



Press statement

### **Chimanimani West pre-election environment**

21 November 2016

Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) condemns victimisation, intimidation of voters and partisan food distribution in Chimanimani West ahead of the national assembly by-election to be held on 26 November 2016. ZPP and other concerned civic organisations are gravely worried about the risk of citizens in the constituency being victimised and disenfranchised.

It is alleged that Zanu PF, through village heads, has been intimidating villagers by making announcements to the effect that Zanu PF supporters are the only ones who should vote at the by-election. Zanu PF Provincial Youth Chairperson, Mbuso Chingono is also allegedly threatening known opposition activists that on election day there will be people ready to vote on their behalf. ZPP is therefore imploring the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to be strict about who qualifies to be an assisted voter.

It is also reported that at Nhedziwa Secondary School in ward 4 there was distribution of rice and sugar a few days back but only Zanu PF supporters and villagers who produced voter registration slips benefited. It is alleged that Zanu PF local leadership turned away beneficiaries that have not been attending the party's meetings.

In Nyanyadzi (ward 8) at Rufaro business centre Zondai Mutezo and Gladman Mutezo tore \*Lucky Reke's t-shirt for distributing fliers with information on one of the election candidates, Edmore Mtetwa. Chingono, in the company of state security agents, has also been accused of visiting campaigners of contesting candidates and ordering them to stop their campaigns.

Uniformed forces like members of the Zimbabwean National Army and Zimbabwe Republic Police have also been spotted driving around Chimanimani West. Over the last two weeks, the sudden increase of army and police presence in the constituency is intimidating and curtails the activities of contesting candidates as their meetings are disrupted.

Mtetwa, the independent candidate, will be contesting against Nokuthula Matsikenyere of Zanu PF, National Constitutional Assembly candidate Pesanai Musakaruka and Peter Gugyanga of the Renewal Democrats of Zimbabwe. The Chimanimani West seat fell vacant after Munacho Mutezo was fired from Zanu PF over his association with Joice Mujuru, leader of Zimbabwe People First.

\*The names of victims have been changed to protect their identities.

If you are concerned about acts of violence in your community, ZPP encourages you  
to get in touch with us on Hotline and WhatsApp numbers  
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**Zimbabwe Peace Project**

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