



WOZA MOYA

WOMEN OF ZIMBABWE ARISE (WOZA) March 2011

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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.



International Women's Day 2011

Demand Dignity; Demand Development

and begin your **Affirmative Action for Development** on 8 March 2011

This year as we commemorate International Women's Day, we launch our Affirmative Action For Development programme. But as we launch our necessary and justified campaign we do so as a nation stripped of dignity and dehumanised by violence. With fear and violence all around us we ask the nation to be comforted by the words of Martin Luther King Jr. *Strength to Love 1958*

"Nonviolence is absolute commitment to the way of love. Don't ever let anyone pull you so low as to hate them. We must use the weapon of love. We must have the compassion and understanding for those who hate us. We must realize so many people are taught to hate us that they are not totally responsible for their hate. But we stand in life at midnight; we are always on the threshold of a new dawn."

WOZA members are now in their ninth year of promoting Non-violence action and Civil Disobedience and persuading Zimbabweans to use their people power. We have asked them to imagine a nation unwilling to obey oppressive laws and are prepared to suffer the consequences of non-compliance! We have asked them to accept that police officers and soldiers may have weapons but they are still people like us who have to eat and send their children to school. If Zimbabweans understand that the only answer to baton sticks and guns is **NUMBERS** of people who observe nonviolent discipline and unity of purpose around issues that are important to daily survival. WOZA and MOZA are working to mobilise the nation around these bread and roses or bread and butter issues.

Along the way many of our members have suffered beatings, arrest, torture and members are often hunted and harassed. But the nation should be aware of this injustice and understand that nonviolent action has three definite functions:

1. It can be used to mobilise against injustice.
2. It is used to make injustices visible through self-sacrifice, which provokes awareness and conscience.
3. It can mobilise people around issues as part of the battle for freedom and independence. The issues must be definite, clear and be hot issues that lots of people identify with. They must also be issues that the opponent could deliver if they are made to care enough. For the issues to real nonviolent action must be directed to those who could deliver social justice if they want to. Nonviolence and Civil disobedience stimulates people to challenge the opponent but it cannot work without the co-operation of the millions of people who are also participating in empowering themselves and their communities. In WOZA, we agree with Gandhi's way of describing nonviolence. He called it **Satyagraha** (which means, "clinging firmly to truth," sometimes translated as soul-force). He explained it as: *The world rests upon the foundation of satya or truth. Asatya meaning untruth also means non-existent, and satya or truth also means that which is. If untruth does not so much as exist, its victory is out of the question. And truth being that which is can never be destroyed.*

Peaceful protest has been used for more than 100 years and even people who have not knowledge can do it. In Berlin, Germany a brief demonstration saved the lives of about 10,000 people who were about to be killed. This spontaneous and brief demonstration by people without any idea of non-violence's history or theory nor a plan to follow up their spontaneous action, 'worked' against the Nazis and saved people lives. If they would have continued the Nazis could not have committed genocide. Nonviolence, a weapon called people power can work even against the most violent opponent. But activists of Nonviolence need to be able to overcome fear and act with great courage to win victory for everyone. But it starts with individuals and leaders with a vision for the future. WOZA/ MOZA members have been patient for too long for dignity and development **to be delivered by our current political leaders. They remain fighting over positions and profits and ignore people needs.** In 2006 we launched the People's Charter and delivered it to parliament. In December 2010 we launched our report on the constitution and are waiting to see if our views are included in the draft constitution. But we need to take back our power and find way to develop our

communities and ourselves. A example of what activists did in India helped people to survive until they could have full independence.

- *In India, Ghandi taught people to spin and sell their own cotton. People started doing this and the spinning wheel became a symbol of Independence and freedom. By doing this simple activity, each Indian could participate in the struggle to build a sustainable economy separate from the British textile industry. This was 'bread labour' fulfilling a basic need, it gave employment to millions and finally freed Indians from England's economic domination. Members of his movement built solar panels and windmills, volunteering in disadvantaged schools, and many forms of neighbourhood building.*
- *The first Palestinian Intifada (struggle) (1987-1991) is another example of the powerful application of Constructive Program. The Palestinians planted community gardens, purchased only their own products, taught in neighbourhood schools, established women's groups and other social networks, and focused on making themselves self-reliant and self-sufficient even during intense repression and without a recognized national government. These activities provided practical help for the people, as well as unity of purpose and psychological well-being.*

History have shown us that while nonviolent movements have successfully liberated people from repressive regimes in almost all cases the same problems of poverty and other forms of structural violence have returned to undermine the gains of the struggle. This is not because Nonviolence doesn't "work" but because Nonviolence campaigns need to have a Constructive Program to make them complete and deliver permanent, constructive change.

So WOZA/MOZA have resolved to begin a Constructive Program for members so that they can see positive alternatives to oppression, let them begin to **act out the future, become productive and practical**. As we do this we will also escalate our demand for social justice. WOZA and MOZA have been conducting some of these activities as part of our fight for freedom and our demand for social justice, a new constitution and a better life – we have been trying to see the Zimbabwe of our dreams.

We expect to build this programme and know that if Zimbabweans participate we will be able to bring real Independence by truthful and non-violent means. Complete Independence through truth and non-violence means the independence of every person, as Ghandi said from 'the humblest of the nation, without distinction of race, colour or creed'. For it to work we need UNITY. But our definition of UNITY does not mean political unity, which we see being imposed; it means an unbreakable **heart unity**. The first thing essential for achieving such unity is for every elected leader to represent people properly and to implement the global political agreement and let us enjoy peace and vote without fear. So we will continue to visit leaders and demand their do their job and represent us well. Ghandi explains: *"The truth is that power resides in the people and it is entrusted for the time being to those whom they may choose as their representatives. Parliaments have no power or even existence independently of the people."*

For too long we have been conned to think that power is for MPs and Senators and principals of the inclusive government. And political history makes us believe that power goes to the people only from parliaments. Since the formation of the Inclusive Government we expected more peace and security but instead we have see the conflict and violence escalate. We must respond by 'escalating our nonviolence'. **But heart unity starts with People – you and me, we must be prepared to take back our POWER.**

We will tell those who promote violence and use their force to dehumanise us, the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. "We will match your power to inflict suffering with our power to endure suffering." The level of our sacrifice, in other words, must grow to match the level of our opponent's dehumanization. (Soul-) force must match (threat-) force, and as the latter rises, so the level of self-sacrifice must rise accordingly. We have already seen how, in the early stages of a conflict, only modest levels of effort are required. However, in later stages, where the demands become greater and the options more limited, more sacrifice is required to meet and transform the injustice.

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The RISING of the women means the RISING of the nation.

No more poverty and starvation, many sweating for a few to benefit!

Kusimuka kwemadzimai- kusimuka Kwenyika.

Hakusisina hurombo uye nzara, vazhinji vanoshanda kuti vashoma vabudirire.

Ukuphakama Kwamakhosikazi – Yikuphakama Kwesizwe

Kuqede ubuyanga lendlala, izithukuthuku zabanengi zingabi yinzuzo yabalutshwana!