



WOZA MOYA

WOMEN OF ZIMBABWE ARISE (WOZA) NEWSLETTER

Write: Box FM 701, Fomona, Bulawayo

Email: info@wozazimbabwe.org Website: www.wozazimbabwe.org

WOZA means 'Come forward'. By women for women and with women, across race, colour, creed, class or political persuasion. Empowering women to be courageous, caring, committed and in communication with their communities.



our country too!

Let me not pray to be sheltered from dangers but to be fearless in facing them. Let me not beg for the stilling of my pain, but for the heart to conquer it. Rabindranath Tagore

Still standing strong for our children

- a Mother's Day message from WOZA

As Mothers Day draws near, we, the mothers of the nation, have examined our existence and that of our children and decided that enough is enough. We are deeply concerned about the current political impasse. The collapse of the schooling and health systems need to be urgently addressed by a new government but these issues are being ignored due to the election impasse. We cannot keep on waiting however; our lives are at stake. We voted in peace on 29 March but we are being punished for choosing to vote for a change.

Behind the fist

The 'fist' is the trademark of Robert Mugabe. We have seen how this fist works. People in Matabeleland and Midlands, supporters of ZAPU, were killed during Gukurahundi in the early 1980's. Residents of Porta Farm also paid a high price for Mugabe's hatred of Ndabaningi Sithole. In 2000, Mugabe launched violent land invasions to punish Zimbabweans who refused his constitutional amendments, and we are still paying the price of hunger today. In 2005, Operation Murambatsvina was designed to quell rising dissent and support for the Movement for Democratic Change after the 31 March 2005 election. When he saw the true results of the March 29 election he launched Operation MaVhoterapapi (where have you voted).

Mhosva haitongwi nekurwa – to use violence is to admit defeat

Recognising WOZA's role as human rights defenders, we therefore call on Robert Mugabe to immediately hand over power to the winner of the presidential election, Morgan Tsvangirai. Mugabe as the leader of a so-called 'liberation war party' has failed to deliver social justice. The heroes who lie buried at Heroes Acres and in unmarked graves in surrounding countries died for this ideal – **one man one vote**.

We do not want a presidential election run-off because this will result in more violence as we campaign for the candidate of our choice. There can be no free and fair environment in any district of the country at present with violence as it is.

In preparation for the run off, it seems Zanu PF have made moves to 'starve' any supporters of the pro-democracy activists. WOZA members report being unable to buy mealie meal if they do not produce a Zanu PF card. Many supermarkets now form two queues one for Zanu PF members which is serviced and another queue whose occupants go home empty handed.

We ask the real war veterans to help us stop the violence and speak out against those perpetrating the violence in their name. We know 'war veterans' met villagers in Mukuwa, Matabeleland South and told them – "we are declaring war". Is this why they ordered weapons from China? To kill ordinary Zimbabweans who simply want a better life and the full realisation of the liberation war promises?

Induku kayakhi muzi - fighting does not build a home; war does not build a nation

We call on the uniformed forces to realise that there is no peace in the absence of justice. Respect that Zimbabweans have voted for change and refrain from being used to perpetrate violence and to carry out injustices. When change comes, and it will come, WOZA will demand an audit of all civil servants, including the uniformed forces. We, your neighbours in our communities, know you for the things that you do, both good and bad. We will remember. Hear us loud and clear - your leaders may get 'generous retirement packages' but you will be left to face the justice of the law and the anger of the people.

When you see us in the streets, we come in peace with love in our hearts and you have the choice to respond likewise and allow us to do our work as mothers of the nation. Good actions will also be remembered and rewarded.

As mothers we advise that during this period, Zimbabweans must remain calm but committed to making their vote count. This is a time for courage and also a time for humility. It is in this spirit that we call on the Chief Election Officer, Lovemore Sekeramayi, to use his powers under the 5th Schedule of the Electoral Act, to declare the candidate with the 'greatest number of votes' the winner forthwith. He knows who won fair and square and should declare Morgan Tsvangirai the winner. Our lives depend on his courage and sense of decency.

We also call on SADC, the African Union and United Nations to show their solidarity for the people and respect that Zimbabweans have already chosen a new president and that their vote should count. The current government are trying to subvert the laws of the land and allowing Mugabe to stay in power when he lost the election.

**Change will come. The people's voices will be heard and respected.
We just need to keep standing strong.**

WOZA would like to thank the **South African Transport and Allied Worker's Union** (SATAWU) for their solidarity in refusing to offload the weapons that the government has bought to kill us with from the Chinese ship of death. The continued support from the International Transport Workers Federation and the promised solidarity from the Angolan transport union are also appreciated. **Amandla ngawethu!**

We would like to salute the courage of those Zimbabweans who refuse to be cowed by violent bullies and who continue to stand up for what is right. Special mention should be made of **Tabitha Marume** who was shot in the stomach by CIO agent, **Daniel Romeo Mutsunguma**, who is based at the Zimbabwe Embassy in Washington DC.

A true shero, Tabitha had been part of a group of seven MDC activists who had walked to a torture camp to demand the release of their colleagues who had been abducted by soldiers.

Her courage in the face of hatred and violence inspired over 10,000 villagers in Makoni West to attend her funeral, despite threats made against them.

Sister Tabitha, may your soul rest in eternal peace.

**WOZA would also like to salute all the others that have lost their lives for believing that a better tomorrow is possible.
Your names will be remembered. Your sacrifice will not be in vain.**