



Z A P U
ZIMBABWE AFRICAN PEOPLES UNION



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UNITY DAY STATEMENT

22 December 2024

ZAPU marks today as a day of remembering the victims of the Ndebele Genocide (1983-1987) commonly known as Gukurahundi. The Ndebele Genocide is a microcosm of the Jewish Holocaust (1933-1945) and stands a stark reminder of the futility of having independence without freedom. The horrors of Gukurahundi have been documented in various ways but a platform for survivors to speak out openly remains a fleeting mirage. A chief-led Gukurahundi dialogue programme launched by President Mnangagwa in July this year remains on ice, clearly facing the stillbirth that similar window-dressing efforts have faced in the past. Apparently, there is no motivation for self-incrimination.

Political posturing and shedding of crocodile tears remains the government's default strategy to buy time, hoping that the issue of Gukurahundi will eventually disappear as its victims die. No one outside the highest level of government has ever seen the report from the Dumbutshena Commission of Inquiry, established to investigate the Entumbane skirmishes between November 1980 and March 1981. Similarly, the Chihambakwe Commission of Inquiry established by President Mugabe in 1983 to investigate the massacres of civilians in Matabeleland by the Fifth Brigade issued a report that remains hidden from the public domain. In 2019, the Chairperson of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC), the late Retired High Court judge Selo Nare told the media that the Dumbutshena and Chihambakwe reports had been lost.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Someone somewhere knows of the whereabouts of the "lost" reports. Perpetrators of Gukurahundi by commission are also officially known. The Zimbabwe National Army holds complete records of the list of soldiers deployed as members of the Fifth Brigade under the command of one Colonel 'Black Jesus' Perrance Shiri. The perpetrators of Gukurahundi are known and their trail of destruction remains evident in the parts of Matabeleland and Midlands they ravaged. Some victims of Gukurahundi can point at their rapists and torturers now decorated civil servants, diplomats or army top brass. A longer list exists, of Gukurahundi perpetrators by omission – institutions and individuals who watched in silence as the Ndebele Genocide occurred during half a decade of rape, torture and wanton bloodletting.

Unity Day is a self-serving ploy by the ZANU PF-led government to cow victims of Gukurahundi into lifelong silence and resignation. As ZAPU we encourage Zimbabweans to unite daily against crime, corruption, oppression and tribalism. For us unity is required in our communities to ward off hunger and for the protection of our environments. Unity Day as prescribed by government is nothing short of a criminal scheme to destroy evidence and delay justice for victims of Gukurahundi. References to the Unity Accord of 1987 are desperate attempts by the rogue regime in Harare to hide behind the human shield of our disciplined party. ZANU PF is determined to sanitize its soiled image by aligning itself with our clean image as ZAPU.

For the avoidance of doubt, know it all men and women that ZAPU is no longer party to the one-sided Unity Accord of 22 December 1987. We pulled out of the Unity Accord in 2008. Since then, we have been working on rebuilding our party and opening our doors to new members. It therefore becomes clear that Unity Day is only valuable to ZANU PF, the divorce partner who got to keep the matrimonial property. For ZAPU and other patriotic Zimbabweans, this day is Gukurahundi Remembrance Day. Our ZAPU-led government will make it official. We will also establish a Gukurahundi Genocide museum in Bulawayo for the nation and world to see the horrors of Gukurahundi.

On this day marking the darkest chapter of our tortured history, we urge all our members and solidarity partners to wear black. Share pictures of your black attire and use black profile pictures on your social media handles. Refrain from any forms of entertainment and take time to reflect on the horrors of Gukurahundi. Think about the hapless citizens harmed by a marauding army of heartless men called the Fifth Brigade. It is unsettling that many of them are roaming freely in our midst. Some could even be pastors at your local church! Rapists and murderers who have never accounted for their dark past. Sadly, only the victims of Gukurahundi have been told to forgive and forget even where no formal apology has been issued by the government of Zimbabwe.

To the victims of Gukurahundi we say do not lose heart. We will never forget about your suffering. We will continue to talk about Gukurahundi till you get the restorative justice you deserve. Record your testimonies, write memoirs and tell your families what you went through. Let your truth be preserved in many forms. One day the hour of reckoning will come for the perpetrators of Gukurahundi. There will be justice even for the people who perished. Between now and then we mourn the death of our citizens at the hands of North Korean-trained murderers on steroids. We commiserate with the girls and women raped with impunity. We stand with every Zimbabwean struggling to obtain personal identification and travel documents as a result of being orphaned by Gukurahundi. Your lives matter. This is your day.

Issued by:

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