



## Zimbabwe Solidarity Forum

### Regional Solidarity Statement on Zimbabwe

19 July 2013

**Noting** that on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2013 a multi-sectoral gathering of civil society formations from across Southern Africa, meeting under the banner of the Zimbabwe Solidarity Forum, resolved to commit themselves to a solidarity action plan in support of their Zimbabwean counterparts.

**Recognising** the Zimbabwe Solidarity Forum as a network movement of progressive South African civil society organisations, including youth, women, labour, faith-based, human rights and student formations that are engaged in the promotion of people-to-people solidarity for sustainable peace, democracy and human&peoples rights in Zimbabwe, engaged with and supported by regional counterparts and solidarity formations in Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Tanzania, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland

**Acknowledging** that ultimately the solutions to the complex challenges in Zimbabwe must be owned and driven by the people of Zimbabwe

**Cognisant** of the current power imbalances and the abuse of power by a minority militarized elite that has captured the state with the intention of maintaining an undemocratic position of power

**Believing** that at this critical time progressive formations from across the region can provide people-to-people solidarity support to the struggles within Zimbabwe

**Affirming** civic statements and position papers emerging from Zimbabwe that draw attention to the escalation of tensions, the ongoing forms of targeted repression against civil society leaders and opposition activists

**Including** strong indications, characterised by the highly criticized day of special votes that was carried out on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July and concerns over massive deficiencies in the voters roll, that the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission is currently ill-equipped both

politically and logistically to run an election campaign that will produce a legitimate election outcome

**Realising** also that the political reforms outlined in the Global Political Agreement have not been fully implemented, including on matters relating to the security forces, the media, the judicial system and legal framework and on fundamental rights including freedoms of expression and of assembly

**Recognising** the role that SADC and the African Union have sought to play as signatories to the Global Political Agreement and as mediators between the conflicting parties in Zimbabwe

**Observant** of the derogatory statements made by the Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe against the principal mediator and the SADC appointed mediation team and the inflammatory and anti-democratic statements made by members of the Zimbabwean military forces that must be retracted before an election goes ahead

**Concerned** that the current Zimbabwean context undermines these regional and continental structures and threatens the peace and security of the entire Southern Africa

**Hereby commits itself to a three-pillared programme of action:**

1. We call on SADC and the African Union, as the Guarantor of the Global Political Agreement to vigorously assert and uphold the principles enshrined in the SADC Guidelines on Governing Democratic Elections and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance knowing that there is full support from progressive civil society formations in this process for a postponement of the proposed election date until the necessary reforms that will level the electoral playing field have been put in place
2. We will be embarking on a programme of mass action that will seek the maximum participation of the citizens across the SADC Region who seek to express their solidarity support for the demands and concerns contained within the communiqués released by Zimbabwean civics and outlined in the Feya Feya Campaign document calling for a peaceful free and fair election
3. We will be preparing the ground for solidarity networks, and systems and structures that will be able to respond rapidly to an increase in the levels of violence and displacement that are envisaged if an election goes ahead under the current conditions, under such circumstances the need for practical forms of people-to-people solidarity will be paramount

Finally we reassert the importance of recognising that the concerns around the current climate in Zimbabwe and the flouting of democratic principles and values is not a concern

for Zimbabweans alone. Current events in Zimbabwe are a concern for all progressive forces across the region and throughout the continent of Africa.

*We call on all civil society and governments in Southern Africa and beyond to join us in demonstrating a strong show of solidarity by engaging with the planned programme of mass action and amplifying a unified voice that demands that the Zimbabwean electorate be given the opportunity to freely express their democratic will in selecting their leadership without intimidation and in an open, transparent and democratic manner.*

**Supported by representatives at the Regional Zimbabwe Solidarity Forum meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July.**

**Delegates were drawn from the following formations:**

<b>The Zimbabwe Solidarity Forum Secretariat</b>	<b>Namibia National Farmers Union</b>	<b>Media Coalition of Tanzania</b>
<b>ACTION Support Centre</b>	<b>Gauteng Concerned Residents</b>	<b>DRC Diaspora Forum</b>
<b>COSATU</b>	<b>Treatment Action Campaign</b>	<b>OSISA</b>
<b>NUMSA</b>	<b>Norwegian People's Aid</b>	<b>PUDEMO</b>
<b>SAMWU</b>	<b>Solidarity Peace Trust</b>	<b>Swaziland Solidarity Network</b>
<b>NEHAWU</b>	<b>Zimbabwe-Mozambique Solidarity Alliance</b>	<b>Swaziland Democracy Campaign</b>
<b>SATAWU</b>	<b>TUCOSWA</b>	<b>SALO</b>
<b>SASCO</b>	<b>Zambia Social Forum</b>	<b>ANC branches</b>
<b>SACC</b>	<b>National Constitutional Assembly</b>	<b>ANCYL</b>
<b>CRISIS in Zimbabwe Coalition</b>	<b>GERMANY Trade Union Congress</b>	<b>Regional Solidarity Formation in Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Tanzania, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland</b>
<b>PASSOP</b>	<b>Malawi Economic Justice Network</b>	
<b>African Diaspora Forum</b>	<b>World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU)</b>	
<b>Zimbabwe Peace and Counseling Services</b>		
<b>Local Peace Committees from Orange Farm, Alexandra and Soweto</b>		