



WOMEN and MEN of ZIMBABWE ARISE (WOZA)



INTRODUCING WOZA

Ask people to discuss the situation in the country. To help you discuss you need to touch on some of these points.

THE SITUATION AND ENVIRONMENT UNDER WHICH WE MUST WORK AND ACT:

Zimbabweans are living in a state of fear and uncertainty. They suffer discrimination in all its forms and are unable to earn a living. Levels of poverty are high; unemployment is at 92% and inflation at four figures. Non-existent service delivery also makes life difficult. Access to education, housing and other basic needs is now only for the rich. The HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has created thousands of orphans and child-headed households, is a social catastrophe compounded by a failed healthcare system and little or no access to ARVs. Further loss of valuable human resources is happening due to people leaving the country in large numbers. People have been unsuccessful at holding their government accountable due to a raft of repressive laws and shrinking freedom of expression/media space. Corruption at all levels of government and the politicisation of all aspects of society has led to chaos and disorganization in every sector.

1. We then explain our mission to people.

WHAT IS OUR MISSION:

Women and men of WOZA will initiate a non-violent campaign. Our aim is to mobilise Zimbabweans to demand social justice from their leaders. The time has come to put the past behind us and start building a better tomorrow. We will hold existing leaders accountable and mobilise people to the movement through meetings and low and high-risk non-violent activities to demand leaders who will deliver all aspects of social justice and a people-driven constitution.

We then explain about the United Nations respecting us as human rights defenders and how we can exercise our rights.

WHO IS A HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER?

Article 1 refers to anyone who, individually or in association with others, promotes and strives for the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

A human rights defender can be a single individual acting independently or as member of an association as well as of groups only occasionally gathered together such as during a public protest. According to the Declaration, a human rights defender, to be considered as such, must accept and respect two principles:

UNIVERSALITY and NON-VIOLENCE

What is Universality? Respecting the principle of universality means accepting that all human beings have the same rights without distinction of any kind, such as race, ethnic origin, gender or sexuality. A person cannot be defined as human rights defender if, while working to defend the rights of a group or individual, he or she denies that other groups or individuals are entitled to the same rights.

What is non-violence? The principle of non-violence requires that any actions taken by human rights defenders must be peaceful. Violence cannot be used to protect or promote human rights under any circumstances.

What rights do we fight for in WOZA?

The Right to Freedom of Expression and the Right to Criticise:

Article 8: Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to have effective access, on a non-discriminatory basis, to participation in the government of his or her country and in the conduct of public affairs.

This includes, the right, individually and in association with others, to submit to governmental bodies and agencies and organizations concerned with public affairs criticism and proposals for improving their functioning and to draw attention to any critical aspect of their work that may hinder or impede the promotion, protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Right to Protest and to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly

Article 5 (a): For the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, at the national and international levels, to meet or assemble peacefully.

Article 12 (1): Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to participate in peaceful activities against violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2. We then explain about strategic non-violence or tough love.

Our strategy

In a non-violent struggle, the key to success is strategy and there are three points, and the first is **unity**. The movement should encompass many views and different social communities and they should consult each other about its goals and methods. Without unity, a movement cannot claim to represent the people, and its calls for action will be ignored.

The second point is **planning**. No successful non-violent movement is spontaneous. The weaknesses of the opponent have to be studied and tactics have to be arranged, to distract and dislocate the state. But whatever plan is chosen, winning is impossible unless we refuse to be violent. We criticize this Government for violence, would it be clever for us to become violent but then be surprised when we are also criticized? **Non-violent discipline** is therefore the third important point. Without it, a movement cannot recruit. No matter how much you argue nobody likes violence.

So unity, planning and non-violent discipline are the skills that drive a movement forward -- so that we get all our rights which were stripped away, so that voices can be heard which were silent, so that people can become who they want to be. Their words and action, the commitment of their lives and sacred honour are the fuel for this kind of change. Democracy and Freedom is not seized by a few, it is demanded and gained by the many.