



# Ballot Update

## Bulletin

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FREE

# What next after the Second All Stakeholders Conference?

By ZESN



There are calls for politicians to take the constitution making process seriously as it is being made not for present but for future generations as well. Clearly a people driven process is harnessed and led by representatives of the people. The Constitutional Select Committee (COPAC) process from the onset was parliament driven, but remarks from the principals were alarming and seemingly indicated that ultimately it is the principals with the ultimate say and not the people. This scenario, which breaches the principle of constitutionalism, is of utmost concern as party interests usually have a short term perspective rather than the inter-generational and non-partisan focus expected in a constitution making process.

This is worrying as this may lead Zimbabweans to be forced to vote for a negotiated constitution. What does this mean for Zimbabwe when such important processes are trivialized over petty personal or party interests? Failure by COPAC to outline the next steps after the 2nd stakeholders is worrisome. Thematic representatives reported back in plenary the areas of agreement and disagreements as it were, indicating lack of dispute resolution mechanisms. One then wonders what the purpose of the conference was, if not to agree on the areas of contention, then what. This brings back issues as they were before the Second All Stakeholders' Conference. The Second All Stakeholders Constitutional Conference was held at the Harare International Conference Centre (HICC) in Harare from the 21st to the 23rd of October 2012. The Conference was held in accordance to Article VI of the Global Political Agreement (GPA).

The constitution making process is behind by more than 2 years. The outreach phase was hampered by coaching, bickering and incidents of violence. The data compiling and drafting stages were also bedeviled with disagreements. The Second All Stakeholders ended without any resolution on the areas of contention. Generally, some political parties were trying to protect the draft and others were trying to push for amendments to the COPAC draft. Political parties ought to know that constitutions are not made to entrench party positions but for the common good of the citizens and for posterity. This failure to reach a consensus will mean that subsequent processes will be delayed, yet the President at the Conference is on record saying that elections will be held in March 2013. Was the Second All Stakeholders Constitutional Conference a mere talk shop? Was it held for grand standing?

It seemed as if the political parties had coached delegates on what to say. Delegates could have seemingly disagreed or agreed with certain constitutional clauses without understanding what they mean or implications for governance and democracy. Citizens have the right to choose and in this regard politicians muzzled citizens' voice. This also highlights that most of the contributions were done in ignorance as citizens towed the party line. The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN), Zimbabwe Peace Project and Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR), observed the process under the banner of ZZZICOMP an independent constitution monitoring body and noted certain observations.

The Conference was peaceful with no major incidents of violence being recorded. What aided in abetting the violence was that the principals' speeches centered on peace and tolerance. This lack of peace had disrupted the first stakeholders conference, were delegates threw bottles of water at each other. It was noteworthy to witness even the top table dancing to music together. Under the watchful eye of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) the conference proceeded without any disruptions.

*“One then wonders what the purpose of the conference was, if not to agree on the areas of contention, then what. This brings back issues as they were before the Second All Stakeholders' Conference”.*

The process of accreditation of delegates and observers was not as smooth as it might be perceived. Civil society organisations were accredited under the list of political parties, and it should be noted that they were very few observers. ZZZICOMP was given very few observers, at first four and then later

10. This number was not adequate to cover the 18 thematic committees. The ZZZICOMP observers had to wait for nearly 2 hours outside the conference as they were barred from entering because the list of observers had vanished.

The COPAC co-chairpersons have indicated that the Referendum will be held in January next year, however Zimbabweans need more information from COPAC on the next steps. Zimbabweans also await the translation of the final draft constitution into vernacular languages, so that as citizens, they can read, understand it and decide for themselves. Heedful of the provision in Article VI of the GPA, that the constitution making process is not a political process but a process for citizens of Zimbabwe.

ZESN is non-partisan and remains committed to reforms which are comprehensive in line with International Standards and SADC principles and guidelines promoting peace, democratic elections and to foster a culture of free non-violence elections and constitutionalism in Zimbabwe.

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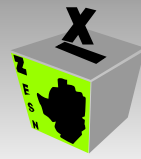
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# Ballot Update Bulletin



## Kuyiwa ngaphi ngemva kwe- 2nd All Stakeholders Conference?

*Kulotshwe yi- ZESN*

Izinkokheli seziquongoselwe kakhulu ngokuthi ziphathe udaba lokubunjwa kwesisekelo sombuso ngenhlonipho langokuzinikela okukhulu njengoba nje sisenzelwa inamuhla lekusasa yeZimbabwe. Kusobala ukuthi uhlelo lwabantu kumele luphathwe yilabo abamele labobantu. Ikhomithi ekhokhela uhlelo lokubunjwa kwesisekelo sombuso, i-COPAC yabunjwa edale lePhalamende njalo uhlelo lolu lukhokhelwa yilo idale lePhalamende, kodwa izinkulumo ezivela kunkokheli zamabandla akuhulumende womanyano ziyethusa njalo zikhomba ukuthi kuleli abantu abalamandla okutsho ukuthi isisekelo sombuso simele sibe yisima kanjani.

Lokhu kungumlandu osuhluthunwe zinkokheli zamabandla ezombusazwe. Ukufuqelwa eceleni kwentando kazulu kudala ukukhathazeka kakhulu njengoba nje intando yamabandla ezombusazwe ifiphele njalo inganakekeli ikusasa yelizwe. Amabandla la azaphoqa uzulu ukuthi avotele isisekelo esifeza intando yawo hatshi ekazulu. Kutshoni-ke lokhu kuzizalwane zeZimbabwe, nxa imbono ejonge ukuphumelelisa abantu abalutshwane nje kumbe amabandla ezombusazwe kuphela? Ukwehluleka kwe-COPAC ukuchacisa ukuthi kuyiwa ngaphi ngemva komhlangano omkhulu wesisekelo sombuso (2nd Stakeholders Conference) lakho kuyadanisa. Emhlanganweni lo omkhulu akuzange kucace njalo ukuthi kuzathiwani-ke njengoba kwasekubonakele ukuthi umhlangano wenziwe kodwa kwasala kulokhu kungaguqukanga lutho, kungavunyelwana njengalokhu okwakuyikho ungakenziwa.

Umhlangano lo omkhulu wezinhlanguaniso eziphatheke ekubunjweni kwesisekelo sombuso esitsha wenzelwa e-Harare International Conference Centre (HICC) eHarare mhlaka 21 kusiya ku-23 Mfumfu kuwonalo umnyaka ka-2012. Umhlangano lo wenziwa kugcwaliswa izimiso zesivumelwano samabandla ezombusazwe akuhulumende womanyano, i-GPA. Umsebenzi wokubunjwa kwesisekelo sombuso esitsha usemva ngesikhathi esingedlula iminyaka embili.

Isigaba sokuqoqwa kwemibono kazulu saphanjaniwa ludlakela, ukutshelwa kwabasekeli ukuthi bathini ngesisekelo lokungezwani phakathi kwamabandla ezombusazwe. Umhlangano omkhulu lo lawo uphele ungelazivumelwano ezisobala njengoba nje amabandla ebezama ukulondoloza lokho osekwavunyelwanayo kukanti amanye efuna kuguqulwe. Amabandla ezombusazwe kumele akhumbule ukuthi isisekelo senzelwa isizwe lekusasa yalo hatshi ukuqinisa wona. Ukuphikisana kwamabandla lokhu kutsho ukuthi ukubunjwa kwesisekelo lokhu kungathatha isiskhathi eside lanxa nje umongameli welizwe wezwakala esithi ukhetho luzaqhutshwa ngoMbimbitho womnyaka ozayo (2013). Umhlangano lo kulokhu kungacaci ukuthi wawungowani ngempela?

Kwaba sobala kulowo mhlanguano ukuthi abantu ababesemhlanganweni lo babetshelwe ngamabandla abo ezombusazwe ukuthi bathini. Ababekulowo mhlanguano babengenelisa ukuphikisa lokho okwakusesisekelweni lesi esisabunjwa kodwa ngoba babengazi, abazange bazihluphe ngokuphuma emfolweni wamabandla abo lanxa lokho okufunwa yiwo kungalungelanga umbuso oqotho lentando kazulu.

Inhlanganiso ye-Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN), i-Zimbabwe Peace Project le- Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR), zahlolisisa ukuphathwa komhlangano lo lohlelo lokubunjwa kwesisekelo sombuso esitsha zingaphansi kwenhlangano ye-ZZZICOMP, zanzelele lukhulu. Umhlangano waphathwa ngokuthula kungela dlakela olufana lalolo olwathi owanyakenye. Ukuthula lokhu kungabe kwadalwa yikuba inkulumo yenkokheli yagxila ekukhuthazeni abantu ukuthi baxoxisane ngokuthula, bengalwi.

*“Lokhu kungumlandu osuhluthunwe zinkokheli zamabandla ezombusazwe. Ukufuqelwa eceleni kwentando kazulu kudala ukukhathazeka kakhulu njengoba nje intando yamabandla ezombusazwe ifiphele njalo inganakekeli ikusasa yelizwe”.*

Kwabakuhle ukubona lezinkokheli zigida zijabula ndawonye lonhlangano uqhubeka kungela mpazamo, izithunywa zenhlanguaniso yamazwe emkhonweni wezansi ye-Afrika, i-SADC lazo zibheke ngawokhozi. Umsebenzi wokubhalisa kwababengena emhlanganweni lo kwaqhutshwa kuhle lanxa nje kungazange kube yilokho xathu okwakukhangelelwe. Izinhlanganiso ezizimele zodwa zabhaliswa ngaphansi kwamabandla ezombusazwe njalo izinhlozi zokuhanjiswa kakuhle kwalo umsebenzi zazinlutshwane kakhulu. I-ZZZCOMP yaphiwa inani elincinyane kakhulu, yaqala yaphiwa ezine yasiphiwa ezilitshumi kodwa babesilela izikhixhe eziyisitshiyangalombili. Inhlozi ze-ZZZCOMP lezi zama okwesikhathi esingaba ngamahola amabili andubana zingene ngoba uluhlu lwamabizo azo lwasolunyamalele.

Ababambisana ukukhokhela i-COPAC sebefanisele ukuthi ireferendamu (ukhetho lwesisekelo sombuso) izakubakhona ngoZibandlela emnyakeni ozayo, kodwa iZimbabwe ilokhu idinga ukwazi ukuthi kuzakwenzakalani singakafiki lapho. Izizalwane zeZimbabwe zilokhu zilindele njalo ukuthi isisekelo esisabunjwa lesi sitolikelwe endimini ezitshiyeneyo ukuze sizwisiseke kuye wonke uzulu. Lokhu kumele kwenziwe kunanzelelwa ukuthi uhlelo lokubunjwa kwesisekelo sombuso esitsha ngokukazulu wonke weZimbabwe njengalokhu okwavunyelwana ngamabandla ombusazwe akuhulumende womanyano.

I-ZESN ayidlelani ngitsho laliphi ibandla lombusazwe njalo imi ngempela langokuzinikela ekuthini ukhetho luphathwe kulandelwa izimiso ezihlonitshwa emhlabeni wonke jikelele laku-SADC ukuze ukhetho lubeqotho njalo ilizwe libuswe kulandelwa isisekelo sombuso ngokomthetho.

## Musangano mukuru wechipiri wegungano remaboka akazvimiririra, mapato ezvematongerwo enyika neruzhinji ane chekuita nekugadzirwa kwebumbiro remitemo wakaitwa : Zvino tochiita sei?

*Chinyorwa ichi chakagadzirwa neZESN*

Pane pfungwa iri kusimudzwa yekuti vanoita zvematongerwo enyika vakoshese kugadzirwa kwebumbiro remutemo nekuti bumbiro rine chekuita nemunhu wese kusanganisira zvizvarwa zvamangwana. Bumbiro rinotaridza zvido zvevanhu rinofanira kutungamirwa neruzhinji rwevanhu venyika.

Matangiro akaita basa rekugadzirisa kwebumbiro remutemo akataridza kuti dare reparamende ndiro range richitungamira nyaya iyi asi zvakazotaurwa nevatungamiri venyika zvakataridza kuti ruzhinji rweZimbabwe haruna masimba panyaya dzebumbiro remutemo. Simba riri muvatungamiri.

Izvi hazvipindirani nehurongwa hunofanira kunge huripo pakugadzirwa kwebumbiro remutemo nekuti zvinodiwa nemapato ematongerwo enyika kazhinji zvinenge zvakanganana nemariro ehutongi panguva iyoyo pasina kutarisa ramangwana.

Izvi hazvifadzi nekuti zvinogona kumanikidza vanhu kuti vavhotera bumbiro risina kugadzirwa nemazvo. Kukundikana kwakaita COPAC kudorongodza matanho avekufanira kutorwa mushure memusangano wechipiri wegungano revanechekuita nekugadzirwa kwebumbiro remutemo kunoshungurudza zvikuru. Pakuunganidzwa kwepfungwa dzezvizvarwa zvenuZimbabwe, zvakaonekwa kuti pane dzimwe nyaya huru dzaiwirirana vanhu nedzimwe dzavaitadza kuwirirana. Chinorwadza ndechekuti, pamusangano uyu hapana hurongwa hwakaitwa hwekugadzirisa pane kusawirirana.

Naizvozvo unobva washaya kuti musangano uyu wakaitirwei nekuti hauna kugadzirisa zvakakosha. Zvave kureva kuti tadzokera zvakare patange tiri musangano uyu usati waitwa. Musangano uyu wakaitirwa kuHarare musi wa21 kusvika musi wa23 Gumiguru 2012. Asi kana tikatarisa zvakanorwa muchibvumirano chemubatanidzwa wehurumende,

kugadzirisa kwebumbiro remutemo kwakasirira kumashure nemakore maviri. Tinoona zvakare kuti danho rekuunganidza pfungwa dzeruzhinji rakakanganiswa nekupopotedzana panyaya dzisina kukosha pamwe nemhirizhongwa. Zvakare danho rekunyora pfungwa dzeruzhinji rakakanganiswa zvakare nekusawirirana. Zvino musangano wechipiri uyu waive nechekuita nekugadzirwa kwebumbiro remutemo hauna kukwanisa kugadzirisa kusawirirana uku.

Pamusangano uyu, mamwe mapato ezvematongerwo enyika aida kuti zvimwe zvikamu zviru muchinyorwa chebumbiro iri zivibviswe mamwe achida kuti chinyorwa ichi chirambe chakadaro. Zvakakosha kuti mapato ezvematongerwo enyika azive kuti bumbiro remutemo harifaniri kugadzirwa rakanangana nezvido zveemapato ematongerwo enyika asi kuti rinofanira kugadzirwa rakanangana nezvizvarwa zvese zvemunyika uye neramangwana revana veZimbabwe. ➡ to page 3





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## AN ANALYSIS OF OCTOBER 2012:

### Introduction

The period under review witnessed important political developments including some progress in the constitution making process with the conduct of the second all stakeholders conference as the major highlight of the period after much stalling and hackling by parties in the GNU. While ZESN felt that the methodology of the 2nd All Stakeholders Conference did not allow a lot of debate, it was devoid of the chaos that characterised the 1st All Stakeholders Conference it was welcome way to move the constitution making process forward. Given the call for elections by President Mugabe at the conference, the need to continue to monitor the environment remains critical as the country moves towards an imminent election. The Zimbabwe Election Support Network remains dedicated to the promotion of democratic elections in Zimbabwe. In line with this objective, we continue to analyse the political environment in the 210 constituencies where observers are deployed. This update is informed by observations from these constituencies and broadly captures national political developments in Zimbabwe.

### Constitution making process

The constitution making process saw headway as the 2nd All Stakeholders' Conference finally took place amid confusion regarding the numbers of delegates and how they would be allocated to political parties. The 2nd All Stakeholders Conference though devoid of overt violence and intimidation faced a number of problems. These included the exclusion of political parties not in the GNU. The constitution making process has excluded all parties that are not part of the inclusive government such as Mavambo Kusile Dawn (MKD), ZAPU and ZANU Ndonga among others yet they do represent particular constituencies. COPAC also limited the number of observers that were allocated to organisations that had requested to observe the process. Interested organisations such as ZZZICOMP were allocated 10 observers and this was inadequate given the number of chapters that were under discussion. In addition, civil society was asked to attend COPAC under the auspices of political parties. This has been the trend since the inception of the constitution making process and it is exclusionary as some groups want to maintain their neutrality and impartiality so that they could independently air their views. Civil society groups refused to be subsumed under political parties as political parties had coached the people and they were split between protecting the draft and pushing amendments in the draft. In addition, there was a lack of cognisance that the positions of political parties do not always coincide with civil society positions and goals.

The opening of the 2nd All Stakeholders Conference was delayed mostly to the slow delegate registration and verification process. The inclusion of Professor Arthur Mutambara as a principal brought confusion as Professor Welshman Ncube boycotted the opening citing their exclusion as Mutambara was said not to represent any party in the GNU. Arthur Mutambara during his speech reminded delegates, COPAC leadership and the principals that crafting a good constitution will not be the panacea to the country's problems when such a document is disregarded and flouted at will by the leaders. He stressed the importance of 'constitutionalism' which entails respecting the constitution and governing within its limits. Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's speech traced the history of constitution-making in Zimbabwe up to the current COPAC led exercise which he called a 'people-driven process'. The speech made by President Mugabe emphasised the need for a new constitution and how the process needs to be done in peace. However, it could have disempowered and caused despondency among delegates as they were informed that the final decision on the constitution lay with the principals not the delegates, hence making a mockery of the whole conference. The statement also run contrary to the spirit and letter of Article 6 of the constitution which calls for a people driven constitution not a principal driven constitution.

ZESN remains concerned by the extent to which coaching by political parties hampered the discussions in the chapters as delegates were supposed to tow the party line and any deviation would have resulted in questioned loyalty of the values of the party. There was a clear stifling of debate among delegates with many agreeing to proposals by others. It was quite clear that the delegates could be classified into two dichotomies that is those supporting and those with amendments.

### The Electoral Amendment act

ZESN welcomes the ascension of Electoral Amendment that seeks to bring reform to the electoral process. Key highlights of the Amendment Act:

- ZEC having the role to compile the voter's roll
- The introduction of the polling station based voter's roll which will be used in subsequent elections
- That results for the presidential elections would be released in 5 days
- The provisions for assisted voters to be assisted by a person of their choice
- Voter education provisions and the role of the commission in monitoring voter education provided by other stakeholders other than the commission, the limitations of foreign funding remain.
- Provisions for special voting and postal voting
- Timely dispute resolution mechanisms including the speedy resolution of election related litigation
- Electronic voters' roll will be provided free of charge whilst the printed form is only available upon request and payment of the prescribed fee
- How to deal with political violence and intimidation
- The removal of police officers from inside the polling station unless called upon by the electoral officials

A number of gaps are glaring in the Amendment Act. There have not been efforts to ensure that proof of residence as a requirement is not relaxed to ensure that women and youths are able to register and access the documents required.

In addition, the Commission will, through the Observers Accreditation Committee (OAC) have responsibility for accrediting election observers. However, OAC is dominated by political appointees who could compromise its independence and objectivity. There are also no clear guidelines to observers for expeditious mechanisms for appeals should the OAC recommend refusal of accreditation to specific observers.

### The feasibility of Elections in March 2013

While all these amendments are welcome, it is important for the laws to be harmonised so that areas of conflict and contradiction within the laws can be rectified.

### By-elections

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> All Stakeholders Conference, President Mugabe declared that elections will definitely be conducted in March 2013. This call comes at a time when the constitution making process has not been concluded and is still to be taken to referendum. The call for general elections while the constitution making process is still in process shows the disregard for a new constitution. While elections are critical given that the GNU's lifetime is about to expire and elections are pertinent. ZESN is concerned with manner in which the President has asked other political parties if they want the electoral ground to be leveled by a caterpillar. This shows a denial of the political issues that confront the country as they relate to electoral issues such as the non reform of state institutions. Reforms are more critical now given that a number of provisions in the GPA have not been implemented.

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Naizvozvo kusagadziriswa kwenyaya dzakakosha, kunoreva kuti kugadzirwa kwebumbiro remutemo kuchatora nguva yakareba zvisinei nekuti Mukuru wenyika akataura kuti sarudzo dzichaitwa munaKurume 2013. Zvinobva zvaita sekunge musangano uyu wakaitirwa kuti vanhu vangotandare zvavo.

Pamusangano uyu zvakaonekwa sekunge mapato ezvematongerwo enyika ainge audza vatsigiri vemapato avo zvekutaura. Zvakare vatsigiri vaive pamusangano uyu vaitaridza kuti vange vachibvumirana kana kusabvumirana nezviga zviri mubumbiro remutemo ivo vasina kunyatsonzwisisa zvinoreva zvikamu izvi. ZESN, Zimbabwe Peace Project ne Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights vari pasi pemubatanidzwa we ZZZICOMP vakange varipo vachicherechedza musangano uye vakawana zvinotevera.

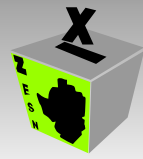
Musangano uyu wakaitwa murunyararo pasina kurwisana sezvakange zvamboitwa pamusangano wekutanga. Runyararo urwu rwakabva pamashoko akataurwa neVatungamiri venyika ekushoropodza mhirizhongwa nekukurudzira runyararo. SADC yaivepowo ichiongorora zvaitika pamusangano uyu uye izvi zvinofanira kuve zvakabetsera mukudzikisa nyaya dzemhirizhongwa.

Zvange zvisiri nyore kubvumidzwa kupinda mumusangano uyu. Mapoka anoona nezvekodzero dzevanhu aipihwa mvumo zvichienderana nekuti varikumapato api ezvematongerwo enyika. Vaongorori vange vari vashoma, naizvozvo havana kukwanisa kuenda pamakomiti ese aitura pamusoro penyaya dzakakosha dzakabuda pakugadzirwa kwebumbiro. Vatungamiri vekomiti inoona nezvekufambiswa

kwebumbiro remutemo (COPAC) vari kuti sarudzo dzekugamuchira kana kuramba bumbiro remutemo dzichaitwa munaNdima 2013. Naizvozvo zvizvarwa zvemuZimbabwe zvakamirira kunzwa matanho achaitwa neCOPAC uye zvakamirira kuti bumbiro iri riturikirwe kuiswa kumitauro yedu yemuno muZimbabwe kuitira kuti munhu wese akwanise kuriverenga uye nekurinzwisisa. Izvi zvinobatsira kuti vakwanise kurigamuchira kana kuriramba vaine ruzivo rwezvirimo.

ZESN haina kurerekera kumapato ematongerwo enyika uyezve yakazvipira kuti pagadzirwe mitemo inoenderana nezvinoitwa pasi rese inotsigira pfungwa huru dziri muchinyorwa cheSADC. Chinyorwa cheSADC chinokurudzira runyararo nekusavepo kwemhirizhongwa, sarudzo dzinokoshesa zvivo zvevanhu pamwe nekuti sarudzo dziitwe zviri pamutemo.





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## AN ANALYSIS OF OCTOBER 2012:

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### Human rights and fundamental freedoms

The death of the Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education Mr Stan Mudenge and Senator Rimbi increases the number of constituencies that need by-elections for the both House of Assembly and the Senate to 28. The latest court ruling ruled in favour of President Mugabe and called for the elections to be held in March 2013 since the government did not have funds to do so at the moment. This means that unrepresented constituencies remain unrepresented until the next general election whose likelihood of taking place in March 2013 is doubtful given the delays in the constitution making process.

While in the majority of the provinces in Zimbabwe, there seems to be stability, political tension remain a major challenge in many constituencies with observers reporting generalised lack of freedom of association and expression. While incidents of overt violence have gone down, observers continue to report the presence of intolerance to diversity. ZESN remains concerned about the inability of citizens to express themselves freely. A look at the provinces reveals the following:

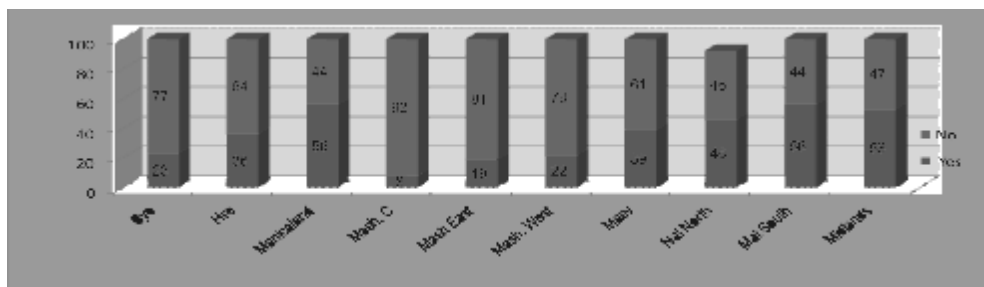


Figure : Freedom of expression in the ten provinces of Zimbabwe

It is critical to note that freedom of expression is generally experienced in fewer constituencies in the provinces mostly urban constituencies and rural constituencies continue to have their freedom of expression infringed. Elections entail the ability of citizens to express themselves and once citizens' freedom of expression is curtailed it has implications for their ability to make electoral choices freely. ZESN continues to call on political parties to exercise restraint and respect diversity which gives a country its uniqueness.

ZESN observers continue to report the existence of discrimination by political party in their various constituencies. Discrimination is experienced in terms of access to services and aid or other ancillary services in the constituencies. The picture below shows the levels of discrimination by province:

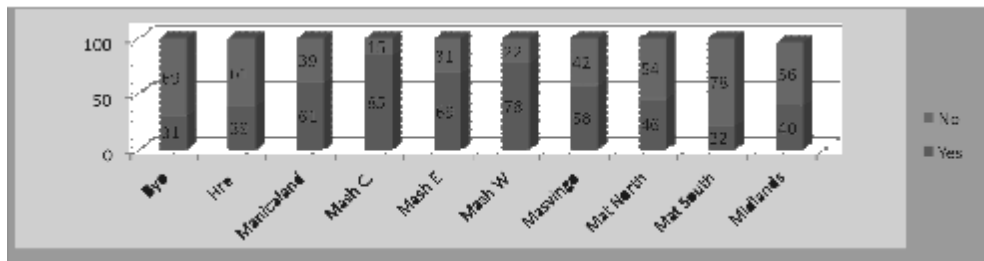


Figure : Existence of Discrimination by Political Party

The political polarisation of the country has resulted in discrimination by political party on many levels in the various constituencies in the country. Access to services, to aid in some cases has been predicated by which political party one belongs to. Access to land, to agricultural inputs, housing stands and to food aid has not been free from discriminatory practices. It is important for people in leadership and those in authority to remember that all citizens are equal regardless of which party they belong to.

Observers in provinces such as Manicaland, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Harare, Masvingo and Matebeleland North and South have traces of youth militia activities. These are mainly led by the youth officers who are stationed in each ward who are clearly Pro-ZANU pf in their approach yet they are paid through the taxpayers' money. The youth officers are the eyes and ears of ZANU PF yet they are paid through government funds. It is critical that the role of these youth officers be interrogated more so as the country heads towards elections in which the stakes are high so that Zimbabwe does not degenerate into another violent election. Zimbabwe's print and electronic media is still dominated by state newspapers, television and radio stations despite the opening up of radio airwaves. Observers in the various constituencies report a systemic lack of trust in state owned newspapers and electronic media. The diagram below shows a pictorial view of the levels of trust in state media:

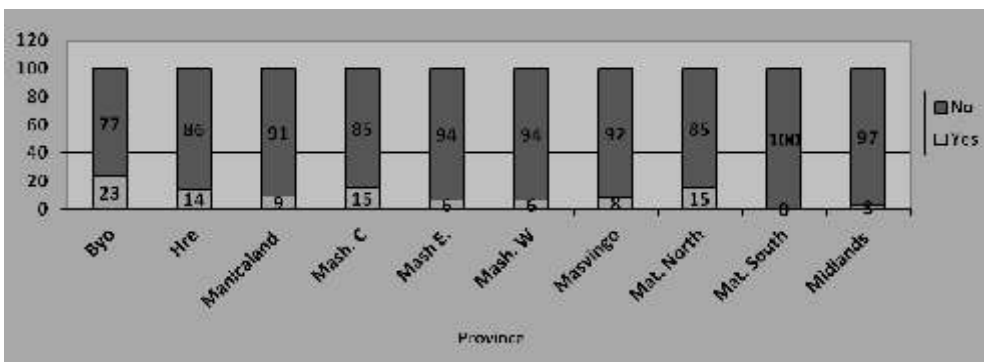


Figure : Trust in information from state owned media

Research by Mass Public Opinion Institute (MPOI) has revealed that over 75 per cent of the population rely on state media for information. Organisations such as the Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe in their reports have noted the bias in state media in favour of ZANU PF in terms of voices. ZESN remains concerned that while state media is the most received, it is not well trusted by citizens. ZESN notes that the most problematic aspect with ZBC radio and television is that they do not provide the right of reply to the parties and people they report on particularly the MDC formations. This has led to erosion in trust levels among citizens. It is critical that as Zimbabwe prepares for the referendum and general election it is important that state owned media makes all efforts to be non partisan and partial towards ZANU PF and that all parties be provided with the right of reply to issues they will have raised.

### Conclusion

ZESN remains committed to monitoring Zimbabwe's political environment and analysing their implications for the conduct of elections in Zimbabwe. While some areas in Zimbabwe are experiencing human rights violations in various ways, observers have also noted areas where people's rights are respected. ZESN envisages a Zimbabwe where people's rights are respected and protected. In pursuance of our mandate of promoting a democratic Zimbabwe where free and fair elections are conducted, ZESN advocates for these minimum conditions:

- The creation of a violent-free environment where freedom of assembly, association and speech among others are upheld.
- Election observation forms a critical element in any election, ZESN calls for the opening up of election observation to all interested stakeholders and for the invitation to be given by ZEC and not an executive arm of government.
- Furthermore, ZESN remains concerned about the state of the voters' roll and calls for the production of a fresh voters' roll.
- ZESN advocates that ZEC should be independent of executive influence and report to Parliament, be well resourced and be given its full mandate in the management of the election.

ZESN believes that for elections to be free and fair there is need for transparency in all processes of the elections which include among others results management, transparency in the processing of postal

**Musangano mukuru wechipiri wegungano remaboka akazvimirira, mapato ezvematongerwo enyika neruzhinji ane chekuita nekugadzirwa kwebumbiro remitemo wakaitwa : Zvino tochiita sei?**

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Zvange zvisiri nyore kubvumidzwa kupinda mumusangano uyu. Mapoka anoona nezvekodzera dzevanhu aipihwa mvumo zvichienderana nekuti varikumapato api ezvematongerwo enyika. Vaongorori vange vari vashoma, naizvozvo havana kukwanisa kuenda pamakomiti ese aitura pamusoro penyaya dzakakosha dzakabuda pakugadzirwa kwebumbiro. Vatungamiri vekomiti inoona nezvekufambiswa kwebumbiro remitemo (COPAC) vari kuti sarudzo dzekugamuchira kana kuramba bumbiro remitemo dzichaitwa munaNdima 2013. Naizvozvo zvizarwa zvemuZimbabwe zvakamirira kunzwa matanho achaitwa neCOPAC uye zvakamirira kuti bumbiro iri riturikirwe kuiswakumitauro yedu yemuno muZimbabwe kuitira kuti munhu wese akwanise kuriverenga uye nekuringiziswa. Izvi zvinobatsira kuti vakwanise kurigamuchira kana kuriramba vaine ruzivo rwezvirimo. ZESN haina kurerekera kumapato ematongerwo enyika uyezve yakazvipira kuti pagadzirwe mitemo inoenderana nezvinoitwa pasi rese inotsigira pfungwa huru dziri muchinyorwa cheSADC. Chinyorwa cheSADC chinokurudzira runyararo nekusavepo kwemhirizhonga, sarudzo dzinokosha zvido zvevanhu pamwe nekuti sarudzo dzaitwe zviri pamutemo.

### Ballot Newsletter

The ZESN Ballot Newsletter has now reached 20 000 copies per month. If you would like to receive copies for your area or organisation please get in touch with the ZESN Information department on the following details;  
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