian John Peters Humphrey, a human rights law professor who prepared the first draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Previous Winners

- 2007 — Akbar Ganji (Iran)
- 2006 — Su Su Nway (Burma)
- 2005 — Yan Christian Warinussy (West Papua)
- 2004 — Godeliève Mukasarasi (Rwanda)
- 2003 — Kimy Pernía Domicó (Colombia) and Angélica Mendoza de Ascarza (Peru)
- 2002 — Ayesha Imam (Nigeria)
- 2001 — Sima Samar (Afghanistan)
- 2000 — Reverend Timothy Njoya (Kenya)
- 1999 — Cynthia Maung and Min Ko Naing (Burma)
- 1998 — Palden Gyatso (Tibet)
- 1997 — Father Javier Giraldo (Colombia)
- 1996 — Sultana Kamal (Bangladesh)
- 1995 — Bishop Carlos F. X. Belo (East Timor)
- 1994 — Campaign for Democracy (Nigeria) and Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (Egypt)
- 1993 — La Plate-forme des organismes haïtiens de défense des droits humains (Haïti)
- 1992 — Instituto de Defensa Legal (Peru)

ZLHR'S WORK TO COMBAT HIV/AIDS

AIDS is the major cause of illness and death among Zimbabwe's youth and young adult population. It is estimated that more than 1.6 million adults and children in Zimbabwe are infected with HIV. Of these, more than 500,000 have developed AIDS.

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) has developed a legal and human rights-based response to the pandemic in Zimbabwe. It provides legal support to people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS and education on the relationship between HIV/AIDS and human rights. Its Human Rights Club initiative established in 10 schools throughout Zimbabwe aims to equip Zimbabwean youth with knowledge on human rights issues.

ZLHR has also launched an HIV/AIDS and Human Rights Charter to help protect and promote the rights of people living with the virus. It will lobby government to use this charter to formulate laws that protect people living with HIV/AIDS. ²