



# WOZA MOYA

WOMEN OF ZIMBABWE ARISE (WOZA) 24<sup>th</sup> June 2015

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.



## An open letter to the Executive Mayor of the City of Bulawayo

Regarding the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing Hon. Ignatius Chombo 26 June 2015 ultimatum and deadline to informal traders to vacate the 'streets' of Zimbabwe.

### Your Worship Councilor Martin Moyo,

Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) members, the majority of whom are women, the majority of whom are informal vendors provide you with the following advice with regard to the ultimatum issued by Minister Ignatius Chombo on behalf of the cabinet, Government and the ruling ZANU PF.

1. Your Worship, you must know that Zimbabweans are not vendors by choice but by the fact that they are unable to secure employment despite the election promise of millions of jobs.
2. You were elected mayor of Bulawayo - a city that was once the industrial capital of Zimbabwe. Bulawayo has been directly and indirectly marginalised by the ruling ZANU PF policy makers beginning with the overt campaign Gukurahundi and then continuing with more subtle disenfranchisement resulting in closing of factories and massive loss of jobs pushing people who want to stay at home into the informal markets.
3. You must know that residents of Bulawayo consider Minister Chombo as disrespectful of the role of the office of Executive Mayor and the Bulawayo city council as an autonomous body with elected and technical people who put Bulawayo at heart and are capable of practicing the culture of Ubuntu in their day to day activities.
4. You called vendors to a meeting on Monday at the city hall and WOZA members were present along with many vendors and their union representatives. WOZA shares the common position that we will not move off the streets until the issues we have raised for many years are addressed. As our Executive Mayor we appreciate the steps you have taken to engage vendors but this must continue and improve. As we engage and find solutions.
5. **Please now formally tell Minister Chombo that Bulawayo City Council will not implement the ultimatum. Council will rather continue to talk to and find common interests of council and informal traders and their representatives to find a sane, amicable solution in a non violent way. Please remind Minister Chombo that Zimbabwe's Constitution protects the right to earn and living with dignity. See Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe 'Chapter 2 - National objectives', sections 13 on National development, 14 on Empowerment and employment and section 15 on Food security and Chapter 4 section 51 – right to human dignity'. Please remind the Minister of the content of ZimAsset.**
6. This is what we expect of you and advice you to do as women, mothers of this city. We will stand with you as you make this case plain to the Minister. The Minister must be told we will not allow any more interference. The issues we need to be addressed as we dialogue for a lasting solution together include:
  - a) An audit of all vending sites to ensure the actual people licenced are operating them and there are no 'middle' brokers or vending site 'barons'
  - b) Civic society and council must together plan for and fundraise for more vending sites for those selling on pavements.

- c) A civic society and council genuine and all-inclusive dialogue platform on the licencing pricing, policy and processes. For many many years these processes have lacked transparency and accountability and have been open to manipulation by politicians and duty bearers alike.
  - d) The Zimbabwe Republic Police must not interfere with our dialogue and engagement and should stop the open looting of vendors goods by police officers.
  - e) Your worship the majority of informal traders are women. We know that most union officials are male officials but don't be misled. There are serious gender dynamics related to vending in Zimbabwe that have to be addressed and women must speak for themselves.
    - Women have to put food in their children's stomachs so they live at the sharp end of desperation seeing children's faces showing hunger and they feel this pain in a different way which pushes them to try to find food.
    - Sanitation of vending sites is often neglected, access to water and toilets are a serious problem. There are also too few dustbins in vending sites and refuse collection is not regular creating health hazards.
    - Care must also be taken to create a safe environment for the children that accompany women to vending sites.
7. If the police start to conduct a violent removal of vendors, it is women who will face the harsh pain of the baton sticks first as they are not as mobile as men due to their gender. We expect you to refuse to allow violence in your streets under any circumstances.
  8. **Executive Mayor we will stand by you if you stand by us.** Let's us find sustainable livelihood's in a dignified manner befitting Zimbabweans. Don't be a part of another '**moment of madness**'. We will not be moved from our streets until there is a comprehensive plan in place.
  9. **We give you courage by quoting Psalms 31:24 BE of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.**

**Woza Moya!**

**Footnote: Other references from Zimbabwe Constitution – Chapter 2 National Objectives**

14 Empowerment and employment creation (1) The State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level must endeavour to facilitate and take measures to empower, through appropriate, transparent, fair and just affirmative action, all marginalised persons, groups and communities in Zimbabwe. (2) At all times the State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level must ensure that appropriate and adequate measures are undertaken to create employment for all Zimbabweans, especially women and youths.

24 Work and labour relations (1) The State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level must adopt reasonable policies and measures, within the limits of the resources available to them, to provide everyone with an opportunity to work in a freely chosen activity, in order to secure a decent living for themselves and their families. (2) The State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level must endeavour to secure— (a) full employment; (b) the removal of restrictions that unnecessarily inhibit or prevent people from working and otherwise engaging in gainful economic activities; (c) vocational guidance and the development of vocational and training programmes, including those for persons with disabilities; and (d) the implementation of measures such as family care that enable women to enjoy a real opportunity to work.

WOZA MOYA/ HUYA MWEYA (Meaning: Come Holy Spirit/ Cleansing Wind)