



# WOZA MOYA

WOMEN OF ZIMBABWE ARISE (WOZA) July 2016



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.

## CITIZEN'S VOICES ON THE STATE OF THE NATION

In the beginning of July 2016 civil servants called for a national stay away. There was also a transport boycott imposed by transport operators due to numerous police roadblocks and demand for bribes. There were more calls through social media for a peaceful stay away. Citizens heard these, found their voices and observed the instructions as a way to make their voices heard. On the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2016 citizens made a STATE OF THE NATION address voicing their concerns through action. Citizens remained peaceful but police officers brutally trampled upon citizens expression indiscriminately and arbitrarily arresting, torturing and tear gassing adults and children. Pregnant mothers were not even spared and the brutality in denying a baby urgent medical care resulted in her death. Her parents lost **Kupakwashe**, a baby girl and so did the nation. Despite this police brutality the citizens' struggle continues and we need to continue to speak out and act nonviolently until Government hear us and our issues are addressed.

### Respect the Constitution, Respect our Rights!

All citizens, women and men alike have an obligation to fend for their families; so we live at the sharp end of desperation seeing children's faces showing hunger and this is what motivates us to cross the borders and trade. Due to the shutdown of industries this is the only way to make money. However, the introduction of **statutory instrument 64** places a ban on imports as well as the use of plastic money making it difficult for Zimbabweans to engage in gainful economic activities. Instead of enslaving citizens through stringent policies the government should be working towards implementing free basic education. Civil servants have been disrespected time and again with late salaries. The stay-away should have shown the government that people are now tired of suffering. Instead when we cry and ask for bread we are given baton sticks and teargas! This response of government repression must come to an end! The financial policy being imposed is only resulting in further melting down of the economy instead of reviving it. It is as if we no longer have a government! We now march to amplify our voices and demand the government review and repeal all laws that take away our right to trade and peaceful protest and petition.

**Our Government must STOP political repression and remember the constitutional promise:** Section 24 (2) (b) *"The state and all institutions and agencies of government at every level must endeavour to secure the removal of restrictions that unnecessarily inhibit or prevent people from working and otherwise engaging in gainful economic activities"*

**Police Officers have caused chaos and mayhem, they must remember their role which** *"is to be non partisan, national in character, patriotic, professional and subordinate to the civilian authority as established by this constitution"*. We are one with you Mr. Policeman, stop corruption and looting from the pockets of the poor. In the last week many of our relatives suffered by your brutality whilst standing up for your rights and well-being.

We call on the Government to

- a) To genuinely and urgently engage citizens and listen to their grievances as regards the state of the nation. Failure to address the socio economic meltdown could result in serious civil strife.
- b) Investigate and prosecute all human rights violations covered in this report.
- c) Immediately repeal statutory instrument 64 and review all laws that hinder citizen's right to trade and earn a living.
- d) To lift unconditionally the undeclared curfew and repressive police presence stifling the right to protest and petition.

**PEOPLE UNITED SHALL NEVER BE DEFEATED – LET'S UNITE AND ACT CITIZENS!!**

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