

The President's Letter

MDC Message from President Tsvangirai

27 June 2008

Post Election Volume 18



“Be Not Afraid, the Lord is with You”

My Fellow Zimbabweans

Today is not an election. Today is a shameful humiliation, another tragic day in our nation's history.

The regime may not want you to know this, but the results of today's Presidential election are already rejected by leaders throughout Africa and the world.

Today's results will be meaningless because they do not reflect the will of the people of Zimbabwe. Today's results reflect only the **fear** of the people of Zimbabwe.

Whatever might happen, the results on 27 June will not be recognized by the world. No matter what you are forced to do, we know what is in your heart. Don't risk your life. The people's victory may be delayed, but it won't be denied.

While you huddle in fear, take heart in knowing that the world is watching. The world is listening. The world is hearing and the world is seeing that Mr. Mugabe is asking Zimbabweans to maim, abduct, and kill other Zimbabweans as a campaign strategy in his “defend power project”.

You are not alone today. African liberation movements and icons have heard your voices and share your anguish at the betrayal of the ideals of the struggle for national liberation. Democratic leaders throughout Africa and the world, from President Mandela, to Archbishop Tutu, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, have denounced the violence heaped upon you since the 29 March elections.

In the past, I have said “be bold and of good courage.” I say this again to you today. I know that many of you will be forced to vote today. I also know some of the tricks they intend to use to scare you in order to claim an illegitimate victory through brutal force.

For example, we know some of you are being told to write the ballot paper serial number on a piece of paper so they can know how you voted by comparing it to the ballot papers in the box. If you need to do this to save your life, be not afraid. Do it.

We know they are telling you that cameras in polling stations will show the militia how you vote so they can punish you if you vote for me. Be not afraid. They have no cameras.

We know they say they will kill you if MDC gets any votes. To this, it is difficult to say “be not afraid”, for we know what you are enduring. To this we say, we know you want change. Change will come. Keep the faith. To Africa and observers, we say, our people's lives are in your hands.

If they threaten you saying “if MDC gets 10 votes then 10 people will die,” be not afraid - as Jesus says, be not afraid. Vote as you must to say safe and alive.

God knows what is in your heart. Don't risk your lives.

Of course, it is because of all these repulsive and shameful tactics that we pulled out of the election.

Again let me say, My Fellow Zimbabweans, we know what is in your heart. We know you want peaceful democratic change. Don't risk your life. If forced to cast your ballot for Mr. Mugabe to avoid personal harm, then, again I say, do so.

We know you are committed to democracy. We know you again want to restore the dignity of our national institutions, the police, the army, the CIO. We know you want food, education and jobs. We know you want peace and prosperity.

If possible, we ask you not to vote today. But if you must vote for Mr. Mugabe because of threats on your life today, then do so.

Whatever you are forced to do at the polling station today, we know you still want a New Zimbabwe and a New Beginning. Whether you are employed or unemployed, old or young, woman or man, student or parent, armed or civilians – we know you all want change. Peaceful change.

Whatever happens, my Fellow Zimbabweans, no one has power without the people. Without the people, power will go. As the African National Congress's Freedom Charter says, “no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people.” It's just a matter of time before an illegitimately-elected leader loses authority because the people are the ultimate authority.

The will of the people shall prevail. We shall finish it!

May God bless you and may God bless Zimbabwe.



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