

**PRE AND POST-ELECTORAL VIOLENCE DYNAMICS IN A FRAGILE
STATE: WHAT IS THE SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION TO THE ELECTORAL
VIOLENCE IN ZIMBABWE?**

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STUDIES**

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents; Liz and Nyika Makonye for imparting the hunger to succeed academically in me. May God bless them with long healthy life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Most sincere gratitude, honour and glory to the Most High God (Mwari wekumusorosoro); for the breath of life, protection, sustenance and amazing grace for me and my family throughout my exiled and painful journey for this thesis. Ebenezer! Mwari matisvitsa pano, zita renyu munonzi Shoko raMwari; muri Jehovah wehondo; ndimi Ishe Jesu Kristu; Amen!

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ABSTRACT

Elections are a defining characteristic of the tenets for democracy, and thus form an integral part of the democratization process. Over the past three and a half decades, Zimbabwe's electoral processes have been pervaded by pre and post-electoral violence dynamics throughout the country. The result has been electoral outcomes that are contestable and neither free nor fair thereby becoming the centrepiece of worldwide attention and condemnation by regional, international and other organizations. The purpose of this study is to inform policy on the holding of elections that are sustainable, peaceful, free and fair in Zimbabwe among other things such as to add the voice of scholarship on the extent to which violence has pervaded the country's elections so that intervention strategies can be designed to rescue the situation. The objectives of this study are to identify the dynamics that lead to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe, to determine the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe and to contribute strategies to mitigate pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. The focus of the study is Zimbabwe's electoral processes from independence in 1980 to the present day. The study is purely qualitative in its nature and it appeals to three theoretical frameworks namely the conflict transformation theory, theory of positive and negative peace and the human needs theory. The study found the dynamics pre and post-electoral violence as militarization, ethnicity, draconian legislations and war rhetoric among others. It further found the existing mechanisms to stem violence as the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission and legal recourse among others. The study concludes by suggesting contributions such as demilitarization, international supervision of elections and the presence of observers well before and after elections. All data were presented and analysed using NVIVO software.

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

As observed by Ndulo and Lulo (2010) elections are a defining characteristic of democracy, and thus form an integral part of the democratization process. In support of this submission, literature shows that a considerable number of countries in Africa namely Zimbabwe, Kenya, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Ivory Coast among others have experienced very violent elections thereby raising questions on whether their elections were sustainable, peaceful, free and fair. This research looks at the pre and post-electoral violence dynamics of Zimbabwe's electoral processes from independence in 1980 to the present day. Various political parties such as Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) among others shall be looked at in relation to the pre and post-electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe.

1.2 Background to the study

Since independence from British colonial rule in 1980, Zimbabwe elections have been inherently violent by their conduct. Pre and post-electoral violence pervaded the 1980 general plebiscite that ushered in majority rule but with so many cases of violence reported among the major contesting parties such as ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU among others. The perpetuation of the post-electoral violence led to the culmination of what became known as the Gukurahundi war that was fought mainly in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces between Mugabe's led ZANU-PF and Nkomo's PF-ZAPU. According to the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) and the Legal Resource Foundation (LRF) (1997) an estimated 20 000 people lost their lives due to this post-electoral violence between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU.

As cited by Tucker (2007) elections are considered a crucial element of democracy. However, increasing international pressure for democratic reforms and the contagion effects have contributed to the holding of elections in countries considered less than fully democratic like Zimbabwe. Blunt manipulation of the electoral process by Mugabe's ZANU-PF has conceivably led to protests and riots by supporters of the opposition MDC, the general citizenry and the clergy including their followers. This has resulted in very violent pre and post-electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe to the day of the writing of this research. Elections provide a

means for starting a new, post-conflict political order; for stimulating the development of democratic politics; for choosing representatives; for forming governments; and for conferring legitimacy upon the new political order. In Zimbabwe, the history of electoral processes has been marred by violence. Since its independence in 1980 and during the first democratic election to be held in Zimbabwe, numerous cases of violence were reported during pre and post-electoral processes (Ndulo 2010). Through the 1980s, Mugabe has depicted the opposition and its leaders as rebels and quashed their supporters through state sponsored violence.

The regularity of elections in Zimbabwe has failed to translate into peace. A culture of violence has always been part of Zimbabwe's electoral politics (Matlosa 2011). There is a view that violence between 1980 and 1985 was amplified by electoral campaigns. Prior to the 1985 elections, PF-ZAPU posed a threat to ZANU-PF's power base and as a result, the latter resorted to violence in its bid to force the opposition out of the electoral contest. The police, army, intelligence and other arms of the state security forces unleashed violence against PF-ZAPU leadership and their Ndebele supporters (Makumbe 1997). Driven by intolerance and the quest for electoral hegemony, ZANU-PF detained most of the PF-ZAPU leadership like Lookout Masuku and Dumiso Dabengwa in 1984.

As has already been indicated it was the threat of violence which forced Joshua Nkomo to flee into exile in England. Pre and post-electoral violence accounts for much of the human rights violations during the Gukurahundi and since then, violence has become a way of maintaining political party dominance by ZANU-PF (Sithole and Makumbe 1997). Unlike the 1985 elections which were compounded by party politics and ethnic violence, the 1990 general elections and presidential elections in Zimbabwe made conspicuous the challenge of electoral violence in Zimbabwe. The late Edgar Tekere, formerly ZANU-PF secretary general, opposed the idea of introducing a one party-state model soon after the signing of the Unity Accord (Sithole and Makumbe 1997).

Together with other disgruntled members of ZANU-PF, Tekere formed the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) in 1989 and contested the 1990 elections. ZANU-PF perpetrated violence against ZUM leadership which resulted in the shooting of the late Patrick Kombayi who had challenged the late Vice President Simon Vengai Muzenda for the Gweru parliamentary constituency (Muzondidya 2009; Sithole and Makumbe 1997). Selective application of the rule

of law resulted in arbitrary detention, forced disappearance and torture of many ZUM sympathizers. Since 1990, ZANU-PF's confrontational strategies against the opposition have been used to silence critics and opposition political parties. Clearly, right from the attainment of independence party-politics became contention problem as violence was perpetrated along political party affiliation. Electoral violence in Zimbabwe became more pronounced in the post-2000 dispensation with the formation of the Movement for the Democratic Change (MDC). The honey moon period between 1990 and 2000 that had seen ZANU-PF enjoying party dominance was threatened when the MDC emerged as a forceful political contender. From the discussion above, it can be deduced that violence had an ethnic dimension, but the MDC managed to transcend the regional and ethnic identities that previously defined political interactions (Muzondidya 2009).

Chitiyo (2009) states that the 2002 presidential elections, 2005 parliamentary elections and the 2008 harmonized elections were all characterized by unprecedented levels of violence since the Gukurahundi killings. ZANU-PF systematically resorted to violence in order to scare away the opposition party from campaigning and also to 'force populace compliance'. Increased reliance on force for political support saw the ZANU-PF led government being at war with those viewed as opposition supporters. The promulgation of repressive pieces of legislations prior to the March 2002 presidential elections legalized political violence by the ruling party. Public Order and Security Act (POSA) and Access to Information and the Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) were all enacted in order to restrict the political space for the MDC. As a result, the political terrain became uneven as evidenced by reports of harassment, intimidation and torture of MDC supporters. AIPPA was meant to create media black-out on matters of forced evictions, arbitrary arrests, beatings and torture as well as disappearances. POSA insured that the MDC would not hold any political rally without the approval of the police. Since the police are the service of the state (ZANU-PF), all MDC meetings were declared illegal and this also involved arbitrary arrests, detentions and harassment as well as labelling MDC as British puppets (Chitiyo 2009).

1.3 Problem statement

Fischer (2010) observes that elections are not synonymous with democracy, but are a central component of a functioning democratic system. Zimbabwe's electoral landscape has been fraught with pre and post-electoral violence dynamics since its independence in 1980 to the

present day. The violent nature of its elections has resulted in the suffering of Zimbabweans; there is absolute social degradation, astounding displacement of Zimbabweans in general and sustained hardships for the general citizenry. There are alarming levels of migration by Zimbabweans to neighbouring countries such as South Africa and Botswana among others in the region and to Europe including Britain while others have migrated to Australia in search of greener pastures while others fear political repression at home. Hunger, caused by the violent seizure of land previously owned by white farmers is another major push factor. The country, once the bread basket of Southern Africa has been turned into a basket case due to the conduct of violent electoral processes by the Mugabe led government and ZANU-PF.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study seeks to look at the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe from 1980 to the present day and to determine the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe. The study shall further proffer strategies to contribute to the holding of sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe so that Zimbabweans can enjoy the peace that has been elusive for a very long time. Furthermore, the study shall contribute to Zimbabwean policy regarding electoral processes so as to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in future. Scholars in the field of conflict transformation, particularly in the field of electoral violence among others may use this research to further their studies as a point of reference thereby enhancing their scholarship.

1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To identify the dynamics that lead to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.
2. To determine the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.
3. To contribute strategies to mitigate pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

1.6 Research Questions

This research shall be guided by the following questions:

1. What are the dynamics that lead to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe?
2. What are the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe?

3. What strategies can be designed to contribute to the mitigation of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe?

1.7 Research Methods and Methodology:

In this study the researcher shall use the qualitative research method. As observed by Creswell (2013) qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honours an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation.

1.8 Research Sample

A sample is a subset of the population that should have properties that make it representative of the entire population. It therefore follows that the researcher shall ensure that the group under study is typically or representative of those about whom he wishes to generalize. (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995). This study will be made up of 25 respondents, namely 10 ZANU-PF provincial chairpersons, 10 MDC provincial chairpersons and 5 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that have an interest in Zimbabwe's elections. In-depth interviews shall be carried out with 20 provincial chairpersons from both ZANU-PF and the MDC, and 5 representatives of civil society organizations that have an interest in elections in Zimbabwe. The purposive sampling technique shall be used to carry out the interviews with the chairpersons of both ZANU-PF and MDC, who represent each of the ten provinces in Zimbabwe. Purposive sampling shall also be used to carry out in-depth interviews with the representatives of the 5 major civil society organizations based in Harare and have an interest in elections.

1.9 Instruments Design

This research shall use the interview schedule to gather the prerequisite data. These interviews shall be carried out with the 20 provincial chairpersons of both ZANU-PF and the MDC, and also with representatives of the 5 major civil society organizations that are based in the capital Harare and have an interest in elections in Zimbabwe. Interviews shall be carried out face-to-face with all the respondents stated above. When carrying out the interviews, particular attention shall be paid to verbal inflexion and facial expressions as well as gestures of

participants since these enable the researcher to capture the finer details from the respondents to the study.

1.10 Data collection procedures

The researcher shall personally carry out all the in-depth interviews with the provincial chairpersons of both ZANU-PF and the MDC in their respective provinces countrywide. He shall also do the same with the 5 representatives of the major civil society organizations that are based in Harare and have an interest in Zimbabwe elections. All political party provincial chairpersons shall be given pseudonyms such as Respondent 1 (R1) to Respondent 20 (R20) and the year the interview shall be carried out for example Respondent 1 shall be (R1, 2017). The 5 representatives of the major civil society organizations shall be named as Tango, Oscar, Victor, Sierra and Kilo and the year the interview was carried out for example (Kilo, 2017). This shall be done to abide by confidentiality as required by ethical considerations. Interviews shall be carried out face to face with all the respondents. Prior to the interviews, the researcher shall seek gate-keepers letters from the responsible authorities in each category of respondents as required ethically by the university.

1.11 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which a specific measurement provides data that relate to the accepted meaning of a particular concept (Babie 1997). This shall be achieved by looking at how well the questions asked shall tend to elicit the actual information sought by use of simple language. Validity shall also be enhanced through the use of purposive sampling. A small scale preliminary investigation shall be undertaken to develop and test measures or procedures that shall be used during the study. On interviews, the researcher shall ensure that he takes into consideration the interviewees' gestures and body language so as to probe deeper in order to obtain more information on the discussion at hand.

1.12 Data presentation and analysis

The collected data shall be sorted out manually and subjected to qualitative data analyses using the NVIVO software. The data shall be further coded, categorized into themes and sub-themes then analyzed using 'thematic analyses'. In this study, it will be necessary to interpret the data provided by participants and readings into themes and to seek patterns of meaning.

1.13 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the research problem and its setting; that is the background to the study; looking at the history of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. It also looked at the

significance of the study and the methods as well as the methodology that shall be used to achieve the objectives of the research. The chapter further stated the objectives of the study as well as the research questions that it intends to answer. It also looked at the general structure of the whole dissertation upon its completion. The next chapter looks at the literature review by various authors on the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Zimbabwe's transition into independence was characterised by ethnic tensions that culminated in the Gukurahundi war leading to the death of up to 20 000 people as the country was just emerging from the protracted war of independence. President Mugabe spent some of his energies anticipating and pacifying any opposition against his rule (Dzimiri et al, 2014). The country has been ravaged by a vicious cycle of pre and post-electoral violence since independence in 1980. There was violence at Entumbane, Connmara and Ntabazinduna in February 1981 where over 300 people died, the Gukurahundi killings of 1983-87 and the unprecedented 2008 pre and post- electoral violence dynamics. Narratives on the complexities and challenges facing Zimbabwe's transition to democracy however tend to concentrate on policy dimensions in their account for the pre and post-electoral violence dynamics experienced in the country. This however, eclipsed the problem of ethnicity, militarization, vote rigging, intra-party politics and civil unrest in understanding the culture of pre and post-electoral violence that has threatened all facets of human security in the country.

This chapter gives a critical overview of the nature and scope of pre and post-electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe by paying special attention on such variables like intra-party politics, militarization of the elections, civil dissent, farm invasions and ethnicity among others. Critical events to be discussed include the 1982-87 Gukurahundi violence in Matabeleland and the Midlands provinces, the 1985 electoral violence targeting the opposition party, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), 1990 electoral violence targeting another opposition party, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), the 2000 farm invasion violence, violence against the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), the 2008 general plebiscite and the post-2000 increased militarisation of the state and electoral violence among other issues. It is the contention of this chapter that pre and post-electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe cannot be explained in isolation from the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU-PF) hegemony and ethnicity as well as the militarization of the successive elections among other dynamics since the year 1980. The chapter argues that ZANU-PF in its bid to maintain political party domination deliberately perpetrated violence along political and ethnic lines and this strategy has been consistently applied up to the present day of endless protests, economic meltdown

and several disappearances of opposition activists including but not limited to Itai Dzamara. This chapter also argues that the Mugabe regime has used the military, police, war veterans, the youth league and the central intelligence organization (CIO) to orchestrate pre and post-electoral violence against opposition parties in Zimbabwe since 1980 to the present day.

2.2 Ethnic politics and violence in the post-colonial era

Comaroff (1991: 32) describes ethnicity as a set of human relations and a mode of consciousness that constantly keep changing. He further notes that ethnicity reflects a socially constructed “collective consciousness of society.” The ethnic composition of Zimbabwe matches Comaroff’s definition. African Black people account for 98% of the population of Zimbabwe. Of these, Shona people constitute 82%, Ndebele 14%, other 2% (mainly Tonga, Nambya and Venda), while mixed and Asian 1%, and White less than 1% (Encyclopaedia of Nations 2013). Shona and Ndebele are the dominant ethnic groupings, with Shona being the main language. The issue of ethnicity in Zimbabwe has some traits dating back to pre-colonial times, mainly between the Ndebele and Shona speaking people. In the distant past, the Ndebele were renowned for being a powerful tribe and survived on raiding the Shona (old Karanga Kingdom), for cattle, crops and women (Musindo 2004). These practices created serious ethnic rifts between the Shona and Ndebele people and were only abrogated by the coming of the colonial settlers in 1890. The British colonial administration took control of Zimbabwe, thereby seizing all the powers from the Ndebele. In a way, White rulers were intent on casting in stone ethnic sensibilities which were very much fluid. The challenge of ethnicity in politics manifested during Zimbabwe’s war of liberation of 1963 to 1979.

According to Sithole (1995), the Southern Rhodesia African Nationalist Congress (SRANC) that was established with the motive of waging a war of liberation in 1957 was spoiled by ethnic barriers between the Shona and Ndebele people. The same ethnic tensions surfaced again when the Front for Liberation of Zimbabwe (FROLIZI) which was formed in October 1971 was crippled by ethnic tensions between the Shona and Ndebele speaking groups. Political mobilisation therefore, became an ethnic play where ZAPU had to mobilise from the Ndebele, while ZANU had the Shona as its resource base (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008b). Despite agreeing on the common objective of liberating the country from White minority rule, major ethnic tensions between the major Zimbabwean liberation movements, namely ZAPU and ZANU resulted in waging the war of liberation along ethnic lines. Due to some ethnic founded differences, the defection from ZAPU by those who formed ZANU in 1963 resulted in the polarisation and political rivalry between the two along ethnic lines with ZAPU being Ndebele

dominated and ZANU being mainly for the Shona speaking people (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008b; Sithole 1995). Throughout the liberation war, there were tensions between the two military wings of the two parties, namely ZAPU's Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA), which operated from Zambia with the strong backing of USSR and ZANU's Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) which was Chinese backed and operated from Mozambique (Sithole 1995). There were some skirmishes between the two liberation military wings, and it was no surprise that the Gukurahundi violence actually started within the integrated Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) in 1982, after ZIPRA cadres within the ZNA were accused of having arms caches for carrying out a coup to topple the ZANU (PF) government (Sithole 1995). To ZANU (PF), ZAPU was therefore a suspicious partner by the virtue of being Ndebele dominated and ZANU (PF) demonstrated its belief in one party politics by absorbing ZAPU in 1987 because any political view which was not in line with government and ruling party ideology was labelled subversive and unpatriotic (Ranger 2003).

It should therefore be acknowledged that the ethnic political landscape in Zimbabwe, which after the formation of MDC extended to areas traditionally regarded as Shona and into urban areas, can be traced back to the pre-colonial and colonial eras. The post-colonial nation building project in Zimbabwe was convulsed by ethnic conflict between the periods 1982 to 1987. The ethnic conflict started when some ZIPRA military cadres objected to the post-independence reintegration where ZANLA and ZIPRA military wings were to be merged (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008b). It is alleged that the dissident activities by some members of ZIPRA prompted ZANU to conduct a crackdown in an operation code-named Gukurahundi (CCJP and LRF 1997). The alleged dissident activities were confined to Matabeleland and the Midlands provinces and the ruling party ZANU-PF authorised 'counter insurgency' by the ZANLA North Korean trained 5th Brigade which were mainly Shona speaking, Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace and Legal Resource Foundation (CCJP and LRF 1997). The Gukurahundi violence was predicated on both ethnicity and party-politics. What started as a crackdown on some rogue elements within the ZIPRA, ended up being an all-out war against the Ndebele people. The Gukurahundi violence reflected the inseparable link between ethnicity and politics in the Zimbabwean situation. Ethnic hatred prompted President Mugabe to describe the Ndebele as a "dissident community" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008b: 35). The contention was that ZAPU was connected with the dissidents, who were Ndebele; hence, all Ndebele people were dissidents (Musindo 2004). Such a fallacy of composition resulted in serious destruction of property, displacement of people and deaths estimated at 20 000 (CCJP and LRF 1997). There were also

reports of disappearances and abductions of Ndebele speaking people during the Gukurahundi violence. In essence, the amount of force invoked during the Gukurahundi seemed not proportional to the perceived dissidents' threat and this may explain why critical voices argue that Gukurahundi was a well calculated political and ethnic violence against the Ndebele speaking Zimbabweans (CCJP and LRF 1997). However, despite assuming an ethnic complexion, Sithole, and Makumbe (1997) posit that the Matabeleland violence was mainly due to incompatible vision of the future of Zimbabwe between the two liberation parties. They allege that ZANU-PF wanted to propagate a "one party model" while, PF-ZAPU advocated a "multiparty" democratic system (Sithole and Makumbe 1997: 184). As a result, the violence that erupted became a struggle for political power and hegemonic status. Joshua Nkomo was singled out as enemy of the state, which forced him to flee the country into exile in London in 1983 (Sithole and Makumbe 1997; Nkomo 1984). The Ndebele on the other hand were labelled as an untrustworthy tribal group who paid allegiance to Nkomo and his PF-ZAPU (Sibanda 2005). It is further alleged that people were also interrogated on their political party affiliation, instructed to denounce PF-ZAPU, forced to attend ZANU-PF rallies and buy ZANU-PF party cards.

Sloganism during ZANU-PF rallies vilified Joshua Nkomo as a dissident and hatred between Ndebele and Shona ethnic groups was aggravated by elitist scholarship within ZANU-PF political cycles which portrayed PF-ZAPU as secondary player in Zimbabwe's politics (Dabengwa 1995). The horrific results of the Gukurahundi according to Bhebhe (2004b: 15) demonstrate the state's failure to integrate the Shona and Ndebele into "one national identity of Zimbabwe." This also explains the phenomenon of Ndebele particularism alienated by the Shona dominated government in Zimbabwe. For many of the Ndebele people, Gukurahundi is believed to be an all Shona crusade against the Ndebele (Lindgren 2005). There are also claims by modern humanitarians to give a genocide label to the Gukurahundi ethnic killings in Zimbabwe. The 2010 Genocide Watch lobbied for referring Ndebele killings to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in order to prosecute the perpetrators. Whether or not the killings constitute a crime against humanity remains contested, but the crux of the matter is that military violence against the Ndebele had an ethnic orientation. The Gukurahundi ethnic and political violence were only terminated when the late Joshua Nkomo settled for a political compromise which saw the merging of ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU to form one ZANU-PF under the auspices of the Unity Accord in 1987 (Brett 2010). It is believed that the Unity Accord between ZAPU and ZANU in 1987 brought peace but also political laziness, lethargy and

corruption because of the lack of a strong political opposition, misuse of public funds, incompetence, and abuse of political positions, which frustrated many citizens (Todd 2007). The merged ruling party leadership took people for granted and used their liberation war credentials. The Gukurahundi violence is significant in the sense that it became the defining pillar of ZANU-PF's political conduct. As will be illustrated in the course of the discussion, from the Gukurahundi to the March 2008 political violence, a culture of criminalisation of opposition politics had been internalised and this attributed to ZANU-PF's bid to propagate and impose hegemonic political status throughout the country compounded by brutal and shocking levels of violence against opposition parties

2.3 Civil dissent and violence in the 1990s

The 1996 public sector strike brought the country to a standstill as nurses, doctors, public service workers and teachers suspended their services. Confronted with such a situation, the Zimbabwean government responded by waging an undeclared war against its people. Running out of options on how to address popular demands, the police descended on people with brutal force, torturing, beating and detaining the protesters' leadership (Raftopoulos and Alexander 2006). The ZANU (PF) government assumed that its power was being challenged and as result it unleashed military violence on its citizens. The state security forces' brutal force on protesters soured relations between the military and the civilian populace leading to the formation of the Movement for the Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999.

The MDC quickly became a powerful opposition political party against the ruling ZANU PF, with majority support from the disgruntled working class, as the Zimbabweans sought a political alternative. Thus, from 1999 the ZANU (PF) government and the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) had not only disengaged, but the urban dwellers and the MDC party became labelled puppets of the Western neo-colonial powers by ZANU (PF). This culminated in the 2005 country wide 'military invasion' of the urban dwellers by the government in what was coined operation Murambatsvina or clean up the mess (Dzimiri and Runhare 2012). Ranger (2004) further observes that any political party that offered an alternative view to the ruling ZANU (PF) party, such as the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) would be labelled as traitorous operating under the control of Western neo-imperialists. From the above discussion, it can be argued ZANU (PF) demonstrated its intolerance and unwillingness to share the political stage with any opposing view as evidenced by the negative naming of opposition voices.

2.4. Farm invasions and the racial violence in Zimbabwe.

The ZANU-PF urban orchestrated violence against economic protesters was not to be the end of Zimbabwe's woes. The country experienced yet another form of violence, this time with a racial dimension orchestrated by the war veterans of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. A short period after the dislodging of White settler government, Whites ceased to be a prime concern in Zimbabwe's domestic politics. Racial antagonism only resurfaced in Zimbabwean politics when war veterans embarked on the invasion of White owned farms, popularly known as Jambanja in local parlance (Sachikonye 2005). Continued social and economic inequalities between Blacks and Whites after the attainment of majority rule triggered feelings of racial prejudice as well as the question of "citizenship and identity" (Muzondidya 2010: 13). The fact that the majority of Blacks languished in poverty while the bulk of the means of production, especially land, was in the hands of a few White minority saw the widening of the rift between Blacks and Whites and this infused a sense of radical land reforms among the war veterans. Since 1890 when Zimbabwe fell under the British colonial system, the White settler community, by conquest took most of the fertile lands and pushed the Blacks to infertile rural areas (Muzondidya 2010; Mlambo 2006; Sachikonye 2005).

In order to bridge the polemic gap on land ownership, the war veterans supported by the ruling ZANU PF embarked on violent land seizures (Stiff 2000). Any White farmers who tried to resist the farm seizures and evictions without compensation were labelled as 'racist Rhodeses' who deserved to be deported out of the country (Reeler 2009). Therefore, the farm invasions led to violence which took a serious racial dimension as it ended up being a Black versus White conflict over land. Land grabbing coupled with confiscation of White farmers' property were all premised on racial identity as Whites were described as imperialists preying on African resources, hence the need to evict them from the farms. Though there are no exact statistics available to illustrate farm related deaths or human violations, there are reports that most of the White farmers who could not comply with the war veterans demands were tortured, beaten and forcibly evicted from the farms (Stiff 2000). It is estimated that 29% of Black farm workers were tortured and up to 9% of White commercial farmers were victimised (Reeler 2009). The farm workers who were targeted were those accused of being in solidarity with their White employers. Some scholars have argued that the real motive behind the attacks of White farmers

was the unexpected defeat in the year 2000 of ZANU PF by the Whites' supported MDC in the referendum to a new constitution which contained provisions for the government to compulsorily acquire White owned land. This suggests that the racial dimension of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) violence was motivated by ZANU-PF's desire to punish White commercial farmers for supporting the MDC (Coltart 2007). The FTLRP coincided with the 2000 Constitutional referendum which ZANU-PF anticipated would authorise acquisition of land without compensation (Sachikonye 2005). It is fair to argue that the watershed in the descent of Zimbabwean politics into a racial confrontation was authored by the government's economic failures especially in the urban areas. It was the confrontation between Mugabe and the war vets which led to the parcelling out of unbudgeted gratuities. This in turn led to the collapse of the Zimbabwean dollar in November 1997. In order to divert attention from the deteriorating economic lives of urban dwellers, ZANU-PF told the war vets that their problems could be solved if the land was taken away from White farmers. However, ZANU-PF lost the constitutional bid as the majority of Zimbabweans cast a "no" vote (Brett 2006). It is then that the government used a racial rhetoric and accused the White farmers of trying to reverse the gains of the liberation struggle by supporting the opposition MDC (Phimister and Raftopoulos 2011). In essence, all Whites were declared enemies of the state and the "language of race" was invoked to justify all violent acts against them (Muzondidya 2010: 17).

The FTLRP was master-minded and put in motion by ZANU-PF and used as a tool for political manoeuvre especially, to win back popular support. To demonstrate that the racial violence of the FTLRP was sanctioned by the government, Smith (2000: 343) cites utterances by the then Minister of Information and Publicity Chen Chimutengwende who attested that the only way to stop the escalation of racial violence was for "the White farmers to surrender their land and [that] any other solution like using the police to stop the invasions" would only provide temporary relief. The racial nature of the land invasions and the accompanying violence was catalysed by a nativist discourse which became a defining pillar of Zimbabwean politics. Sithole and Bretton (2004) point out that ZANU-PF's propaganda that it wanted to return the land to its rightful owners gained acceptance from the older generation who still had memories of the colonial experiences. However, for the younger generation what mattered most was having a stake in the political and economic spheres of the country.

2.5. Political labelling and the electoral violence in Zimbabwe

It was through the conduct of democratic elections that Zimbabwe attained the Black majority rule and this has been sustained from 1980 to the present. While elections are the pathway towards democratic consolidation, Matlosa (2011) posits that what matters most is integrity and credibility in the conduct of elections. Matlosa (2011: 3) describes elections as a “double edged sword” in the sense that they can be both a source of stability and instability. It is true that democracy is only possible through elections but elections can be conducted in situations where democracy is highly constrained. Matlosa (2011: 5) describes this as the “fallacy of electoralism.” Diamond (2008) also argues that what matters is not the quantity of elections or the number of times a country has held elections but the quality of those elections, that is, how free and fair those elections are. A critical analysis of pre-and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe augurs well with Matlosa’s and Diamond’s explanations. The regularity of elections in Zimbabwe has failed to translate into peace. A culture of violence has always been part of Zimbabwe’s electoral politics. There is a view that violence between 1980 and 1985 was amplified by electoral campaigns. Prior to the 1985 elections, PF-ZAPU posed a threat to ZANU-PF’s power base and as a result, ZANU-PF resorted to violence in its bid to force the opposition out of the electoral contest. The police, army, intelligence and other arms of the state security forces unleashed violence against PF-ZAPU leadership and their Ndebele supporters (Sithole and Makumbe 1997).

Driven by intolerance and the quest for electoral hegemony, ZANU-PF detained most of the PF-ZAPU leadership like Lookout Masuku and Dumiso Dabengwa in 1984. As has already been indicated it was the threat of violence which forced Joshua Nkomo to flee into exile in England (Sithole and Makumbe 1997). Electoral violence accounts for much of the human rights violations during the Gukurahundi and since then, violence has become a way of maintaining political party dominance by ZANU-PF. The detention of PF-ZAPU leadership and the subsequent signing of the 1987 Unity Accord meant that Zimbabwe was practically a “de factor one party-state” (Sithole and Makumbe 1997; 122). Unlike the 1985 elections which were compounded by party politics and ethnic violence, the 1990 general elections and presidential elections in Zimbabwe made conspicuous the challenge of electoral violence in Zimbabwe. The late Edgar Tekere, formerly ZANU-PF secretary general, opposed the idea of introducing a one party-state model soon after the signing of the Unity Accord (Sithole and Makumbe 1997). Together with other disgruntled members of ZANU-PF, Tekere formed the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) in 1989 and contested the 1990 elections. ZANU-PF

perpetrated violence against ZUM leadership which resulted in the shooting of the late Patrick Kombayi who had challenged the late Vice President Simon Vengesai Muzenda for the Gweru parliamentary constituency (Muzondidya 2009; Sithole and Makumbe 1997). Selective application of the rule of law resulted in arbitrary detention, forced disappearance and torture of many ZUM sympathisers. Since 1990, ZANU-PF's confrontational strategies against the opposition have been used to silence critics and opposition political parties. Clearly, right from the attainment of independence party-politics became a contention problem as violence was perpetrated along political party affiliation. Challenges to ZANU-PF Political Hegemony and State Militarisation Electoral violence in Zimbabwe became more pronounced in the post-2000 dispensation with the formation of the Movement for the Democratic Change (MDC). The honey moon period between 1990 and 2000 that had seen ZANU-PF enjoying party dominance was threatened when the MDC emerged as a forceful political contender. From the previous discussions, it can be deduced that violence had an ethnic dimension, but the MDC managed to "transcend the regional and ethnic identities" that previously defined political interactions (LeBas 2006: 423).

Capitalising on civil dissent that characterised the food riots of the late 1990s, the MDC initially appealed to the youth and urban populace as it presented itself as the only option towards bringing sanity to the social, economic and political conditions in Zimbabwe. The motto for political mobilisation for the MDC was around the theme of change, while the ruling party revived the liberation war rhetoric. The whole country was divided along party politics and subsequently, violence became prevalent. ZANU-PF initially derived its support from the old people who had experienced the horrors of colonial rule, mainly in rural areas. However, with the passage of time, the MDC's message of change percolated to the rural areas previously believed to be ZANU-PF's strong holds. It can also be argued that the contest for political power by ZANU PF and MDC has assumed an identity character as MDC portrays itself as a progressive and Democratic Party. On the other hand, ZANU PF depicts itself as a revolutionary party that protects the gains and values of the liberation struggle. By so doing, ZANU-PF brands all its opponents as enemies of the people, the revolution and the state. The 2002 presidential elections, 2005 parliamentary elections and the 2008 harmonised elections were all characterised by unprecedented levels of violence since the Gukurahundi killings. ZANU-PF systematically resorted to violence in order scare away the opposition party from campaigning and also to "force populace compliance" (Makumbe 2009). Increased reliance on force for political support saw the ZANU-PF led government being at war with those viewed

as opposition supporters. The promulgation of repressive pieces of legislations prior to the March 2002 presidential elections legalized political violence by the ruling party. Public Order and Security Act (POSA) and Access to Information and the Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) were all enacted in order to restrict the political space for the MDC (Coltart 2007). As a result, the political terrain became uneven as evidenced by reports of harassment, intimidation and torture of MDC supporters (Institute for Justice and Reconciliation Report 2006). AIPPA was meant to create media Blackout on matters of forced evictions, arbitrary arrests, beatings and torture and political killings. POSA insured that the MDC would not hold any political rally without the approval of the police. Since the police are at the service of the state (ZANU-PF), all MDC meetings were declared illegal and this also involved arbitrary arrests, detentions and harassment as well as labelling MDC as British puppets. In order to understand the scope and nature of electoral violence in the post-2000 dispensation, it is vital to understand the agents, command structures and the victims. What makes the post-2000 political violence unique is the expansive role of the military sector in matters of governance (Murithi and Mawadza 2011).

As a result of the waning support, the Mugabe regime appointed former liberation war commanders into key security services positions. The military involvement in politics prevented ZANU-PF from acknowledging political diversity and from viewing the MDC as equal player in politics. This political-military nexus created some form of patronage where the state security services are at the service of the ZANU-PF party (Bretton and Masunungure 2008; Chitiyo 2009). Masunungure (2011) adds that this also led to party-state duality where there is a thin line between the state and political parties. Since the year 2000, state security forces have shaped the strategic direction of the country. That is why Masunungure (2011: 4) euphemistically describes the military as “politicians in uniform.” The violent conduct in Zimbabwe’s electoral system has seen the police, army and intelligence taking the commanding political roles while the war veterans and the National Youth Services (NYS) were co-opted as instruments of violence. State monopoly of violence through the security structures has been premised on the revival of the liberation war rhetoric, where ZANU-PF officials claim that their actions are informed by the need to preserve the values of the liberation struggle (Chitiyo 2009). Violence has become an instrument for electioneering and people are coerced into voting for ZANU-PF for personal safety and security (Chitiyo 2009). Rupiya (2005: 117) attributes the unprecedented levels of political violence in the post- 2000 era in Zimbabwe to what he terms “governance through military style.” Military style governance was also reflected during the 2005 Operation Murambatsvina. Coincidentally, Operation

Murambatsvina was conducted in the aftermath of the 2005 parliamentary elections (Dzimiri and Runhare 2012; Bratton and Masunungure 2007). The fact that the ruling party ZANU-PF lost dismally to the opposition MDC in most urban areas triggered a suspicion that the Murambatsvina violations were meant to punish the electorate for dumping ZANU-PF (Dzimiri and Runhare 2012). Operation Murambatsvina fits the label of political violence when one critically examines the timing of the exercise. The humanitarian consequences of Murambatsvina points to a well calculated state sponsored violence on the urban electorate. The pre- and post-electoral violence in 2008 was another moment of trials and tribulations for the people of Zimbabwe. This took place after the March 2008 harmonised presidential, parliamentary, local government and senatorial elections where MDC polled 47 per cent against ZANU-PF's 43.3 per cent (ZESN 2008). The fact that the MDC failed to win majority votes led to election run-off which was scheduled for 27 June 2008. Unlike the relative peace that had prevailed before the March 2008 elections, this time ZANUPF resorted to its usual tactics of militarising the campaigns. Prior to the run-off, the police and the army were seen conducting rallies and forcing people to denounce the MDC in what Masunungure (2008: 85) describes as "militarised election." Studies on the 2008 electoral violence in Zimbabwe reveal that there is a core-relationship between voting patterns and the levels of violence (Solidarity Peace Trust 2010).

Most of ZANU-PF's support bases like Mashonaland West, Central and East, became the "epicentre" of violence (Bretton and Masunungure 2008: 51). State security forces supported by the war veterans and the youth militia conducted a reign of terror torturing, abducting, parading and beating opposition supporters in public. Members of the non-governmental sector (NGOs), civil society groups and teachers were persecuted for allegedly politicising people in voting against the ruling party (Muzondidya 2009). Sadly, as the violence intensified the MDC also adopted violent tactics purportedly as a means of self-defence. Violence became conspicuously perpetrated along political party identity. The politics of name calling has been used for identity construction as well as justifying violence. The military-ZANU-PF nexus fomented violence by name calling the opposition and its supporters 'sell-outs' or vatengesi in Shona language (Marowa 2009). The name 'sell-out' featured most during the liberation struggle to describe those who collaborated with the colonial Rhodesian Front (RF) (Marowa 2009). The 'sell-out' label was malleably used to designate anyone in solidarity with ZIPRA and RF. The irony with the application of the name 'sell-out' is that despite the fact that ZIPRA was fighting for the common cause, due to political party intolerance, ZANU-PF harboured

hate and resentment for the opposition party. Towards the 2008 presidential runoff elections, those believed to be opposing the so called values of the liberation struggle were paraded, denigrated and beaten in public. Political violence unleashed by ZANU-PF and its supporters against the opposition forced the MDC leader to pull out of the June 2008 runoff election race. ZANU-PF invoked a policy of annihilation which saw the displacement of opposition supporters, burning of houses in the case of rural areas and destruction of property (Chitiyo 2009). State security forces spearheaded a post-run-off election operation code named Operation Makavhoterapapi/Whom Did you Vote for? This was a witch hunt exercise meant to punish those who voted for the opposition. Reeler (2008: 5) describes the harassment of opposition supporters and their leadership as “subliminal terror.” Terror tactics were meant to instil fear and unconditional compliance with ZANU- (PF) demands. According to Chitiyo (2009) torture camps were established throughout the country and the so called ‘sell-outs’ were beaten in public with some killed. In the post-colonial phase however, the reconstruction of the ‘sell-out’ label assumed new forms.

Even former ZANLA liberation cadres like Joshua Nkomo and Edgar Tekere and lately Dumiso Dabengwa and Tsvangirai earned the description of ‘sell-outs’ for the mere fact of voicing their concern over ZANU-PF’s undemocratic conduct. Naming became a powerful tool for identity construction since the military sector invoked the liberation war credentials in their bid to strengthen ZANU-PF’s grip on political power. The idea of name- calling comes to the limelight when opposing forces were named ‘sell-outs’ and ‘puppets’. The danger of this to democratic elections in Zimbabwe lies in the observation that political labelling has also fallen into the hands of the military and political elites who advocate ZANU-PF hegemony for the sake of maintaining their accumulated political and economic privileges under the ZANU (PF) led government. The Sunday Mail, a Zimbabwean weekly- news-paper of 5-12 May 2013 had a headline: “I have no time to speak to sell-outs”, referring to Chiwenga, Zimbabwe Defence Forces Commander refusal to meet with Tsvangirai. This shows the extent to which the politics of labelling has been used to instil fear among the opposition by the military service chiefs, who openly identify themselves with ZANU (PF) instead of the nation at large. The partisan nature of the army was also reflected when Brigadier-General Nyikayaramba publicly announced that he was for ZANU-PF and would not live to see Tsvangirai as president since he lacked liberation war credentials .This also complemented the 9 January 2002 position by the security chiefs that they would not salute any leader lacking the liberation war credentials (Masunungure 2008). Clearly, any attempt to address the challenge of political violence in

Zimbabwe first requires the definition of the role of state security structures as well as depoliticising them.

2.6 Violence and the polarisation of the global political agreement (GPA).

Political violence in Zimbabwe subsided with the signing of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in September 2008. This was also a precursor to the formation of the Government of National Unity in 2009. The MDC is believed to have entered into the GNU power sharing arrangement mainly for violence prevention purposes. The scale and levels of political violence prior to and after the June 2008 run-off elections compelled the MDC to share the political stage with ZANU-PF despite their ideological incompatibilities (Raftopoulos 2013). However, the power sharing deal between the MDC and ZANU-PF did not address the issue of political violence, due to the fact that ZANU-PF does not want to be subjected to any political contest. Reports of political intimidation and arbitrary arrests of some MDC party supporters illustrate the continuation of violence in Zimbabwean politics. Even within the coalition government formed in 2008, were reports of intra and inter-ministerial antagonism in the GNU cabinet (Mazarire 2013; Muzondidya 2013). Within one ministry, the co-ministers seemed to promote their party interests and ministries headed by MDC or ZANU (PF) ministers contradicted each other on several occasions. A clear example was the MDC Minister of Finance and ZANU (PF) Reserve Bank governor whose offices failed to collaborate on important state programmes.

2.7 Conditions preceding the June 2008 Run-off

As observed by Linington (2008) the law provided for a 'second election' to decide the presidency in the event that the first election proved inconclusive, i.e. with no candidate obtaining 50 per cent +1 of the valid votes. The law also provided for 21 days for such a presidential runoff to be conducted after the first election. Zimbabwe's run-off election, however, was marked by several peculiarities. First, this was the first time in the history of elections in both pre- and post-independence Zimbabwe that the country was holding a run-off. In previous presidential elections, Mugabe would romp to victory, though very controversially in respect of the 2002 presidential election when he won by 56 per cent of the vote to Tsvangirai's 42 per cent. In addition, Mugabe did not even consider a runoff, let alone coming second to his long-time adversary. After casting his vote on 29 March, Mugabe said a second round would not be necessary as he was going to knock out all his opponents and conquer them in the first round:

We are not used to boxing matches where we go from round one to round two. We just knock each other out. That's how we have done it in the past. That's how we will do it this time. It's a constitutional requirement that there may be a re-run, but it won't be necessary.

The second peculiarity was the inordinate delay in announcing the results of the first round presidential election held on 29 March; the results were frozen for five weeks, well beyond the timeline for holding the run-off election. A third oddity was the time it took after the announcement of results on 2 May to announce the run-off date. When the date was finally announced on 16 May, it was two days after the government had first extended the period for the second round election from 21 days to 90 days after the announcement of results. Due to a combination of all the above, it is virtually impossible to determine when the presidential run-off campaign actually started. However, it appears fair to suggest that it began as soon as ZANU-(PF) got wind of the results, which must have been soon after 29 March, i.e. in early April. For instance, on 3rd April, long before the results of the presidential election had been announced, the Deputy Information Minister said: 'ZANU-(PF) is ready for a run-off, we are ready for a resounding victory. In terms of strategy, we only applied 25 percent of our energy into this campaign. ... (the re-run) is when we are going to unleash the other 75 percent that we did not apply in the first case' (Linington, 2008).

Then on 4 April, 2008 the ZANU-(PF) Politburo held an extraordinary meeting that sought among other things to carry out a post-mortem of what in law was still an incomplete election process and plan a way forward. After the meeting, ZANU-(PF) Secretary for Administration, Didymus Mutasa, announced that the party had decided that Mugabe would participate in a run-off. 'It's definite there will be a re-run. We are down but not out', he said and added: 'absolutely, the candidate will be Robert Gabriel Mugabe – who else would it be other than our dear old man?' This shocked many people who strongly suspected that ZANU-(PF) had gained advance knowledge of the results and the defeat of its presidential candidate and therefore was already planning for a run-off (Linington, 2008).

Further, on the very day the ZANU-(PF) Politburo was meeting, veterans of Zimbabwe's guerrilla war were marching through the capital; according to Sapa-AP, 'while they were silent, there was little doubt they were out to intimidate President Robert Mugabe's political opponents.' This chapter reflects on how the winds of democratic change were defied, paying particular attention to the leading role of the military/security sector in this process (Linington, 2008).

2.8 The military/security factor in the Run-off election

The April to June 2008 election interregnum was a militarized moment. A ZANU-(PF) that had been de-stooled as the ruling party in parliament was not prepared to be dislodged from State House. A pivotal player in the militarized elections was the Joint Operations Command (JOC), a military/ security body comprising the heads of all security organs (army, air force, prison service, intelligence, and police) which, according to Jocelyn Alexander and Blessing Miles Tendi, 'decided within days of the (29 March) election to deploy a strategy of delay and violence in order to hold onto the all-important executive'. The militarization of the 27 June election was part of the militarization of the state that had started several years before with the onset of what ZANU-(PF) and the government termed the 'third Chimurenga', a reference to the often violent take-over of white-owned farms from 2000 onwards.

This metamorphosed into a 'governance-by-operations' militaristic style of policy implementation. Alexander and Tendi note that since 2000,

Zimbabwe's state has been described as increasingly 'militarised', with military men being appointed in key positions throughout the state, and an expanding range of decisions and actions being taken by the military, from political strategy to the formulation and implementation of agrarian and economic policy.

The increasing penetration of the military/security sector is closely associated with the party-state phenomenon. In practice, a party-state means the ruling party is fused to the state; party and state structures at all levels are conflated. Moreover, in the party-state duality, the party is supreme over the state. All formal organs of the state – including the military and security services – are closely linked to the party without being officially integrated into it. Bratton and Masunungure characterize the Zimbabwe case as a 'politicised party-state'.

The militarization of Zimbabwe politics in the service of the ruling party became evident at the turn of the millennium and towards the June 2000 parliamentary elections. Some commentators then were already alluding to this militarization. For instance, constitutional expert and activist Brian Kagoro was perturbed by 'early signs of militarisation, orchestrated by the government' while academic Brian Raftopoulos was more categorical:

...it is quite clear that President Robert Mugabe's real strength is the coercion which comes out of the army and the liberation war veterans. He is using it to the full and the militarisation will be to his benefit even if the opposition does well in any elections which might take place.

Bratton and Masunungure (2008) state that the year 2000 ‘was a turning point in civil-military relations. With the emergence of the MDC challenge, the military’s involvement in political life became increasingly open’. The militarization of the state took the form of a growing number of senior military officers being appointed to lead strategic state institutions including the Zimbabwe Prisons Service (ZPS) the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO), the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), and parastatals such as the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM), the Grain Marketing Board (GMB), National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) and The Department of National Parks and Wildlife.

Bratton and Masunungure (2008) characterize Mugabe’s post-independence regime as ‘a militarized form of electoral authoritarianism’ which has come to rest on ‘the interpenetration of two key organs of authority: the ruling party and the security forces.’ This perspective can be extended to the analysis of Zimbabwe’s two elections. This chapter argues that both ‘organs of authority’ were important in the two elections but that their visibility and significance differed fundamentally between them. In the lead up to the March elections, it was the party – as was the case in previous elections – that played a critical and prominent role in the campaign while the military and other security branches played a background, more-or-less subdued, and more rhetorical than physical role.

ZANU-(PF) fought for power against its opposition rivals and did so more or less politically. The political leadership of the regime campaigned for power and did so without directly and physically bringing the men and women in uniform into the fray. The military leadership of the regime occasionally revealed its partisan sympathies but there was no wholesale and systematic political mobilization of the security/military sectors as institutions. It can thus be fairly asserted that the march to the 29 March elections was a political march and not a military march. The campaign was a political campaign; though the military/security may have lurked rather menacingly in the background, their claws remained sheathed. Unlike the pre-29 March period, the campaign afterwards was a visibly militarized one. The security forces, rather than the ruling party, were in the forefront, spearheading the march to the 27 June run-off. Available evidence suggests that the governing regime came to the conclusion that the party had failed in the march to 29 March and therefore that military should lead the march to 27 June. Here is how the ZANU-(PF) president described his party’s 29 March performance when he addressed the party’s Central Committee in mid-May:

We went to the elections completely unprepared. We went to the elections completely unprepared, unorganised and this against an election-weary voter. Our structures went to sleep, were deep in slumber in circumstances of an all-out war. [The structures] were passive; they were lethargic, ponderous, divided, diverted, disinterested, demobilised or simply non-existent. It was terrible to see the structures of so embattled a ruling party so enervated. As leaders, we all share the blame: from the national level to that of the branch chairman. We played truant; we did not lead, we misled; we did not encourage, rather we discouraged; we did not unite, we divided; we did not inspire, we dispirited; we did not mobilise, we demobilised. Hence the dismal result we are landed with ('Unite for victory: President.')

Prior to this rare, candid and public declaration of the 'dismal' performance of the party, Mugabe was reported to have told his ZANU-(PF) Politburo in early April 2008 that in order to win the presidential election run-off, the party must establish a warlike and military-style leadership to campaign for him. The Zimbabwe Independent quoted one of the documents as follows:

[Mugabe] said the party must establish an almost military/warlike leadership which will deliver. The president and first secretary said the party must mobilise massively to achieve a resounding victory in the run-off. He said party members must understand this was a sink-or-swim election.

Mugabe is said to have come up with this 'warlike' strategy after meeting his JOC advisors before the April Politburo meeting. The import of this was to reduce the run-off contest to a battle between the bullet and the ballot. In this battle, ZANU-(PF) was making it starkly clear that in its political world, the bullet is supreme and the ballot is subservient to it. This philosophical line dates back three decades to when, in 1976, the ZANU president and ZANLA commander-in-chief articulated his party's militaristic conception of the source of political authority:

...our votes must go together with our guns; after all any vote ... shall have been the product of the gun. The gun, which provides the votes, should remain its security officer, its guarantor.

This thinking is itself the supreme vitiation of elections as an expression of democratic choice because if the ballot produces a result that is incongruent with the expectations of the gun-wielders, then the bullet will shred the ballot. For ZANU-(PF), elections are a continuation of war by other means. A senior army officer made this unambiguously clear in the run-up to the

run-off when he publicly declared that ZANU-(PF) captured power after a bitter and protracted war and would not surrender the country unless it was defeated by the MDC in a war. In the words of Major-General Engelbert Rugeje: 'This country came through the bullet, not the pencil. Therefore, it will not go by your X of the pencil.' Rugeje also chillingly promised his Masvingo audience of villagers that on his return after the vote, 'the helicopter will be full of bullets. In the northern part of the country in Mashonaland West, soldiers reportedly handed out bullets to villagers and told them: 'If you vote for MDC in the presidential run-off election, you have seen the bullets; we have enough for each one of you, so beware.' Mugabe, the soldiers' Commander-in-Chief, endorsed this view. At one of his election rallies, he warned: 'We fought for this country, and a lot of blood was shed. We are not going to give up our country because of a mere X. How can a ballpoint fight with a gun?' Mugabe's Commander of the Defence Forces then put the matter to rest by predicting a resounding electoral triumph for his political boss: 'Our comrade, Defence Forces chief, our leader President Mugabe and comrade-in-arms will romp to victory. We say so because we have no apology to make to any house nigger and puppets.' (Linington, 2008).

The military factor in the run-off election was so dominant and visible that to many critical observers, the military had covertly taken over and had become the arbiter of Zimbabwe's fate. There were reports of a 'military coup by stealth', with Mugabe being ' beholden to his senior generals to hold office' but more as the regime's titular leader. A Human Rights Watch Zimbabwe specialist, Tiseke Kasambala, noted an 'increasing militarisation of the state' and that evidence pointed to 'an increasing role by the army in state affairs.' According to her, 'The army is no longer just in barracks, waiting to protect the country. The army is out there, taking a role in the day-to-day government of the country'. In early June 2008 Tsvangirai himself claimed that 'the country has witnessed a de facto coup d'état and is now effectively run by a military junta.'

The period between 29 March and 27 June 2008 gave the strong impression that the ZDF were little more than ZANU-(PF) in uniform. For instance, a month before the run-off election, Army Chief of Staff Major-General Martin Chedondo made this unambiguously clear when he addressed soldiers:

The Constitution says the country should be protected by voting and in the 27 June presidential election run-off pitting our defence chief, Cde Robert Mugabe, and Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC-T, we should, therefore, stand behind our Commander-in-Chief. Soldiers are not

apolitical. Only mercenaries are apolitical. We have signed and agreed to fight and protect the ruling party's principles of defending the revolution. If you have other thoughts, then you should remove that uniform.

As if not to be outdone by the gun-wielders, members of ZANU-(PF)'s political class echoed the same militaristic sentiments, and just as chillingly. The then Finance Minister Samuel Mumbengegwi was reported to have equated an MDC victory with a declaration of war. Addressing school heads in Masvingo province, he admonished: 'This is up to you, if you want peace, you vote for us. If you vote for the MDC, we will go to war.' The same function was addressed by then Masvingo Resident Minister and Governor, Willard Chiwewe, who bluntly decreed that Zimbabweans had no choice but vote for ZANU-(PF). 'This is a choice with no choice. It's either you vote for war or peace.'

More fundamentally, the above statements betray two radically different conceptions of the sources of power and legitimacy. In the ZANU-(PF) political world, legitimacy and power flowed from the barrel of the gun – and also from God, in the case of Mugabe – and not from the ballot. On the other hand, the MDC-T continued to invest faith in the ballot as the only viable source of power and legitimacy. The 27 June moment was therefore a contest between these two conceptions and, as it turned out, the ZANU-(PF) conception 'won' the game.

2.9 The Political Environment: The Reign of Fear

By all accounts, the inter-election period was one of the most traumatic and abnormal political situations in the country. Richard Joseph's observation in February 2008 that 'the notion of an electoral process in Zimbabwe with Mugabe at the controls can only be described as Orwellian' was more apt in respect of the run-off election. Terence Ranger sums up the 'abnormal' period:

It is hard to comprehend how abnormal the situation in Zimbabwe has been between the March and June elections. Zimbabwe has had no parliament although all the MPs have been elected. The new parliamentarians have not met to elect a Speaker. Several MDC MPs have been arrested on charges ranging from child abduction to organising violence; many others are in hiding. There have been no functioning city councils or mayors even though a full slate of councillors was elected in March. The elected councillors in Harare met on private premises and chose themselves a mayor, but the only – and terrible – result of that was that his wife was abducted and brutally killed. Not surprisingly, no mayors have been elected elsewhere. Zimbabwe cities have been 'in commission.' Zimbabwe has hardly had a functioning civil society. Its human rights bodies have been raided and all non-governmental organisations have

been prevented from operating in rural areas. Journalists have been beaten, arrested and killed. Churches have been under pressure, as Mugabe has declared his desire to see every church answerable only to Zimbabweans leaders and committed to the Zimbabwean revolution.

The pre-election context is also well summarized by Timberg (2008):

In three months between the 29th March vote and the June 27 runoff election, ruling-party militias under the guidance of 200 senior army officers battered the Movement for Democratic Change, bringing the opposition party's network of activists to the verge of oblivion. By election-day, more than 80 opposition supporters were dead, hundreds were missing, thousands were injured and hundreds of thousands were homeless. Morgan Tsvangirai, the party's leader, dropped out of the contest and took refuge in the Dutch Embassy.

Timberg (2008) revealed that the brutal campaign was code named CIBD, an acronym for Coercion, Intimidation, Beating, and Displacement. In fact, the vicious campaign went beyond CIBD to include murder. The campaign was code-named 'Operation MakavhoteraPapi' (Operation Who Did You Vote For?). It began in the rural areas, and within them, in the three Mashonaland provinces of Mashonaland West, East and Central. Incidentally and ironically, these were ZANU-(PF) strongholds. The party won sixteen of the eighteen House of Assembly seats in Mashonaland Central, its best performance country-wide. In Mashonaland East, ZANU-(PF) won nineteen of the 23 contested House of Assembly seats and yet it recorded the highest level of violence. From Mashonaland the violence spread to other provinces and from the rural areas the violence spread to the urban centres. In a tragic sense, the whole country was unified, in violence, and its pattern was the same, indicating a central point of organization and execution. The bloody crackdown was reportedly orchestrated and systematically executed by soldiers, police, state security agents, ZANU-(PF) militia and veterans of the liberation war. The violence took the form of intimidation, kidnapping, torture, arson and murder of opposition or suspected opposition leaders, activists and supporters. Many domestic and international observers documented the horrors attendant on the run-off, where Zimbabwe was reduced to a Hobbesian state of nature, in which life became 'solitary, nasty, brutish and short'. Human Rights Watch captured the litany of sordid incidents in its June 2008 report:

There is overwhelming evidence that the organised pattern of abuses have been replicated throughout the provinces. In nearly all the areas affected by violence, victims and eyewitnesses told Human Rights Watch that it was usually conducted at night and was characterised by

abductions, beatings and the looting and burning of huts and other property. ZANU(PF) officials and 'war veterans' are beating and torturing suspected MDC activists and supporters in hundreds of base camps established across the provinces as local centres of operations. ZANU(PF) supporters, government officials, 'war veterans' and state security forces are conducting brutal daily 're-education' meetings in which they beat and at times torture local residents to force them to denounce the MDC and swear allegiance to ZANU(PF). Further, ZANU-(PF) and its allies have gone on a campaign of widespread destruction of property and looting, including the burning of homesteads that has led to thousands of people being internally displaced. There has been a spate of abductions and killings of known MDC activists by suspected agents of the state, ZANU-(PF) supporters and 'war veterans' in the province of Mashonaland East and Harare.

The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) (2008), a local elections watchdog, was equally blunt:

When the results were finally released on 2 May 2008, it took almost two weeks to have the run-off date announced on 15 May 2008 during which the run up to the run-off degenerated into a run over leaving in its wake a trail of destruction, houses burnt down, many people displaced and homeless, many children orphaned, and community relations torn asunder. Freedom of assembly and movement were heavily restricted with rural areas virtually sealed off from opposition rallies, the opposition leadership subjected to sporadic arrests and detentions, their campaign activities under total blackout on national electronic and press media. Hate speech, incitement of violence, and threats of war characterized electoral campaigns, with the ruling party presidential candidate threatening to go back to war if he lost the election to the MDC presidential candidate, whom he considered a puppet of the West.

The observations by ZESN (2008) were confirmed by field reports from other domestic observers, notably the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), a much respected defender and advocate of human rights and social justice dating back to before independence. The CCJP was one of the organizations that decided to observe the run-off election but 'under protest' given the unpropitious conditions obtaining in the post-harmonized elections period. The following field observations from CCJP graphically capture some of aspects of the pre-election environment:

The June 27 run-off election was characterised by a wave of intimidation, torching of houses, beatings, abductions, ceaseless meetings and many other forms of violence. The pre-election

period to this election left the people of Gokwe in total fear and psychological stress. The MDC was not allowed in any form to hold a meeting or any form of gathering. If by any chance they attempt to meet, they (meetings) were either broken away by the Police, Army or the ZANU-PF Youth Militia. In some villages, people who were known to belong to the opposition had their names written down by kraal heads and ruling party leaders – for the purpose of identifying them and dealing with them later in form of murdering them or beating them, denying them food hand-outs and above all, as a threat (CCJP: Diocese of Gokwe).

This Pre-Presidential period (29 March to 27 June 2008) was the most violent and bloody of all post-colonial elections that we have witnessed as an observer group. The most primitive and uncivilised methods and tactics were used in this supposedly modern day election. Only ZANU PF rallies were witnessed throughout the Diocese. The rallies were not attended out of one's choice or free will. People were forced to go to rallies in all the rural areas of Masvingo. Violence was intense. It was manifested in four major ways: intimidation, beatings, killings and arson. All forms of threats were used from verbal to physical threats. Youth (ZANU PF) and militia established bases which in other words could be termed as torture camps (CCJP: Diocese of Masvingo). The superficial and negative peaceful environment that prevailed prior to the harmonised 29th March Election has been turned into a turmoil of direct and open violence, torture, beatings, arson, abductions, kidnapping and mass displacement, initiated and spearheaded by government agencies, security forces (military junta), war veterans, youths militias and ZANU- PF supporters. The period between March 29 2008 and June 27 2008, the date set for the runoff elections thus can be described as 'days of Armageddon' for the Zimbabwean populace (CCJP: Manicaland, 2008).

Two weeks before polling day, the CCJP was compelled to issue a stinging press statement on the pre-run-off environment.

The reign of violence that has been unleashed on the country, especially in the rural areas and former commercial farming areas, is unacceptable. Base camps from which militias terrorise defenceless rural populations must be disbanded as a matter of urgency. People are being force-marched to political re-orientation meetings and

are told that they voted 'wrongly' in the Presidential poll on 29 March 2008 and that on 27 June 2008, they will be given the last opportunity to 'correct their mistake', else the full-scale shooting war of the 1970s will resume. It is in this context that despicable atrocities are being committed by members of both contesting parties, ZANU PF and MDC.

Many other observers – regional and international, friend and foe – of Zimbabwe’s post-harmonized elections scene arrived at the same verdict. For instance, the Pan-African Parliament Observer Mission which arrived in the country on 14 June 2007 to observe the run-off warned that ‘violence is at the top of the agenda of this electoral process’ and that it had received ‘many horrendous stories. The election is a far cry from what we had [in March].’ Tanzanian Foreign Minister Bernard Membe, speaking on behalf of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security lamented the dim prospects for a free and fair election: ‘There is every sign that these elections will never be free nor fair.’

Across the Atlantic both the United States and the United Nations expressed their deep anxiety with Condoleezza Rice, then United States Secretary of State, accusing the Mugabe regime of having given up ‘any pretence that the 27 June elections will be allowed to proceed in a free and fair manner’. Five days before polling, the UN Security Council unanimously condemned the politically motivated violence: ‘The Security Council regrets that the campaign of violence and the restrictions on the political opposition have made it impossible for a free and fair election to take place on 27 June.’

The environment was such that Tsvangirai went into self-imposed exile for six weeks soon after the March 2008 elections for fear of assassination attempts. He returned to Zimbabwe on 24 May but his campaign was consistently blocked or frustrated; he was arrested or detained on several occasions until he gave up the fight.

These were the conditions in which the run-off election was to be conducted. It is evident that the prevailing conditions were inimical to a fair, free and credible election. It should be noted that ZANU-(PF) not only rejected allegations of state-instigated violence and its central role in it but actually blamed the MDC for the violence. Mugabe and his security chiefs constantly warned the MDC against perpetrating violence. Genocide Watch, a human rights group, calls this phenomenon ‘mirroring’ and describes it as ‘a strange but common psychological mechanism of denial used by mass murderers.’

For instance, in late May 2008, the Police Commissioner General Augustine Chihuri said: ‘The nation is facing a myriad of challenges and machinations by external forces and their internal sympathisers, who I normally call puppets. Its very existence and survival is threatened by these puppets and their handlers.’ But what motivated the ZANU-(PF) regime to behave in the manner it did? Various explanations can be offered.

2.10 Towards Explaining the Scorched-earth Campaign

As already noted, ZANU-(PF) lost its parliamentary majority for the first time since the watershed independence elections and its leader personally lost a presidential contest, coming second to his arch-rival Morgan Tsvangirai, the man he publicly despised for his modest education. Mugabe must have felt a sense of grievous personal loss and humiliation and his power base – the military/security establishment – also got angry on his behalf. The loss had to be avenged, and those who had caused it – the MDC in particular and the voters in general – had to be ‘disciplined’ for their ‘delinquent’ conduct on 29 March 2008.

But why target ZANU-(PF)’s own support base and strongholds? For ZANU-(PF), it was more hurtful to lose a single seat in its traditional strongholds than to lose all seats in the ‘enemy’s’. So, while it was understandable for the party to lose all seats, as it did, in Bulawayo, it was unforgivable to lose two out of eighteen seats in Mashonaland Central, or four of the 23 seats in Mashonaland East. This partly (if not largely) explains why the epicentre of the strategy of ‘electoral cleansing’ was in the Mashonaland provinces and within them in those constituencies where it lost or won marginally. Even in constituencies where it won, the brutal campaign visited those areas whose polling stations had recorded a loss for the party or where a large opposition vote had been recorded. ZANU-(PF) treated those who voted for the opposition in its traditional backyard as stray voters, who, like stray animals, had to be brought back into the kraal, but after some whipping. They had to be taught not to go astray next time. A party politburo member provides evidence of this line of thinking when, quoted anonymously, he warned the ‘stray voters’: ‘We’re giving the people of Zimbabwe another opportunity to mend their ways, to vote properly ... this is their last chance.’

This line of argument was earlier articulated by Bratton and Masunungure (2008):

The objective was to kill MDC officials and polling agents, displace qualified electoral officials such as teachers, and punish known MDC supporters. The targets of intimidation were not so much the solid MDC strongholds in the cities and the southwest, but politically contested areas in the country’s middle belt and northeast where, in the first round of the election, voters had swung away from ZANU-(PF) and toward the MDC.

Bratton and Masunungure (2008) contend that the object of electoral cleansing was to create 'no-go zones' 'where the ZANU-(PF) monopoly could be enforced at the local level through the direct and demonstration effects of violence'. To reinforce this, the regime banned the operations of virtually all NGOs operating in rural areas, especially those delivering humanitarian relief. The consequent human suffering was comprehensive and unprecedented; it was a scorched-earth policy which was comparable in its ferocity and objectives to the Gukurahundi campaign of the early 1980s. It was as if the regime was guided by Emperor Caligula's philosophy: 'Let them hate as long as they fear.' The fear was guaranteed to deliver victory for Mugabe, and the party was emphatic about this. For instance, one senior ZANU-(PF) leader told Robyn Dixon of The Los Angeles Times: 'There is no way we are to lose the runoff. We are going to make sure of that. If we lose the runoff, then the army will take over. Never be fooled that Tsvangirai will rule this country. Never.'

Associated with the above reasons is a deeply rooted sense of ZANU-(PF) entitlement to rule, and to do so for eternity. The top ZANU-(PF) political generation and its allies in the military/security establishment have an 'end of history' perspective to the liberation struggle and the achievement of independence in 1980. The attainment of Uhuru through a protracted liberation struggle against settler colonialism marked the end of all struggles, and the triumph of ZANU-(PF) was the last triumph. 1980 marked the victory of light over darkness, and in this line of thinking any other struggle in Zimbabwe would be tantamount to an attempt to bring back darkness. This thinking leads ZANU-(PF) to brag that it delivered democracy and therefore there cannot be any other democratic struggle. In short, retaining power in ZANU-(PF) is a historical imperative. In effect then, by posing a real challenge to take power from the anointed ruling party, the MDC was not only trying to 'reverse the gains of the revolution,' but was also challenging history by so doing. This is the context in which threats to 'go back to the bush' should be understood. For instance, two weeks before the run-off, Mugabe told youth members of his ZANU-(PF) party that the war veterans from Zimbabwe's 1970s war of independence had told him they would launch a new bush war if the election was won by the opposition leader Tsvangirai.

They came to my office after the [first round of] elections and asked me: 'Can we take up arms? They said this country was won by the barrel of the gun and should we let it go at the stroke of a pen? Should one just write an X and then the country goes just like that?'

The old guard in ZANU-PF) and the military/security sector is locked into this ‘end of history’ paradigm and cannot accept let alone appreciate anything that is not explicable within the parameters of this paradigm. This is one of the tragedies of electoral democracy in Zimbabwe.

However one explains the motives behind the architects of Operation MakavhoteraPapi, the bottom line is that they wanted to raise the cost of participating in opposition politics and supporting the opposition MDC candidate in the run-off election. The organizers and implementers of the Operation constricted the space so much and lowered the bar so low that it became practically impossible for opposition politics to function. The strategy succeeded and the cost of opposition politics became so high that even the candidate himself was forced not only to withdraw from the race but to immediately seek refuge in the Dutch Embassy in fear for his life.

2.11 Tsvangirai’s Withdrawal and the One-candidate Election

On 22 June, just five days before the run-off, the MDC-T candidate Morgan Tsvangirai held a press conference at which he announced his withdrawal from the run-off, citing eight reasons for pulling out; central to these was the intense and widespread violence and intimidation. ‘We in the MDC cannot ask [voters] to cast their vote on the 27th when that vote would cost them their lives,’ Tsvangirai said, and urged the United Nations and African Union to intervene to prevent ‘genocide’. He gave statistics of the victims of the violence as of that day: 86 deaths, 10,000 homes destroyed, 200,000 displaced, and 10,000 injured. He noted that:

The victims have been MDC supporters. The violence has been clearly state- sponsored and carried out in most cases by members of the Zimbabwe National Army and ZANU-(PF) militia. It is true that in some instances our supporters have fought back, in most cases in self-defence. Because of our inability to access the rural areas, the above statistics may be understated.

Soon after the press conference, Tsvangirai sought refuge in the Dutch Embassy but the government and ZANU-PF) derided Tsvangirai’s pull-out and his safety fears as groundless and a ploy to seek international attention and sympathy. The electoral body also refused to accept Tsvangirai’s withdrawal and kept his name on the ballot paper. The ZEC chairman actually boasted that he was ready looking forward ‘to a credible election’. He also rejected other accusations levelled against ZEC:

- *that the armed forces had been forced to vote for a particular candidate – he dismissed this as ‘general allegations’ and that he had been assured by the commanding officers that ‘nothing*

of the sort had happened'; • that observers had been barred from witnessing the postal ballot process – Chiweshe said the law did not provide for the presence of observers but only a competent witness; • that there had been a dramatic increase in the number of postal ballots (which allegedly increased from 8,000 to 64,000 postal applications) – the ZEC said this was because members of the army had also submitted returns unlike in March when only police officers applied for this facility; and • that the public media was biased against the MDC – the ZEC said it had not received any formal complaint from MDC-T about equal access to public media coverage.

Oblivious of Tsvangirai's withdrawal and the inauspicious electoral environment, the ZEC went ahead with the run-off election with Robert Mugabe as the remaining candidate. There were 1,958 ward collation centres and 210 constituency collation centres and a national command centre was established in Harare.

The administrative and logistical arrangements for the election were adjudged by observers to have been satisfactory but there were many irregularities that compounded an already anomalous situation of having a one-race contest in an environment drenched in blood. These included demands by ZANU-(PF) local leaders and activists that voters record the serial numbers on their ballots and hand this information over to ZANU-(PF) 'wardens' together with their personal details. This was supposedly to enable the 'wardens' to check on who the voters had voted for. Another irregularity was forcing voters to first assemble at the headman's homestead where they would be given numbers after which they would proceed to the polling station led by their kraal heads. Yet another irregularity was that voters suspected of being opposition members or sympathisers were required by local ZANU-(PF) leaders to feign illiteracy – no matter how well educated – so that they would be 'assisted' to vote. They would then proclaim their preference to vote 'paMasvingo' (the ZANU-(PF) logo) meaning a preference for Robert Mugabe.

The strategic aim of the aggressive ZANU-(PF) campaign was to ensure its candidate's victory. But an equally important aim was for Mugabe to win 'resoundingly' so as to shame the party's detractors, and to ensure high voter turn-out another 'operation' was mounted just before polling and this was dubbed 'Operation Red Finger': to avoid voting twice, each voter was required to dip a finger in red ink that is visible but indelible and the message spread by ZANU(PF) was that anyone who would not have voted (and therefore without a red finger) was going to be classified as an MDC person and subjected to the same 'disciplinary' action

as meted out under Operation MakavhoteraPapi. As a result, many people in the rural areas – but also in some urban areas – were compelled to go and vote just in order to secure the much valued red finger. This is how ZESN (2008) described voting day:

The Polling Day was characterized by poor voter turnout in urban areas, an extraordinarily high number of spoilt ballots [39,975 in the March Election against 131,481 in the June Election] with a significant number reportedly carrying insulting messages, an unusually high number of assisted voters, and recording of serial numbers – incidents that point to a banal breach of voter rights and secrecy. In most rural constituencies, voters were reportedly herded to polling stations by traditional leaders and allegedly instructed to vote for the ruling party candidate. They were also ordered to record their ballot papers' serial numbers and would after polling give them to the local leaders. Soldiers and police presence was reportedly heavy, in some cases their presence overshadowing that of voters.

Table 1 shows the results of the 27 June run-off election and Table 2 compares the results of the March presidential election to those of the run-off election. It is clear from the results that Mugabe had won in the manner he and his party had intended, i.e. with a landslide. Compared to the March election, he had increased his votes by more than one million and spectacularly recovered from winning 43.2 per cent of the votes in March to 85.5 per cent, thus doubling his share. As already noted, Tsvangirai formally withdrew from the presidential race but ZEC decided to go ahead nonetheless. The results showed that Tsvangirai received nearly a quarter of a million votes and in some cases, notably in Bulawayo; he won more votes than Mugabe. Voter turnout in the run-off was almost exactly the same as that for March harmonized elections (42.37 per cent to 42.7 per cent). Another visible feature of the run-off election was the unusually high number of spoilt ballots, more than treble those of the harmonized elections. There were even the bizarre cases – especially in Bulawayo – of the number of spoilt ballots at a polling station being higher than those of the winning candidate. It was also noteworthy that unlike in the March elections, when it took the electoral body over four weeks to announce the results, for the 27 June run-off ZEC only took two days to announce the final results, and within a few hours the winning candidate had been crowned the President of Zimbabwe.

How did observers assess the run-off election? There was near-unanimity that the elections were far from free and fair. Below is a sample of opinions expressed by the observers from the SADC, Pan-African Parliament and the African Union.

The pre-election phase was characterised by politically motivated violence, intimidation, and displacements. The process leading up to the presidential run-off elections held on 27 June 2008 did not conform to SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. However, the Election Day was peaceful. Based on the above mentioned observations, the Mission is of the view that the prevailing environment impinged on the credibility of the electoral process. The elections did not represent the will of the people of Zimbabwe.

2.12. Table 1: Run-off Presidential results by province

Province	Robert Mugabe	Morgan Tsvangirai	Rejected/Spoilt votes	Total Votes
Bulawayo	21,127	13,291	9,166	43,584
Mash. West	25,699	18,459	10,821	285,979
Masvingo	321,404	12,804	7,940	343,948
Mat. North	84,185	40,099	9,907	134,191
Mat. South	92,654	21,687	7,353	121,694
Midlands	302,407	33,555	19,438	355,400
Manicaland	323,284	29,561	17,525	370,370
Harare	156,478	48,307	36,547	241,232
Mash. Central	276,912	4,066	3,409	284,337
Mash. East	315,119	11,171	7,675	333,965
TOTAL	2,150,269	233,000	129,781	2,514,750

2.13. Table 2: Results of Presidential Elections- March and June 2008

First Round	Robert Mugabe	Morgan Tsvangirai	Simba Makoni	Langton Towungana	Total Valid
Popular vote	1,079,730	1,195,562	207,470	43,584	2,497,265
Percentage	43.2	47.9	8.3	0.6	100
Spoilt					39,975
Second Round					
Popular vote	2,150,269	233,00			2,383,269
Percentage	85.5	9.3			100

Spoilt					131,481
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Source ZEC: 2008.

The prevailing political environment throughout the country was tense, hostile and volatile as it was characterised by an electoral campaign marred by high levels of intimidation, violence, displacement of people, abductions, and loss of life. In view of the above the Mission concludes that the current atmosphere prevailing in the country did not give rise to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections.

The poll was peaceful and held in accordance with the electoral laws of Zimbabwe;

There was violence in the run down to the elections; The fear of violence deterred popular participation in the electoral process; There was no equitable access to the Public Media. Against the backdrop of the foregoing factors, in the context of the AU Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, it is the considered view of the African Union Observer Mission that the Election process fell short of accepted AU standards. (my emphasis)

From whatever angle one looks at the 27 June presidential election, one thing reverberates: they were heavily militarized and the resultant ballot was more a barometer of people's fears than of people's choices. It was, in every sense, a choice-less election that failed to settle the question of who should legitimately lead the people of Zimbabwe. Rather than resolving the legitimacy question, the run-off election deepened it. This set the stage for the search for a non-electoral solution to the Zimbabwean crisis.

Elections to choose who will govern us are supposed to be political processes whose result is often indeterminate. This was the case with the 29 March harmonized elections in which politicians campaigned politically for the free expression of the people's choice. This element of free choice is precisely what the architects of Operation MakavhoteraPapi wanted to eliminate and replace with a predetermined outcome. To this extent, the political process was overthrown and in its place came a militarized process in which the military elite came to the aid of their political counterparts in a toxic combination of ZANU-(PF) and the military/security complex. In this political-military alliance, the military was the dominant player and this robbed the electoral process of its political character. In the process, the winds of democratic change were defied; a peaceful, election-centred process of transition away from

authoritarianism and towards democracy was interrupted. This research submits that the 27 June 2008 presidential runoff election was a militarized election without a choice.

2.14 General Elections in March 2008

The run-up to the March 2008 parliamentary and presidential elections differed significantly from elections in 2000 and 2002 because there was far less violence (Human Rights Watch, 2008). However, the serious flaws that marked those elections and the 2005 parliamentary elections remained, and included a partisan and inadequately prepared electoral commission, concerns about pre-poll rigging, unequal access to the state media, and government restrictions on the rights to freedom of association, assembly and expression. ZANU-PF supporters were implicated in serious incidents of violence and intimidation against MDC activists, and the use of food and agricultural inputs as political tools against the opposition. Prior to the March 29 elections, Human Rights Watch expressed serious concerns about the possibility of post-electoral violence due to the flawed nature of the electoral process and the failure of the government to address persistent political intolerance and impunity in Zimbabwe since the 2000 elections.

Human Rights Watch (2008) observes that despite these pre-electoral conditions, ZANU-PF suffered an extraordinary and unexpected defeat at the hands of the MDC in parliamentary elections. The release of the results of the presidential elections, which took place on the same day, was delayed by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) after the ruling party questioned the validity of both the parliamentary and presidential elections. The ZEC called for a recount in 23 constituencies, but this brought no significant changes in the results. The delay in the announcement of the presidential results seriously heightened political tensions in the country. On May 2, more than a month after the general election, the ZEC finally announced the presidential results with Morgan Tsvangirai winning 47.9 percent of the vote and the incumbent Robert Mugabe winning 43.2 percent. Under Zimbabwe's electoral laws, the failure of the leading candidate to win a 50 percent plus one vote majority necessitated a run-off between the two leading candidates, which the ZEC set for June 27.

2.15 State-Sponsored Violence and Torture since the March 29 Elections

According to Human Rights Watch (2008) since the March 29 elections ZANU-PF quickly responded to the loss of its parliamentary majority for the first time since independence and its leader finishing second in the presidential vote by unleashing a systematic and brutal campaign violence against the MDC. Those leading the campaign dubbed it 'Operation

Makavhoterapapi?’ (Operation Who Did You Vote For?). There was overwhelming evidence that the organized pattern of abuse were replicated throughout the provinces. In nearly all the areas affected by violence, victims and eyewitnesses told Human Rights Watch that it was usually conducted at night and was characterized by abductions, beatings and the looting and burning of huts and other property.

ZANU-PF officials and ‘war veterans’ were beating and torturing suspected MDC activists and supporters in hundreds of base camps established across the provinces as local centres of operations. ZANU-PF supporters, government officials, ‘war veterans’ and state security forces conducted brutal daily ‘re-education’ meeting in which they beat and at times tortured local residence to force them to denounce the MDC and swear allegiance to ZANU-PF. Further, ZANU-PF and its allies embarked on a campaign of widespread destruction of property and looting, including burning of homesteads, that led to thousands of people being internally displaced. There was a spate of abductions and killings of known MDC activists by suspected agents of the state, ZANU-PF supporters and ‘war veterans’ in the province of Mashonaland East and in Harare. Interviews by Human Rights Watch with more than 60 victims and eyewitnesses indicated that the violence was concentrated in areas traditionally viewed by ZANU-PF as ‘strongholds’, in the provinces of Mashonaland West, Mashonaland East and Mashonaland Central, as well as the provinces of Manicaland, Masvingo and the capital Harare. Human Rights Watch also documented other incidents of violence in Midlands, Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South provinces.

2.16 Reasons for the Violence

The website [http:// www.kubatana. net](http://www.kubatana.net) states that for the very first time in its history, ZANU-PF either suffered heavy losses or won by much narrower margins than it expected in its ‘strongholds’ in the parliamentary elections. For example, in Mashonaland Central, one of the areas of rampant ZANU-PF violence, ZANU-PF actually won 16 of the contested House of Assembly seats. In Mashonaland East, another area that saw high levels of ZANU-PF violence it won 19 of the contested House of Assembly seats. However, closer scrutiny of the polling station results indicated that the MDC made significant in-roads in each of these provinces, losing by much narrower margins than ZANU-PF had anticipated. In other violence-affected provinces such as Masvingo and Manicaland, ZANU-PF lost constituencies that it had previously held to the MDC. The violence appeared to be intended to punish Zimbabweans who voted for the MDC on March 29, in particular those who voted in the ‘strongholds’. It was used to deter people from voting for the MDC and to persuade them to vote for ZANU-PF

during the presidential run-off. Finally, it was used to change the political landscape of rural areas by effectively displacing and disenfranchising the voting rights of known MDC members and supporters.

The scope and scale of the post-election violence far exceeded that seen during past election years of 2000, 2002 and 2005. Local human rights organizations reported thousands of incidences of violence throughout the country since April. For example, on May 8, the Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights (ZADHR) reported that it had documented 900 victims of organized violence and torture, including 22 deaths, in the post-election period. As of May 27, Human Rights Watch had confirmed at least 36 deaths and found that the number of confirmed victims of violence and torture across the country had risen to almost 2000. Nearly all were MDC activists or people perceived to have voted for the MDC. Some had been observers from the independent Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN).

ZANU-PF supporters and their allies did not find it necessary to prove that a person voted for the MDC before meting out 'punishment'. Instead they examined results posted outside polling stations to identify areas where people voted for MDC in large numbers, even if the MDC lost to ZANU-PF in those areas. For example, a 26-year old man from Mudzi, Mashonaland East was beaten by ZANU-PF youth simply because they believed he was an MDC member. He told Human Rights Watch:

They surrounded my place around midnight on April 13. They were 30 ZANU-PF youth and war veterans. They broke down the door and tied my hands and took me. I was beaten with logs until 8 am. I was accused of being an MDC member and sell-out.

In Mudzi, Mashonaland East, victims told Human Rights Watch that ZANU-PF supporters accused MDC officials and polling agents of 'bringing the disease of MDC into the area,' necessitating a cleansing process that would be achieved through beating people into repentance. In Vhombozi village, Mudzi, Mashonaland East, ZANU-PF supporters went on a witch-hunt for those suspected of having voted for the MDC in order to punish them. A 41-year old man told Human Rights Watch how a group of suspected ZANU-PF supporters attacked him in his home on the night of April 11:

I noticed that my neighbour's hut was on fire, more people (ZANU-PF supporters) came from a maize field where they were hiding. They were more than 20 in number and dragged me about 500 metres from my hut. There they began beating me with wooden logs on the buttocks

for at least 20 minutes. They burnt down my hut, together with a heap of maize and sorghum. They also stole my sewing machine and radio. They said I was a friend of an MDC activist and therefore must also be an MDC activist myself who must be punished for helping to betray the country. One of the people was shouting saying, 'You sell-out, why did you vote for MDC?' Those who beat me said ZANU-PF would not tolerate sell-outs; among them were two women who also participated in beating me. As a result of the beatings I fractured my left arm and suffered badly swollen fingers.

In Mutoko, Mashonaland East on the night of April 10, ZANU-PF supporters brutally beat about 20 men suspected of voting for the MDC before the entire village. A 45-year old man told Human Rights Watch that the ZANU-PF supporters used whips, chains and iron bars to beat him and they broke his left leg below the knee. They repeatedly said that his 'crime' was that he voted for the MDC during the elections.

2.17 Incitement and Organization of the Violence

Human Rights Watch (2008) suggest that as in the elections of 2000 and 2002, the post-election violence in 2008 did not arise spontaneously. It has credible evidence that senior security officers at the local and national level of government were organizing and inciting the violence. Human Rights Watch researchers interviewed more than 60 victims and eyewitnesses who implicated by name local headsmen, ZANU-PF councillors, MPs, and supporters who were working closely with senior ranking army officers, police and prison officers, and agents from the CIO. The government sought to hide its role in the abuses by using groups of war veterans and youth militias as proxy forces to commit violent acts. However, Human Rights Watch investigations uncovered links between the government and ZANU-PF, the youth militia, and 'war veterans' involved in serious human rights violations. This includes evidence that those who directly committed abuses were acting under the orders or with the acquiescence or complicity of senior ranking army and other security officers.

2.18 The Role of the Joint Operation Command

Human Rights Watch (2008) had information from credible sources in the police and prison services, as well as from victims and eyewitnesses that Operation Makavhoterapapi was planned and orchestrated under the direction and command of the government's Joint Operations Command (JOC). The JOC is comprised of the heads of Zimbabwe's security forces: the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, police, and CIO and prison services. The then minister of Rural Housing, Emmerson Mnangagwa, who was implicated in abuses in Matabeleland in

the 1980s, was reported to be in charge of the JOC. According to the Zimbabwe *Independent*, Mnangagwa replaced then minister of State Security Didymus Mutasa as head of the JOC soon after March 29.

JOC members made clear their support for the ZANU-PF government rather than the Constitution. For example, General Constantine Chiwenga was quoted in the *Standard* newspaper in March before the elections as saying that ‘the army would not support or salute sell-outs and agents of the West before, during and after the presidential elections’, a clear reference to the MDC. On May 31, Chief of staff Major General Martin Chedondo said, ‘Soldiers are not apolitical; only mercenaries are apolitical. We should therefore stand behind our commander in chief...If you have other thoughts, then you should remove that uniform’.

2.19 The Role of Police and Prison Service Officers

Human Rights Watch (2008) observes that some senior ranking police officers were ordering and inciting subordinates to commit politically motivated violence. It interviewed two police officers who reported that from May 6 to 9, 2008, different teams of senior police officers from Police Headquarters addressed members of the police force at all police camps in Harare province. The then Officer Commanding Harare Province, law and order police Boyson Mathema reportedly called for the meetings, dubbed ‘Police Project Meetings,’ which were addressed by senior police officers. According to the officers interviewed by Human Rights Watch, the message sent to the police camps was basically the same: MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai would never rule the country and that the police should be ready to go to war if Tsvangirai won a second round of elections. They said that senior officers threatened the lower ranking officers and told them that they were aware that a significant percentage of the police forces had voted for the MDC, but they would not be allowed to ‘sell out’ the country. According to the officers, this message was repeated at similar meetings throughout the country.

As indicated above, members of the police force were implicated in widespread post-electoral abuses around the country, including but not limited to politically motivated arrests, beatings, and torture. Victims informed Human Rights Watch that senior police officers in the provinces of Mashonaland East and in Manicaland were actively involved in inciting violence and carrying out attacks. For example, Human Rights Watch gathered evidence from three persons who were attacked by ‘war veterans’ and police in unrelated incidents that then Police Assistant

Commissioner Martin Kwainona of the Presidential Guard was allegedly involved in inciting, leading and perpetrating violence in Mt Darwin, Mashonaland Central.

A 43-year old man told Human Rights Watch:

I was an MDC polling agent. On April 17, Martin Kwainona came to my house at 10am and accused me of having insulted a member of ZANU-PF. He begun assaulting me saying he was going to clear all MDC members from Mt Darwin. He arrested me and took me to Dotito police station where he instructed police to beat me up. I was beaten by police for two days in police custody. I was set free on April 20 when I came to Harare.

A 48 year old man told Human Rights Watch that Martin Kwainona threatened all the people attending a gathering at Tsengurwe Secondary school in Mt Darwin on April 18 saying: ‘All MDC members in Mt Darwin must be made to disappear, we are busy training our youths to do just that.’ According to the man, Kwainona went on to say that ‘MDC people surrender and rejoin ZANU-PF because we are going to vote again. If you don’t, we know you, and will come for you. We will never be ruled by Tsvangirai’.

A 28 year old woman on April 16 witnessed Martin Kwainona beating a person at Dotito police station in Mt Darwin. She told Human Rights Watch:

Four police officers came to my home and arrested me and took me in a private car to Dotito police station. They beat me with batons for more than 30 minutes. At the police station the Officer in Charge Sergeant (name withheld) said, ‘Here we in Mt Darwin South our commander is Martin Kwainona.’ I was detained overnight and beaten again, several times during the night and was released on April 17. As I was leaving the police station I saw a person being brought into the station by Kwainona. Martin Kwainona was beating him as he took him into the station. I heard him say to the police officers in the station, ‘Go and fix MDC members for the next 21 days, beat them till they reveal their plans about betraying the country,’

Victims and eyewitnesses named at least three other senior police and prison service officers as organizing and participating in violence in Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West and Mashonaland Central provinces.

Human Rights Watch also spoke to three officers from the Zimbabwe prison services who described the systematic deployment of senior prison officers to various provinces to oversee

Operation Makavhoterapapi, under the direct command of the JOC. According to the officers, at least five senior prison officers from Harare Central Prison were deployed to provinces in Mashonaland Central, Manicaland and Mashonaland East in the weeks after the March 29 elections.

2.20 Defence Force Involvement in Acts of Violence and Torture

Numerous victims and eyewitnesses described to Human Rights Watch the direct involvement of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (comprised of the Zimbabwe National Army and the Zimbabwe Air Force) in acts of violence and torture. The army was implicated in committing abuses such as beatings and torture, carrying out nightly raids in search of MDC activists and perceived MDC supporters, as well as providing logistical and other forms of support to ‘war veterans’ and ZANU-PF supporters to enable them to carry out acts of violence. As described above, the army perpetrated much of the violence in the capital Harare in April. In a May 2008 statement, the army denied involvement, stating the army ‘categorically distances itself and any of its members from such activities.’ However, Human Rights Watch found numerous instances of army involvement in acts of violence and torture that could not have taken place without the knowledge of senior army officers. In some cases, senior serving and retired military officers themselves directly participated in the violence.

A court case brought before the High Court of Zimbabwe on May 19 highlights the army’s involvement in violence. In his petition the late Eric Matinenga, an MDC member of parliament for Buhera West, Manicaland, alleged that the Zimbabwe Defence Forces were in fundamental breach of the Constitution of Zimbabwe and the Defence Act because of unlawful activities they were carrying out in Buhera West and other rural areas. These included the alleged subjection of MDC supporters to harassment, assault and humiliation. Matinenga named the Commander of the Zimbabwe Defence forces General Constantine Chiwenga and Major Svosve, a company commander in Buhera West. (Several local contacts and eyewitnesses who spoke to Human Rights separately identified Major Svosve as being present during attacks in Buhera West.)

In another case, five individuals told Human Rights Watch that a senior army officer from Harare was directing and inciting the violence from 3 Brigade, the provincial base of the army in Mutare, Manicaland province. Others said the ‘war veterans’ and ZANU-PF youths and supporters were operating from 3 Brigade army barracks and were assisting the army by pointing out houses of MDC activists and compiling lists of MDC activists.

One person, a prominent MDC activist in Mashonaland East, arrested by the police after ‘war veterans’ abducted and tortured him in Mashonaland East, told Human Rights Watch that a military commander in the Zimbabwe Air Force, Bramwell Kachairo, came to the police station after he heard of the arrest. According to the activist, Kachairo said, ‘I have come to see this MDC thug. I want to see his face.’ He then told him, ‘When you get out of prison I am going to slaughter you and you will be removed from your home.’ The man told Human Rights Watch, ‘Kachairo is the one causing violence.’

Three other people in Mashonaland East named Bramwell Kachairo as being responsible and for organizing and sometimes taking part in the beatings in the province. One told Human Rights Watch that he had seen Kachairo threatening people with groups of ‘war veterans’ in Mashonaland East. He told Human Rights Watch, ‘He is the one leading the violence. He goes around with the youth militia and ‘war veterans’ and is always armed’. Another said, ‘I have seen him beating people in the area. He is very dangerous.’

In Mashonaland West, seven persons who witnessed attacks on MDC activists in the towns of Chinhoyi, Kariba and Hurungwe believe that they were coordinated and directed by Air Marshal Perence Shiri. They said they had witnessed several senior military officers operating under Perence Shiri in these areas. They included a brigadier general and two lieutenant colonels. Human Rights Watch was also to obtain the names and service numbers of three other senior ranking army officers operating in the area.

The following accounts gathered by Human Rights Watch point directly to army involvement in abuses in various provinces. In Mashonaland East, a 26 year old MDC youth activist told Human Rights Watch that on April 15 uniformed and armed soldiers descended on a safe house in Murehwa Town Centre for MDC activists who had fled political violence in rural Murehwa:

At around 7pm on Tuesday, April 15, a pick-up truck arrived at the gate of our safe house with about 15 soldiers in uniform; many of them had rifles and hand guns. One of them pulled out his gun and shouted, ‘We have found the people we are looking for, let us beat them’ and he began to advance towards the house. We all ran in different directions. Unfortunately for me, I panicked and fled into the house where four soldiers followed me and began to beat me with the butts of their guns on the head, saying they were looking for me-but they did not know it was me they were beating. They also used batons to beat me. As I ran towards their truck at the gate, one soldier pulled out a gun and pointed it at my head and tripped me so that I fell to the ground. While I was on the ground more soldiers came to beat me up and to kick me in the

ribs and stomach, after some time I got up and began to run away towards a nearby village. I have a heavily swollen right hand, severe chest pains, as well as pain in my sides and legs, I also have some injuries on my head.

In Zinoro village, Mutoko North district, Mashonaland East a 32 year old man who contested the March 29 elections as an MDC councillor, alleged that he was attacked by soldiers and police officers:

On Saturday April 12, around 9pm, six soldiers in uniform from Joko army barracks (the army barracks in Mutoko) came to Nyamuzuwe Township in four cars, with guns. They were in the company of a Senior Assistant Commissioner from Police support Unit, Everisto Pfumvuti and 'war veterans' from my village.

The soldiers fired their guns into the air and we all fled in different directions. They ran after us, I was caught and beaten using whips, but was later rescued by my MDC colleagues who had regrouped to carry out a rescue operation. We ran for more than 20 kilometres to Mutoko Centre. There I sold my mobile Sim Card to raise money for transport to Harare where we were admitted at (a) clinic on 16 April. I have no idea how my family is now, they were threatening to burn down my house. I fear for my family.

A 32 year old man from Zihute village, Murehwa North, Mashonaland East, told Human Rights Watch:

I was at Murehwa Centre together with many other displaced people at a safe house when on April 15 at 6pm four uniformed soldiers came, armed with guns, and said, 'We want to see your leader here.' People started to flee when they saw raised guns.

We jumped over a security fence, but we were caught by the soldiers and put, two of us, in an unmarked car and driven along Mutoko road towards Joko army barracks in Mutoko. Before we got to Joko army barracks, one of the four soldiers in the car took out a knife from his pocket and aimed to stab me in the chest, I blocked the knife with my open palm and I kicked the door and jumped out of the moving car. I sustained a deep cut inside my right hand- got three stitches, got bruised when I fell from the car. The other person I was abducted with did manage to escape. I do not know what happened to him. I am not going back to my home, it is too dangerous.

2.21 Army Assistance to ZANU-PF Supporters, Youth Militia and War Veterans

Human Rights Watch (2008) suggests it gathered information from more than 20 victims and eyewitnesses that indicate the army's involvement in providing guns and transportation to abusive 'war veterans' and ZANU-PF supporters. Armed 'war veterans' and ZANU-PF supporters were implicated in shooting incidents in Manicaland, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West and Mashonaland Central. 'War veterans' and youth militia were reportedly operating from army bases and camps throughout the country. Victims also reported that in some incidents the 'war veterans' were using army trucks and pick-ups to carry out raids on the homes of MDC activists and supporters.

In some cases 'war veterans' masqueraded as soldiers and wore army uniforms. In one incident a man told Human Rights Watch that he knew that some of the uniformed men who beat him were not soldiers, even though they were dressed as such, because one of the men had 'dreadlocks' and not the customary short hair that all soldiers are required to have in Zimbabwe.

Human Rights Watch (2008) documented several cases where victims and eyewitnesses saw civilians armed with rifles and handguns, in some cases firing at MDC supporters. For instance in Murehwa, a 33 year old man from Munemo village in Murehwa North, Mashonaland East province was shot by a member of ZANU-PF at Murehwa Centre on April 14. He told Human Rights Watch:

On Monday, 14 April as we walked to our MDC offices at Murehwa Centre at Mwamuka turn off, a car with ZANU-PF logo and marked 'ZANU-PF' but without number plates came towards us at full speed. The passenger in the car brought out a gun, then the car deliberately attempted to run us over, and hit three of my colleagues in the legs. Our MDC youth leader, Shingi Nheweyembwa shouted 'Boys get down!' when he saw the passenger in the car pulling out a gun and preparing to fire. I was slow to go down and was shot in the head with a gun. Immediately after being shot I fainted. I do not know what happened to me- I have no recollection of events that followed. I understand police officers manning a traffic road block about 200 metres from where the incident occurred came to our assistance. I do not know the person who shot me, but I know the driver of the vehicle. I was fortunate in that the bullet grazed the back of my head but did not affect the skull, leaving only an open wound on my head.

In another incident in Makoni West, Manicaland, armed 'war veterans' opened fire and shot at a group of MDC supporters, injuring three (Human Rights Watch, 2008). One of the female

supporters, Tabeth Marume, subsequently died from her wounds. The 'war veterans' had set up a makeshift base at Chiwetu Rest Camp from which they abducted, beat and tortured known MDC supporters. On April 23 the war veterans abducted 12 MDC members and took them to the camp where they were beaten. In response, 22 other MDC supporters including Marume went to the camp to negotiate the release of their colleagues.

According to Human Rights Watch (2008) one of the MDC supporters narrated what took place when they got to the camp:

When we got to the base, we were confronted by more than 50 war veterans and ZANU-PF youths, 12 'war veterans' had guns, AK-47 guns [military assault rifles]. They ordered us to sit down. We refused and said we had come to seek the release of our colleagues. I went into a room where our colleagues were being beaten, with hands tied at the back, lying facing the ground, I only managed to untie one colleague when the 'war veterans' fired into the air. Most of my colleagues began to run away, some escaped. The second round of fire was directed at us, and Tabeth Marume was shot in the stomach. Two of my colleagues were also shot, one in the thigh and the other in the calf.

Other 'war veterans' caught me before I could escape and began to beat me with iron bars, one blow was delivered on my left arm and I heard my arm snap and knew straight away that my arm was broken. The bone was protruding through the skin but I forced myself to run away. The next day we organized transport to take us to Mutare Provincial Hospital because there was no medication at Rusape hospital. At this point Tabeth was alive but her bleeding was too much. In the truck that we used to travel to Mutare I held Tabeth's head in my lap, she was in great pain. As we approached Mutare, about 20 kilometres from Mutare she asked me for a glass of water. I gave her just a few drops, then she began to roll her eyes. An old woman with us in the truck simply said, 'She is gone,' and that is how she died.

Human Rights Watch (2008) suggests that the MDC supporter and two others who were involved in the incident identified the 'war veterans' who allegedly had guns as Retired Colonel Daniel Romeo Mutsvunguma, Mapfumo, Chikata, Madondo and Noah Mahwata. Mutsvunguma allegedly fired the shot that killed Tabeth Marume. MDC chairperson Stephen Chigori told Human Rights Watch, 'Retired Colonel Daniel Mutsvunguma shot her. I saw Mutsvunguma fire his gun. I know him very well.'

2.22 Abductions and killings in Mashonaland East and Harare

Human Rights Watch (2008) interviewed several victims and eyewitnesses around the country who implicated ZANU-PF supporters, 'war veterans,' CIO agents and soldiers in the abduction of scores of known MDC activists. Victims of the abductions informed Human Rights Watch that they were taken to military bases or 'war veteran' bases and camps where suspected ZANU-PF supporters, 'war veterans' and soldiers beat and tortured them, including by mutilation. Other victims reported that the perpetrators would take them into the bush or deep into the hills and mountains of the countryside, and beat and torture them before leaving them for dead.

The abductions took an even more disturbing turn with at least five incidents of abductions and killings of known MDC supporters recorded in May. In one particularly horrifying incident, at least 12 suspected ZANU-PF supporters abducted, beat and tortured and murdered three MDC activists on May 7.

Human Rights Watch (2008) interviewed witnesses and relatives of the dead men who said that ZANU-PF supporters ambushed the car of four MDC activists as they were driving to Murehwa in Mashonaland East. One escaped, but Beta Chokururama, Godfrey Kauzani and Cain Nyevehe were pulled from the car and taken away. Chokururama's body was found on May 11 in a river in Murehwa, while the bodies of Kauzani and Nyevehe were found some kilometres away in Goromonzi district on May 17. The eyes of the victims had been gouged out, and their tongues and lips were cut off. Human Rights Watch spoke to medical doctors who confirmed that the men were beaten and tortured.

On May 21, the body of another MDC activist, Tonderai Ndira, was discovered at a mortuary in Parirenyatwa Hospital, Harare. According to relatives who spoke to Human Rights Watch and witnessed the abduction, in the early hours of May 14, 10 armed men, some in police uniform, took Ndira from his home in Mabvuku, Harare and bundled him into a truck. One relative who identified the body of Ndira at the hospital told Human Rights Watch that his eyes had been gouged out, and his tongue and lips cut off. He also had extensive injuries to his head and face, and suspected stab and bullet wounds. Police refused to release his body into the custody of his family for an independent post mortem to be done to ascertain the cause of his death. The body was only handed over to Ndira's family for an independent post mortem and burial after the intervention of lawyers, Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, who secured a court order compelling police to release the body.

On May 22, four persons suspected by eyewitnesses to be CIO agents reportedly abducted the losing senatorial MDC candidate for Murehwa North in Mashonaland East. His body was found in the Goromonzi Mountains, Mashonaland East two days later.

2.23 Torture Camps and Bases in Manicaland, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland West and Masvingo provinces

Human Rights Watch (2008) observes that victims and eyewitnesses from Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland Central, Manicaland and Masvingo spoke about the establishment of torture camps throughout these provinces in the immediate aftermath of the parliamentary and first presidential elections. The camps were used to beat and torture victims and to punish them for voting for the MDC, to extract information from the victims on the whereabouts of the MDC activists and supporters, and finally to force victims to denounce the MDC and swear allegiance to ZANU-PF.

One 36 year old MDC activist who was tortured at a base in Mashonaland East on April 10 told Human Rights Watch:

About 35 people came to my hut around 2am led by our village headman who is also a 'war veteran.' They forced their way into my hut and they dragged me, my mother and wife from the hut and took us two kilometres away into the nearby bush, to their base, where they began to beat us, accusing us of being MDC. They used thick wooden sticks, open palms, clenched fists and booted feet to beat and kick us. We were finally rescued by our colleagues from the MDC who heard our cries and came to our rescue after more than an hour of beatings.

A 32 year old man from Uzumba in Mashonaland East told Human Rights Watch that he was taken to a base called Karimbika on April 11 where he was handcuffed and beaten for a whole night with iron rods, barbed wire and logs. He told Human Rights Watch:

At the base there were nearly 200 ZANU-PF youths. They said 'You people have sold the country to white people, now we are beating you to cleanse you, after this you must repent and apologize because our country cannot go to [UK Prime Minister] Gordon Brown.' I was then ordered to give them all the names of MDC polling agents and I did because I feared for my life. I was released at 11am the following day and told to go back to my house and not leave.

Another man abducted by 'war veterans' on April 11 in Mashonaland East told Human Rights Watch, 'I was taken to a base at Benson Mine. There I saw uniformed soldiers, 'war veterans'

and ZANU-PF youths. They beat me for an hour and poured water on me and said, 'Now you are baptized for re-admittance into ZANU-PF, your sins are forgiven.'

Human Rights Watch (2008) established that there were at least 11 bases in Chipinge East and Central districts, eight bases in Chipinge East and three in Chipinge Central in the province of Manicaland. According to victims and eyewitnesses to the violence, Odzi Country Club in Mutare, Manicaland province was also converted into a base. The base was visited by a Human Rights Watch researcher who witnessed scores of youth militia going through marching drills.

Victims and eyewitnesses informed Human Rights Watch that financing and food for the bases in Manicaland came from the army, and 'war veterans' and ZANU-PF supporters raiding villages and local communities for goats and cattle to slaughter. For example, one victim tortured by 'war veterans' at a base in Makoni North told Human Rights Watch that his torturers boasted they had stolen nine of his goats and the livestock, mainly cattle of other victims to maintain their camp. Other victims told similar stories of finding looted goods and animals at the camps or bases.

A 41 year old man who was tortured at the base in Makoni North, Manicaland on April 16, told Human Rights Watch that youth militia, 'war veterans' and ZANU-PF youths had converted former tobacco barns into torture chambers. He was taken to one of these chambers and told Human Rights Watch:

At this base called Dzete the ZANU-PF youths took turns beating me throughout the night. They put me in leg irons and handcuffs and stretched me on the ground and in that position they began to ask me, 'Who did you vote for?' I said I am a community police officer under the police forces so I voted for ZANU-PF.

They began to beat me saying, 'You are lying, we know some of you have betrayed the country'. After supper they continued to beat me. They whipped me 12 times on my back. I was released at around 3am. They told me that I was now an informer and agent for ZANU-PF. They said, 'You must tell us who all MDC members and cadres are,' I said I would do it. They said, 'Now go but report back here at base at 3pm with a comprehensive list of MDC names. I fled to Harare instead.

Human Rights Watch (2008) further contends that it received information of the existence of at least five camps or bases where beatings and torture of MDC activists and perceived activists took place in Nyanga district, Manicaland. These bases were located in the following areas:

close to Barenga army camp, in ward 23, at Nyanga Country Club, in ward 15 and at the Ruwangwe business centre. It also gathered similar evidence of torture bases and camps in the provinces of Masvingo, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland East and Mashonaland Central.

In one incident, a man from Mashonaland East province who was abducted by ‘war veterans’ and later saved by the police, told Human Rights Watch that police took him to five bases around the province as they tried to prevent ‘war veterans’ from carrying out acts of violence, an attempt which failed. He told Human Rights Watch:

When the police came and rescued me they took me to Dumuyera shopping centre where there is a base. A war veteran leader called Masango was there beating a lot of people and trying to burn the home of a businessman. At Luckydip there was also a base there and police tried to get the war veterans to disperse. There were also bases at Jani, Chitugazuwa, and Rukado. At Chitugazuwa base I saw people who were beaten so badly. I saw a lady who couldn’t walk since she was severely beaten up. It was around past 7pm. People were being brutally beaten.

On May 13, the Herald newspaper reported that police had dismantled camps in Bikita and Gutu in the province of Masvingo. However, the police did not carry out any arrests or take any action against those responsible for setting up the camps. Further, Human Rights Watch had evidence of the continued existence of other camps in Masvingo, as well as in other provinces around the country.

2.24 ‘Re-education’ Meetings in Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East and Mashonaland West.

As observed by Human Rights Watch (2008) some of the worst violence took place during ‘re-education’ meetings conducted by ZANU-PF, ‘war veterans,’ youth militia and the army. The sole purpose of these meetings was to coerce the population into voting for ZANU-PF and denouncing the MDC through beatings and torture. Villagers told Human Rights Watch that the meetings took place on a daily basis with ZANU-PF and its allies visiting areas and villages in the provinces where they believed they suffered significant losses to the MDC or where they won by very narrow margins. The posting of results outside polling stations enabled the party to target these areas with little difficulty. Victims told Human Rights Watch that people were forced to chant ZANU-PF slogans and swear allegiance to the party.

Local ZANU-PF officials used these meetings to incite people to punish those who voted for the MDC in the general elections and to ensure that in the event of a presidential run-off people

would be too afraid to vote MDC again. Those who were suspected of voting for the MDC were beaten and tortured before the rest of the village.

For example, in Karoi district, covering the constituencies of Hurungwe East, West, North and Central, in Mashonaland West province, witnesses told Human Rights Watch that on April 6 winning politicians from ZANU-PF addressed party faithful in Karoi in Chikangwe Hall, and said that people had voted the wrong way, and that this should be corrected ahead of the presidential run-off election. The people gathered were told that what was about to be done was called *Operation Makavhoterapapi*?

Witnesses told Human Rights Watch that Peter Tapera Chanetsa, ZANU-PF winning Member of Parliament for Hurungwe North, and Rueben Marumahoko, ZANU-PF Senator for Hurungwe, addressed ZANU-PF members on April 6 and said, 'People voted the wrong way, so people must be beaten thoroughly so that no one will ever vote again,' The first incidents of violence against MDC supporters and members in Karoi occurred the next day. Since then Human Rights Watch documented several incidents of violence by ZANU-PF supporters against people perceived to have voted for the MDC in the area.

The army also played a role in systematically targeting village heads and chiefs and ordering them to call for meetings in different parts of Karoi. Everyone was required to attend these meetings without fail, and according to eyewitnesses accounts the soldiers repeated one message to the people: No one should dare vote for MDC in the event of an anticipated presidential run-off election. Those summoned to the meetings told Human Rights Watch that all meetings in villages around Karoi and Hurungwe took the same form, chiefs and headmen summoned their people to the meeting, which was addressed by uniformed members of the army who intimidated villagers by brandishing rifles in the air and displaying live ammunition to villagers. Each villager would be given a bullet to hold in their hands, then soldiers would say, 'If you vote for MDC in the presidential run-off, you have seen the bullets, we have enough for each of you, so beware.'

Human Rights Watch (2008) states that eyewitnesses confirmed that soldiers and war veterans used new Mitsubishi pick-up trucks, many of which had no number plates, but some had logos of the national electricity company, ZESA. Such meetings were held on April 19 at Karereshe School, on April 20 at Doro, on April 21 at Chisape School and on April 22 at Kanyati and were reported to be planned for Nyamhunga, Chidamoyo and Munjinga. In a clear example of government involvement in the 're-education' meetings, eyewitnesses informed Human Rights

Watch that the vehicles were refuelled each morning at Hurungwe Rural District Council Offices.

In another case from Mudzi, a 33 year old man told Human Rights Watch of his ordeal at the hands of ZANU-PF supporters on April 11:

At around 6pm ZANU-PF members called for a ward meeting and one ZANU-PF member came to summon me to attend the meeting. He said, 'You are wanted at the meeting, you have to answer for your crime,' At the meeting the ZANU-PF ward chairperson said to me, 'We know you voted MDC so now we shall proceed to punish you. You must know that in the coming run-off election no one will vote for MDC in the entire Mudzi area,' they beat me on the buttocks using thick sticks and iron bars. During the beatings I fainted two times. I was beaten so much that I sustained a huge open wound on my left buttock.

2.25 Six Deaths During a 'Re-education' Meeting in Chiweshe

According to Human Rights Watch (2008) the brutal nature of the ZANU-PF 're-education' meetings was seen in Chiweshe, Mashonaland Central on May 5 when ZANU-PF officials and 'war veterans' organized a meeting at Chaona primary school and brutally beat and tortured over 70 villagers, leaving six men dead. Human Rights Watch spoke to eight victims of the violence and several relatives of the dead men.

On the night of May 4, villagers in Chiweshe noticed groups of people being trucked to Chaona Primary School in the centre of Chiweshe. The villagers identified the people as being youth militia from Border Gezi camp in Mt Darwin, Mashonaland central (they wear a distinctive olive green uniform) as well as ZANU-PF youths and 'war veterans' from surrounding villages. UP to 300 of these people arrived at the primary school. An announcement was then made that on the following day people should go to a meeting at the primary school. In the early hours of May 5, ZANU-PF youths went knocking door-to-door calling people to attend the meeting. When the people got there they were addressed by a person who was identified as Retired Major Cairo Mhandu, a former soldier and 'war veteran.'

The villagers told Human Rights Watch that Mhandu told the crowd, 'This community needs to be taught a lesson. It needs re-education. We want people to come forward and confess about their links and association with the MDC and surrender to ZANU-PF. This is what we want.' No one came forward. After a brief pause one of the ZANU-PF youths grabbed a 76 year old woman and made her lie in front of the crowd on her stomach. They said, 'We will beat this

woman if people don't come forward.' They started beating her with logs on her buttocks. After 10 minutes, three men came forward and said they were MDC just to stop the youth beating the woman. Cairo Mhandu said this was what he wanted, more people came forward.

The ZANU-PF supporters also had a list of about 20 MDC activists who they called out. They proceeded to beat these people and demanded that they each reveal the names of at least five other activists. In pain, the victims would shout out the names of any people and they too would be called out to be beaten. The ZANU-PF youths and supporters would bring forward three or four people at a time. They tied the legs of the victims and handcuffed their hands, before forcing them to lie prone on their stomachs. Three ZANU-PF youths with thick sticks would stand on either side of the victim and take turns beating the victims on the back, back of the legs and buttocks. The ZANU-PF youths and supporters either stripped the women naked or down to their underwear before beating them. In some incidents the perpetrators tied barbed wire around genitals of the men and tied the other end of the wire around the logs. The perpetrators then forced the men to use their genital to pull the logs as they continued to beat them. Several men sustained serious injuries to their genitals as a result (Human Rights Watch, 2008).

The beatings continued all that afternoon and evening. More than 70 people were beaten, of which 30 were hospitalized at Howard and Concession hospitals in Mashonaland Central, while others were transferred to Avenues clinic in Harare. The beatings only ended that evening when five police officers arrived. The 300 assailants dispersed and were never arrested by the partisan police officers. To date no arrests have been made. Six men subsequently died from the horrific beatings and torture that took place that day. Two of them, Alex Chiriseri and Tapiwa Meda died on the spot after the beatings. Joseph Madzuramhende died later that day. Geoffrey Jemedze and Wilson Emmanuel died at Avenues clinic on May 9, Jemedze from renal failure. Fushirai Dofu died on May 10 at Howard hospital (Human Rights Watch, 2008).

A government doctor who spoke to Human Rights Watch confirmed that three of the men who died had severely mutilated genitals, beaten and swollen testicles, one had crushed testicles. Many of the men he treated had damaged genitals. The doctor also confirmed that many of the women beaten on that day sustained severe injuries to the buttocks requiring skin grafts. A 33 year old woman, an MDC supporter, told Human Rights Watch about how a group of 'war veterans' beat her with logs and sticks on that day. She sustained serious injuries to her buttocks:

The chief called out the name of my husband and me and we were made to stand to one side with other people called from the list. We were told that we had been called because we were from the MDC. We were taken aside and beaten with sticks in front of everyone. They made us lie down and tied our hands with handcuffs and beat us with thick sticks. They were counting as they beat us and taking turns. I was beaten 115 times on one buttock. They were so many. I knew some of them.

2.26 Creation of ‘No-Go’ Areas in Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West and Mashonaland Central

According to Human Rights Watch (2008) ZANU-PF supporters and ‘war veterans’ created ‘no-go’ areas across broad swathes of the countryside in the provinces of Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West and Mashonaland Central to prevent victims from leaving the provinces, and to prevent foreign journalists and local human rights organizations from reporting on the violence. They placed barricades across roads leading to villages hit by the violence making the areas inaccessible. Thousands of people were unable to flee the violence and were left without food, water or shelter. In a deliberate attempt to punish those it suspected of having voted for the MDC, ZANU-PF supporters and their allies blocked and threatened victims of violence in need of medical treatment.

For example, in mid-April, a man from Mudzi, in Mashonaland East told Human Rights Watch that he received severe wounds to his buttocks after being beaten with logs by people he believes were ZANU-PF supporters. His attackers told him that if he went to the hospital for treatment, they would come back and kill him. By the time he managed to find medical treatment in Harare four days later, his flesh had begun to rot

Medical personnel in Harare informed Human Rights Watch that the problem of victims presenting with infected wounds had grown worse as threats against doctors increased and roadblocks set up by ZANU-PF prevented people from accessing treatment in the capital. Doctors and medical personnel in the provinces of Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland West and Mashonaland East reported that ZANU-PF supporters and ‘war veterans’ routinely intimidated and threatened them in an attempt to prevent them from treating victims of violence in the provinces. One doctor informed Human Rights Watch that three of his colleagues had fled Mutoko district in Mashonaland East after receiving threats from ZANU-PF supporters and ‘war veterans.’

The acute lack of medicine and medical supplies in rural hospitals meant that victims who could not access treatment in Harare were left untreated in the rural hospitals. Medical personnel in Harare also informed Human Rights Watch that ‘war veterans’ and suspected CIO agents had prevented ambulances from Harare from picking up victims hospitalized in the provinces of Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West and Mashonaland Central on at least seven occasions (Human Rights Watch, 2008).

2.27 Arrests, Beatings and Torture of MDC Activists in Harare

As observed by Human Rights Watch (2008) in urban areas, particularly in and around Harare, incidents of political violence took two particular forms: First, indiscriminate beatings of people by police and army following the imposition of an unofficial curfew in some of the high density suburbs. Second, a targeted campaign against known activists that mainly took place at night and was carried out by armed and uniformed members of the army aided by ZANU-PF supporters. Armed and uniformed soldiers frequently used supporters of ZANU-PF as informants to compile lists of names and addresses of known or perceived MDC supporters. The soldiers and ZANU-PF supporters would then raid the homes of known MDC activists at night, and abduct and beat them in the bush on the outskirts of Harare.

For example, an MDC activist from Dzivarasekwa Extension in Harare told Human Rights Watch that on April 20, 12 armed soldiers in uniform came to his house at 3am while he was asleep. They beat his private security guard who was guarding his cars in the yard, before proceeding to beat his 18 year old son. He explained to Human Rights Watch what followed after the soldiers found him:

They handcuffed me, hands at the back, then they dragged me naked to their waiting truck, they blindfolded me and took me to their truck. In the truck they ordered me to lie on the floor of the truck, face down, and they used my body as a foot stool, they all put their feet on my body and the truck drove away, I had no idea where to since I was blindfolded.

After some time the truck stopped and I was dragged out of the car and they began to beat me using batons and chains, they beat me for more than 30 minutes, all over my body, in my hands, on the soles of my feet, on buttocks, everywhere, and the chains ripped flesh from my body and left open wounds, I was bleeding profusely. When the soldiers were beating me up they said, ‘We are beating you because you belong to MDC and you used your lorry to ferry MDC supporters to rallies in this area.’ That was true; I had used my lorry to carry MDC supporters

to meetings and rallies during the campaign period in March. After beating me severely, they removed the handcuffs and left me in the bush, still with the blindfold on.

Alexander and Tendi (2008) contend that Zimbabwe's politics are profoundly shaped by violence. Violence has motivated, divided and united each of Zimbabwe's political parties in distinctive ways, it has shaped their ability to mobilize, their constituencies and their ideology, it has marked successive violent electoral contests and it has been used to transform the state. ZANU-PF's 'third chimurenga', launched in 2000, was rooted in a historical narrative of violence that links the uprisings against conquest in the 1890s to the liberation war of the 1970s and the battle to reclaim the nation's white-owned farmland in 2000. For those in opposition politics, the violence of the third chimurenga evokes a different lineage: the extreme repression- known as Gukurahundi- that was launched against ZANU-PF's liberation-era rival ZAPU in the 1980s, and the violence periodically directed at civic and political opponents of ZANU-PF since then.

Zimbabwe's recent polls held on 29 March and 27 June 2008, marked two ends of a spectrum of violence and electoral politics. The first round, for house, senate, presidency and local councils, was the least violent of the third chimurenga era and produced results that stunned ZANU-PF. The battered and divided MDC won a parliamentary majority, while Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the larger MDC faction, received more votes than any other presidential candidate, though not enough, according to the contested official figures, to avoid a run-off. The opposition's success sparked an extremely violent reaction ZANU-PF and its securocrat ideologies that led to Tsvangirai's withdrawal just days before the June run-off poll, allowing Mugabe to claim victory. The 29 March election redeemed a popular faith in the electoral process that had waned over the past 8 years of opposition defeats. There was in its aftermath a moment of jubilation in which alternative visions of Zimbabwe's political future and a halt to its record-breaking economic decline seemed possible. The presidential run-off went a long way toward undermining this briefly renewed faith in the power of the vote and to laying bare the deeply problematic nature of both the liberation-struggle logic and the militarized means by which ZANU-PF sustains its claims to power (Alexander and Tendi, 2008).

2.28 The June 27 Presidential Run-off

Alexander and Tendi (2008) state that ZANU-PF's response to its surprise defeat on the 29 March was at first unclear. Would there be an offer of power-sharing? Would there be an abdication? Rumours abounded of ZANU-PF's approaches to Tsvangirai to discuss a Mugabe

concession or some form of power-sharing. The story that eventually emerged suggested that the JOC, made up of the heads of the army, air force, prison service, police and the CIO, and reportedly led by Mnangagwa, decided within days of the election to deploy a strategy of delay and violence in order to hold onto the all-important executive. Succession politics played a role once again: as noted, since 2000 those in ZANU-PF who defended the third most vocally and adopted strategies of violence flourished. That the JOC was intimately involved in the decision to wage violence is telling. Since 2000, Zimbabwe's state has been described as increasingly 'militarised', with military men being appointed in key positions throughout the state, and an expanding range of decisions and actions being taken by the military, from political strategy to the formulation and implementation of agrarian and economic policy. The JOC openly entered the political field, declaring in 2002 that the security forces could not 'accept, let alone support or salute' anyone without liberation struggle credentials, meaning of course Tsvangirai. Such threats were regularly repeated. When Mugabe wobbled, they stepped in to ensure his and ZANU-PF's survival.

Alexander and Tendi (2008) posit that the coercive nature of the response followed from the locus of the decision-making and the analysis that the MDC had won because it had been allowed too much political space. ZANU-PF is of course no stranger to violence. It had used violence in every previous election, by far the most dramatically in 1985 when it faced ZAPU at the polls. The modus operandi specific to the 1985 elections could be read once more in the spread of violence in April and May 2008. This was no coincidence: several members of the JOC- most notoriously Perence Shiri and Emmerson Mnangagwa had been directly involved in the 1980s violence.

2.29 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the literature that speaks about pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe by various authors. The literature dated back to the first elections that were held in 1980 after Zimbabwe's liberation war struggle from the British colonial rule to the general elections that were held recently in 2013. The literature review covered such variables as ethnic politics and violence, civil dissent and violence in the 1990s, farm invasions and the racial violence in Zimbabwe, political labelling and the electoral violence in Zimbabwe, the military/security factor in the run-off election among other things. In each instance, the literature was situating the pre and post-electoral violence with each variable as alluded to by various authors that wrote on the subject. The next chapter looked at the theoretical framework that informed this study.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed three key theoretical frameworks that were used by this study. These are: Conflict Transformation theory, Human Needs theory and theory of Positive and Negative Peace. In all instances, the researcher endeavoured to situate these theories in relation to

electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe. This provided a basis to synthesize and dissect the findings of this research later in the dissertation.

3.2 Conflict transformation Theory

The departure point of the Conflict transformation theory is that conflict is endemic in society. Thus in the course of holding national elections to determine who rules the country, conflicts are bound to occur. Conflict transformation then is about transforming the very systems, structures and relationships which give rise to violence and injustice. It addresses underlying structures, cultures and institutions that encourage and condition violent political and social conflict. Conflict transformation is a holistic and multi-faceted approach to managing violent conflict in all its phases (Reich, 2002). The goal of conflict transformation is therefore to establish a positive peace (Young, 2010:279). The term signifies an ongoing process of change in the relations, behaviour, attitudes and structures from negative to positive. Conflict transformation theory views peace as centred and rooted in the quality of relationships. This includes both face-to-face interactions and the ways in which the society structure its social, political, economic and cultural relationships (Lederach, 2003). In this sense, peace is a 'process structure', a phenomenon that is simultaneously dynamic, adaptive, and changing. Conflict transformation theory views peace as a continuously evolving and developing quality of relationship (Botes, 2003). It is defined by intentional efforts to address the natural rise of human conflict through nonviolent approaches that address issues and increase understanding, equality and respect in relationships. To increase justice we must ensure that people have access to political procedures and voice in the decision that affect their lives (Lederach, 2003). This is relevant to this study as it seeks to understand ways of mitigating intra-party electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

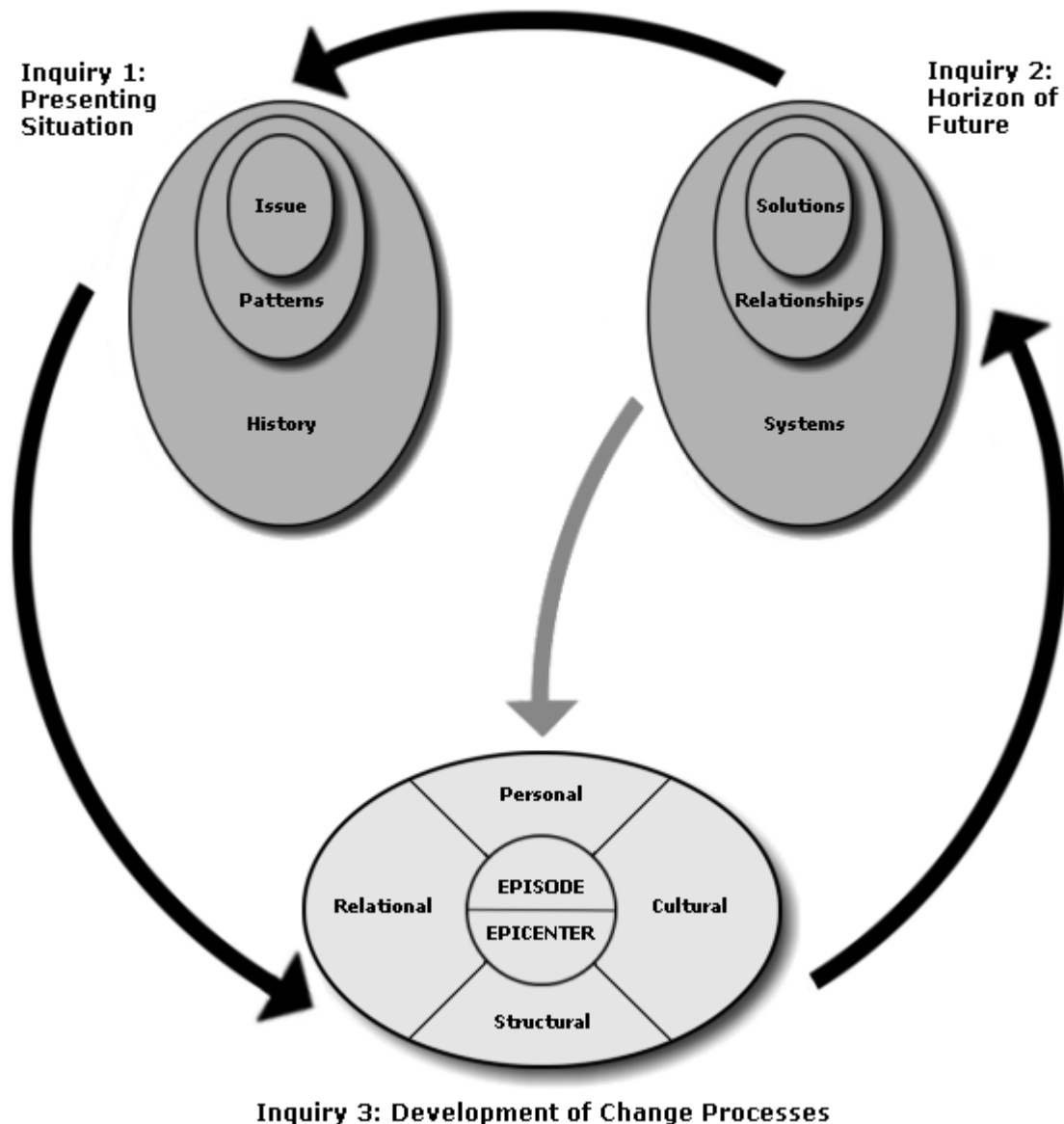
Conflict transformation theory deals with social justice issues and identity, livelihoods and political power-sharing, the aim being to achieve institutional and structural transformation in the long run. Peace is made from within the society in conflict rather than by external experts and interveners, even if the latter may bring much needed and welcome ideas and support (Lederach, 2003:3). The Conflict Transformation theory suggests the need to develop capacities to engage in change processes at the interpersonal, inter-group, and social-structural levels. One set of capacities points toward direct, face-to-face interaction between people or groups (Reich, 2002). The other set underscores the need to see, pursue, and create change in ways of organizing social structures, from families to complex bureaucracies, to structures at the global level. This requires a capacity to understand and sustain dialogue as a fundamental

means of constructive change (Botes, 2003). Many of the skill-based mechanisms that reduce violence are rooted in communicative capacities to exchange ideas, find common definitions and move toward solutions. But dialogue also plays a crucial role in the maintenance or change of social structures. Through dialogue, these structures can be modified to be more responsive and just. Thus local people need to be continuously engaged throughout the process of mitigating pre and post electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe.

The process of transformation first transforms attitudes by changing and redirecting negative perceptions. Secondly, it transforms behaviour, and lastly, transforms the conflict itself by seeking to discover, define and remove incompatibilities between parties. Conflict transformation, as described by Lederach (2003), does not suggest that we simply eliminate or control conflict, but rather recognize and work with its 'dialectic nature'. By this he means that social conflict is naturally created by humans who are involved in relationships, yet once it occurs, it changes (transforms) those events, people, and relationships that created the initial conflict. At the personal level, conflict transformation involves the pursuit of awareness, growth, and commitment to change which may occur through the recognition of fear, anger, grief, and bitterness. These emotions must be outwardly acknowledged and dealt with in order for effective conflict transformation to occur. Certain orientations can become 'cultures of violence' or a manifestation of 'cultural violence', which conflict transformation aims to convert into 'cultures of peace' transforming material and structural conditions (Botes, 2003). Sustainable solutions must be proffered to mitigate electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe and also to encourage political parties to co-exist in a democratic environment.

Conflict transformation allows for ebb and flow in conflict, and sees the presenting problem as a potential opportunity to transform the relationship and the systems in which the violence is embedded. The process of transformation begins with unmasking violence and uncovering hidden conflict in order to make their consequences visible to victims and communities. Conflict transformation aims to challenge adversaries to redirect their conflicting interests towards the common good (Botes, 2003:6). It may have to disturb an artificial peace, expose structural violence or find ways to restore relationships without retribution. Lederach (2003) presented conflict transformation theory diagrammatically:

The Big Picture of Conflict Transformation



Source: Lederach (2003)

The first point of inquiry is the presenting situation, the conflict episode that provides an opportunity to look both at the content of the dispute and the patterns of relationship in the context in which the dispute is expressed. This is graphically represented as a set of embedded circles or spheres. Transformation views the presenting issues as an expression of the larger system of relationship patterns. It moves beyond the 'episodic' expression of the conflict and focuses on the relational and historical patterns in which the conflict is rooted. The potential for change lies in the ability to recognise, understand and redress what happened, and create

new structures and ways of interacting in future (Parlevliet, 2006). The second point of inquiry is the horizon of the future, the image of what people wish to create. It asks people to consider what they would ideally like to see in place. It represents a social energy that informs and creates orientation. Thus, the arrow point not only forward to the future, but also back toward the immediate situation and the range of change processes that may emerge. This combination of arrows suggests that transformation is both a circular and linear process. The final major inquiry is the design and support of change processes. This broader component requires that people think about response to conflict as the development of change processes that attend to the web of interconnected needs, relationships, and patterns. Since the change processes should address both the immediate problems and the broader relational and structural patterns, there is need to reflect on multiple levels and types of change rather than focussing on a single operational solution. Change processes must not only promote short-term solutions, but also build platforms capable of promoting long-term social change (Parlevliet, 2006).

Danielsen (2005) observes that violence is not human nature and it is not genetic and is simply a social construct, an invention. Unfortunately, it has not been given much attention. Now if violence is a learnt behaviour, why do we behave violently? And how can such violent behaviour successfully be deterred, prevented? Within conflict transformation and peace studies, conflict resolution approaches look at these questions. Through conflict transformation, one considers the sources of conflict in order to address the roots of the problem, thereby avoiding or preventing violence.

One theory which looks at the roots of conflict is Human Needs Theory (HNT). HNT offers valuable insights into the sources of violent conflict, and thus possible mitigating options (Danielsen, 2005). In order to live and attain well-being, humans need certain essentials. These are called human needs or basic human needs. Human needs theorists argue that conflicts and violent conflicts are caused by unmet human needs. Violence occurs when certain individuals or groups do not see any other way to meet their need, or when they need understanding, respect and consideration for their needs. Rosenberg (2003) states that violence is a tragic expression of unmet human needs, implying that all actions undertaken by human beings are attempts to satisfy their needs. If we are able to connect with our needs and those of others, we will therefore be able to look at other ways of meeting such needs, avoiding violence and destruction. Often, human needs or basic human needs are confused with subsistence needs. However, such a view of human needs may limit our understanding of the human being to simply exist as a biological creature. Although there are conflicts over subsistence, most

conflicts have to do with other unmet human needs, such as protection, identity, recognition, participation and understanding. Only by giving more importance to these latter needs, truly recognizing them as human needs essential to the wellbeing of all human being, will we be able to address current and intractable conflicts like the one occurring in Zimbabwe. Our confused view of human needs as subsistence needs only is also in part due to the alienation on 'needs' we have created in our society. Needs are often associated with weakness, and someone who needs is considered weak and fragile. This also further impedes the inclusion of needs approaches in conflict transformation and peace processes.

3.3 Human Needs Theory (HNT)

Danielsen (2005) observes that there are various individual who have applied human needs theory. Here, the proposals of Abraham Maslow, John Burton, Marshall Rosenberg and Manfred Max-Neef will briefly be explored. In his pyramid of Human Needs, Maslow (2002) puts emphasis on the hierarchy of needs, stating that some are more urgent than others. On the base of the pyramid he places food, water, and shelter. On a second level, he places the need for safety and security, followed by belonging and love. The need for self-esteem is found on a fourth level, and finally on a fifth and final level, personal fulfilment. Maslow argues that each human being is trying to meet needs on a certain level at any one time. An individual looking to meet needs for food and water will not be looking to meet needs of belonging, love or self-esteem. Only when the needs on the lower end of the Pyramid are met, will humans look to meet their need for personal fulfilment.

Burton (1993) has been applying human needs theory more actively to current social and political conflicts. In his work on protracted, social conflicts, he looks at how universal human needs often are neglected, leading groups to use violence to claim their rights and satisfying needs. In what is really a compatibility of human needs, Burton argues that education and culture make parties manipulate the issues and dehumanizing the other parties.

In Marshall Rosenberg's approach, human needs are universal and meeting them is essential to human survival and well-being. Rosenberg (2003) groups the needs in sub-groups, and is open to the existence of needs beyond what he has defined. He states that our education and culture often alienate us from connecting with our real needs, through Nonviolent Communication, he proposes a model for connecting with our own and others' needs, an approach he applies in all levels of society and which he has used in mediation in several countries.

Max-Neef (2005) proposes nine universal human needs, through which he argues that we can achieve human development and peaceful societies. He defines his main proposal, Human Scale Development, as ‘focused and based on the satisfaction of fundamental human needs, on the generation of growing levels of self-reliance and on the construction of organic articulations of people with nature and technology, of global processes with local activity, of the personal with the social, of planning with autonomy, and of civil society with the state.’ Like Burton and Rosenberg, Max-Neef agrees that no need is superior to the other, and that they are all complementary and essential to human life.

3.4. Table 1: Human Needs, as presented by various theorists

Maslow	Burton	Rosenberg	Max- Neef
Food, water, shelter (1)	Distributive justice	Physical Nurturance	Subsistence
Safety and security (2)	Safety, security	Interdependence	Protection
Belonging or love (3)	Belongingness, love	Integrity	Affection
Self-esteem (4)	Self-esteem	Autonomy	Understanding
Personal fulfilment (5)	Personal fulfilment	Play	Creation
	Identity	Celebration and mourning	Identity
	Cultural security	Spiritual communion	Leisure
	Freedom		Idleness
	Participation		Freedom
			Participation

Source: Danielsen (2005)

Danielsen (2005) states that much can be said to the usefulness of HNT in working with violent conflict. Firstly, it has wide applicability. While some see it merely as a tool to be applied in prevention or post-conflict peace building, practitioners like Rosenberg also use HNT in mediation in violent conflicts. Equally, it can be applied in all levels of society, for intra and interpersonal conflict, inter-group conflict and intra-party conflict. Secondly, it focuses on the source of conflict, looking at how best the parties can have their needs met, and those of others. Thirdly, HNT emphasizes common humanity. In a world context where differences are

accentuated, HNT attempts to unify human beings from different regions and cultures, creating a common understanding of who we are and how others need and feel the same way we do. Marker (2000) points out that human needs are non-negotiable:

'Needs, unlike interests, cannot be traded, suppressed, or bargained for. Thus, the human needs approach makes a case for turning away from traditional negotiation models that do not take into account non-negotiable issues. These include interest-based negotiation models that view conflict in terms of win-win or other consensus-based solutions, and conventional power models that construct conflict and conflict management in terms of factual and zero-sum game perspectives.'

HNT is, in sum, widely applicable, may provide sustainable solutions as it focuses on the source of conflict, it promotes understanding from a base of our common humanity and it highlights the distinction between negotiable and non-negotiable issues in a conflict.

When applying HNT to electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe, it is useful to look at the opposition party, the MDC and its supporters to identify what their needs are given the persistence of violence each time elections are held in Zimbabwe. Supporters of the MDC have participated in voting for the opposition party since the 2000 plebiscite to the present day, but as stated in this research, the incumbent has robbed them of their democratic right to vote a party of their choice into power. Analysts and election observers from the SADC region and beyond concur with this researcher that elections have been stolen by ZANU-PF. Voters freedom of choosing a party of their choice has been trampled on by Mugabe for over three decades and a half. Opposition voters' safety and security have been perpetually compromised by Mugabe's desire to cling to power at all costs, as he unleashes his state security forces including the army, police, youth, war veterans and CIO among others to systematically use violence to claim his hold on power. The MDC and its supporters have been denied protection as they are continually subjected to torture, harassment, coercion, disappearance, rape, murder and thorough beatings by Mugabe's henchmen each time elections are held in Zimbabwe since 1980 to the present day. Voters have also been robbed of their personal fulfilment since their right to vote for the opposition is always disregarded by the violent regime of Mugabe.

According to Danielsen (2005) human perception plays an essential role in conflict transformation. Culture, education and societal influence shape our minds and our perceptions. Enemy images are created, convincing groups and individuals that certain needs can only be met by certain strategies and that other groups are intrinsic obstacles to their needs being met.

While a certain political group's needs for identity, protection, respect and equality may be met through a range of strategies, lack of trust and enemy images of the 'other' may convince the group that the only acceptable or possible solution is appeal to regional, continental and international institutions for redress. Building trust, deconstructing enemy images and fostering cooperation are therefore key elements in human needs-based conflict transformation.

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Danielsen (2005) asserts that there are also drawbacks to HNT. Firstly, how do we really define human needs? Table 1 above shows several discrepancies between the various theorists, even between Burton, Rosenberg and Max-Neef, agree that all needs are universal, non-hierarchical and complementary. If a human need is simply what we perceive it to be, it will be hard to truly address human needs in a conflict situation. Secondly, should we prioritise certain needs over others? Is Maslow right in asserting that needs for food and shelter should be met before considering needs for self-esteem and self-fulfilment? Or is protection, rest and play equally important to secure human well-being? Thirdly, there seems to be an exaggerated belief in the importance of dialogue. How can warring parties sit down and talk things through, identifying their needs? And even if it is so, that HNT cannot be applied in violent situations, and how useful will it be in conflict transformation today? Finally, assuming we identify needs for conflicting parties. Is there any assurance that these needs are the most important ones? Who will decide? And how will we know whether the identified needs and the strategies to be applied, are the most accurate ones?

Surely, more study needs to be carried out on the validity, applicability and usefulness of HNT in violent conflicts such as the one obtaining in Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, by attempting to

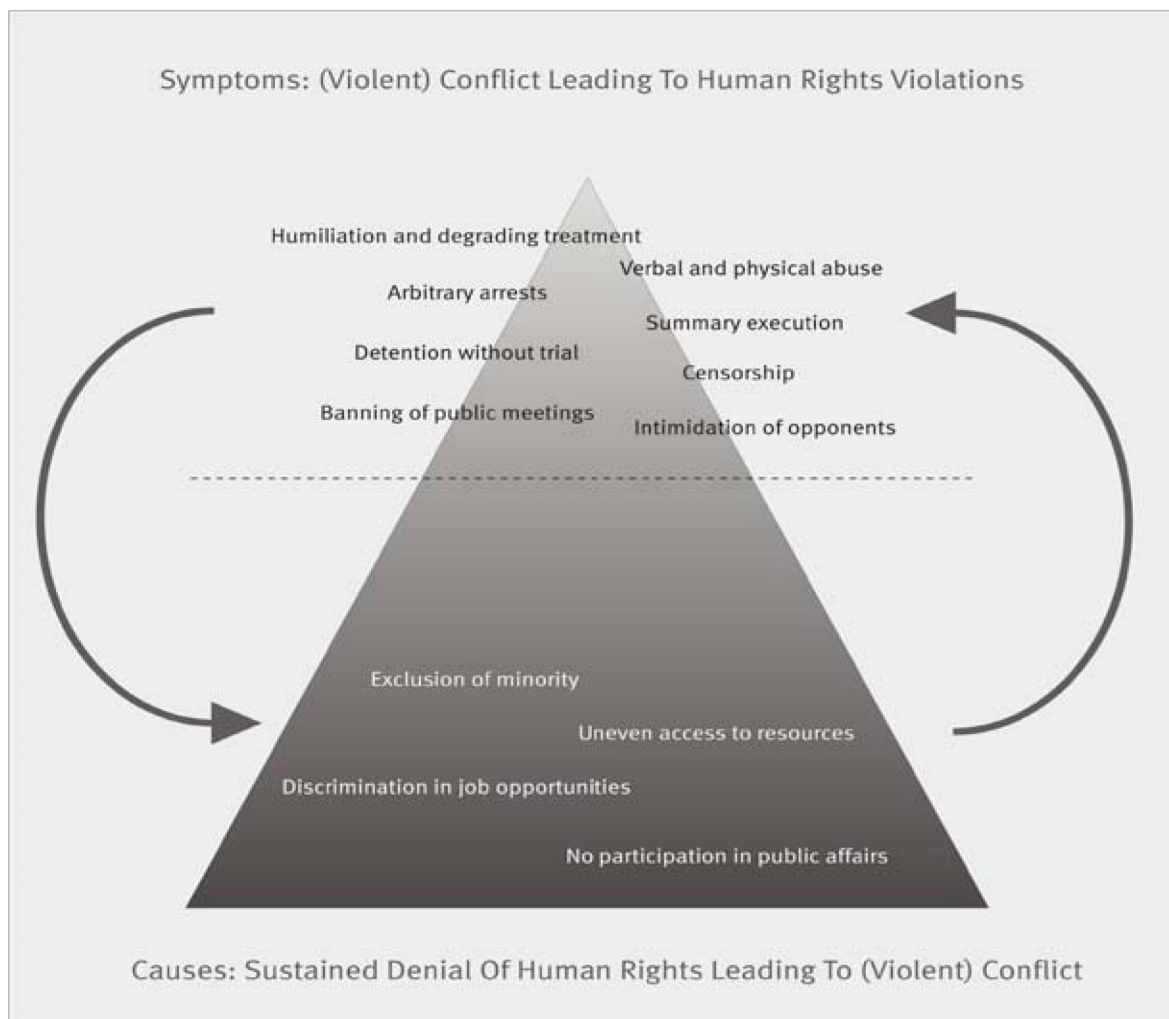
apply HNT to real cases, and knowing that mediators often and successfully apply the concepts of ‘positions and interest’ similarly to ‘strategies and needs’ in HNT, there is some value to its application. Before applying the Human Needs Theory to the conflict in Zimbabwe, let us further move on to look at the conflict in question. A complex and intractable conflict which has been going on for more than three and a half decades, this research offers a comprehensive understanding of the many issues, actors, variables and factors in the conflict. It will therefore revisit the main issues in the conflict between the regime of Mugabe and all opposition parties not limited to but including ZAPU and MDC among others.

The electoral violence in Zimbabwe pits the Mugabe’s ZANU-PF party and all the subsequent opposition parties since independence from colonial rule in 1980. Mugabe has used coercion, ethnicity, militarisation, murder, rape, displacement and many other unorthodox means to maintain his stranglehold to power despite being defeated by the opposition at the ballot box. Since the Gukurahundi massacres as alluded to in this research, every successive opposition party including the current MDC has suffered different levels of violence at the hands of the brutal and merciless violence of ZANU-PF. The majority of Zimbabweans have voted for the MDC party to rule the country on several occasions but Mugabe has been uncompromisingly orchestrating violence in his bid to disrespect voters’ freedom to choose a party that they want to govern the country. Zimbabwe’s successive elections have been characterized by vote rigging, disappearance, and uneven electoral space; vote buying, name-calling and murder of opposition activists among other dynamics of electoral violence. Regional, continental and international organizations such as Southern African Development Community (SADC), African Union (AU) and the United Nations have condemned the electoral violence in Zimbabwe to no avail. To this end, Zimbabweans have been denied their right and freedom of expression in choosing a political party of their own choice.

3.4 Theory of Positive and Negative Peace

Developed by Galtung in 1969, Theory of Positive and Negative Peace states that peace is about the structural organizations of people who voluntarily choose to pursue co-operation for the benefit of mankind (Sandy and Perkins Jr, 2000). As observed by Groten and Jurgen (1981), positive peace is meeting people’s basic needs or providing the minimum for subsistence. It involves the search of positive conditions which can resolve the underlying roots of conflict which produce violence. Gerwin (1991:77) states that positive peace is a condition of society in which relationships between individuals and social groups are conducted on the basis of honesty and consent, and there is a known disposition for all parties to continue such practices.

Individuals are free to do, be or become what they desire unless this infringes upon the ability of any others to do the same (Young, 2010:6). Direct violence constitutes the tip of an iceberg, while the vast majority of the formation (structural violence) is hidden below the water's surface as shown in the diagram below.



Source: Isakovic 2001

Isakovic (2001:40) argues that direct violence insults human needs with the deliberate intention to hurt and harm; structural violence does so more indirectly. Cultural violence is symbolic and refers to those aspects of our cultures that are used to legitimize direct or structural violence. Positive peace aims at removing structural violence. Structural violence occurs when people are deprived of their potential by the structure of society (Varobej, 2008). Naidu (1986) posits that structural violence is legalized human suffering without direct and overt use of violence. Structural violence is exploitation and injustice, much of which is institutionalized and also

culturally and psychologically internalized. The exploiters may even be as unaware as anyone else of the overall situation and, indeed, genuinely believe that there is no injustice. The deeper right would be the human right to live in a social and world structure that does not produce torture. The table below illustrates types of violence and their human rights relevance.

TYPE OF VIOLENCE	HUMAN RIGHTS RELEVANCE
Direct violence	The rights of an individual or group are violated by the state or abused by a non-state actor; if the latter, the state fails to protect the rights of the individual or group as it is supposed to do. Rights involved are civil and political rights (the right to life, to bodily and mental integrity, freedom from torture, freedom of speech, freedom of peaceful assembly, etc.).
Structural violence	The rights of an individual or group are denied by the way that society functions and the state is organised. Individuals or groups cannot exercise their rights (civil, political, social, economic and cultural) and are not able to develop their full potential as they have differential access to social, political and economic resources.
Cultural violence	The humanity and dignity of individuals or groups is denied (stereotyping or demonising of 'the other'). They are therefore not afforded the respect and treatment due to them as human beings and are subject to discrimination.

Source: Parlevliet 2006

Human life can be destroyed through starvation, lack of health care, human generated environmental pollutions and ecological disasters. Similarly, when people suffer from preventable diseases or when they are denied a decent education, affordable housing, freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, or opportunities to work, play, or raise a family, a kind of violence is occurring, even if no bullets are shot or no clubs are wielded. People die or suffer

serious harm unnecessarily; as a consequence of distribution of resources rather than overall scarcity (Isakovic, 2001:39). A society commits violence against its members when it forcibly stunts their development and undermines their well-being, whether because of religion, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual preference, or some social reason. Structural violence is a serious form of social oppression, which can also be identified with respect to treatment of the natural environment. Structural violence can include impoverishment, deprivation, humiliation, political repression, lack of human rights, and the denial of self-determination.

Haessly (2011:8) suggests that structural violence takes place at the macro and micro-levels. At the macro-level organized structural violence includes the establishment of state sponsored social, political and economic systems, structures, policies and practices within a country that result in repression of citizens in general and the torture and sometimes murder of opposition activists by the incumbent leaders and their governments. The point of departure of the Theory of Positive and Negative Peace to this research is the history of political violence in independent Zimbabwe that can be traced back to the Matabeleland disturbances in the 1980s in which the government deployed violence, submission and brutal force following reports of alleged banditry activities. An estimated 20 000 lives were lost in what has popularly become known as Gukurahundi massacres. Since the Gukurahundi era, Zimbabwe has been characterized by violence allegedly perpetrated mainly by state agents and their ancillaries. General elections have been characterized by sanctioned campaigns of violence, which have been conducted with impunity. Perpetrators of human violations have not been held accountable for their actions. Violent ways of settling political differences have become culture.

A culture of violence may leave an impression that violence is mysterious and can't be pinned down. This has led to what Colaguori (2010) termed 'naturalization of violence' in which the continued existence of violence is justified as inevitable and unavoidable. Since 2000, Mugabe's government enacted repressive legislation as part of its clampdown on dissenting voices. The following draconian pieces of legislation were introduced: The *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (Chapter 10:27) (AIPPA)*, the *Public Order and Security Act (Chapter 11:17) (POSA)*. These pieces of legislation restricted the rights of the majority of Zimbabweans to freely assemble, associate and express themselves thereby allowing the government to stifle civil liberties.

Limited access to redress mechanisms for victims of organized violence and torture has encouraged a culture of impunity for perpetrators. For example, in May 2008, the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum filed an application against the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) before the SADC Tribunal on behalf of twelve of its clients who were all victims of organized violence and torture. The GoZ was found in breach of its obligations to act in accordance with the principle of 'human rights, democracy, and the rule of law' by failing to comply with court orders. In all the cases, the GoZ either failed and or neglected to pay the judgment debts altogether, or, in the cases where it was paid, the payment was done after lengthy delays thus rendering the compensation amount useless due to inflation. This was compounded by the prohibitive legislative terms such as the Section 5 of the State Liabilities Act Chapter (8.14), which does not permit the attachment of state property in execution of a court judgment. This statute and government's attitude towards court orders effectively renders domestic remedies ineffective and perpetuates a culture of impunity.

Selective application of the law involves irregular interpretation and enforcement of the law by the law enforcement agencies. The partisan Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) and the judiciary are believed to have affected their impartiality in the discharge of their duties, thereby affecting their upholding of the rule of law. Unfortunately law enforcement agencies have let away known suspects involved in politically motivated criminal acts. It is alleged that non-ZANU-PF members of parliament and perceived government critics (including journalists, human rights defenders and opposition activists) were targeted for arrest on flimsy charges and prosecuted. The leniency and disregard for justice delivery with which perpetrators are treated will only work as motivator or incentive for the perpetrator to further commit direct violence. Coupled with limited redress mechanisms for victims, victims themselves may choose to retaliate as happened with MDC supporters when faced with this scenario. In the process, a vicious cycle of violence is created in which perpetrators are motivated to infringe on the rights and freedoms of others. The Mugabe regime has continually used selective application of the law to deal with dissenting voices.

Madebwe, et al (2011) state that housing shortages in Zimbabwean towns and cities have been some of the major challenges of the post-independence era. After independence in 1980 Zimbabwe's cities experienced a proliferation in unplanned settlements, which were a result of rural urban migration and the subsequent failure of the urban economy to offer adequate housing and jobs. This left peri-urban space as the only sanctuary for the urban poor to live in and eke out a living informally. The failure by local authorities to provide urban housing and

social amenities led to the growth of many illegal structures reflecting structural violence. While there was a failure to redress the housing challenges, government embarked on a massive illegal structure demolition popularly known as ‘Operation Murambatsvina’ in May 2005. An estimated 700 000 urban Zimbabweans were rendered homeless or unemployed by the operation. The partisan police and military that carried out the operation reportedly arrested 40 000 for alleged illegal activities. Through this operation, serious human rights violations were committed including assaults; malicious damage to property; forced relocations and relocations and denial of access to healthcare and sanitation. It is interesting to note that most of these displaced urban dwellers were perceived to be opposition supporters since the MDC controls all the urban areas in Zimbabwe.

According to Mambondiani (2009) the function of structural violence needs to be understood in relation to an overall social system organized on the basis of violent political control. The level of political control desired involves the moral imposition of irrational beliefs on others that work against their own capacity for freedom of thought, as in the cases of forcing people to belong to certain political parties. Forced ZANU-PF rally attendance in Zimbabwe represents an activity that affects civil liberties. This has been the general trend in Zimbabwe where in times preceding major political events, the general public’s rights are subdued. Such behaviour disrupts the integrity of democratic processes and selectively victimises certain members of the population that do not conform to the irrational beliefs.

Christie, Wagner, and Winter (2001) observe that although direct violence tends to be more visible and easily perceived than structural violence, the two forms of violence are interdependent. Structural violence is both a source and a result of direct violence. More often than not the process is circular; structural violence may lead an oppressed group to direct violence, which may in turn leads to further oppression to curb the direct violence. For example, if a government feels threatened by the people protesting substandard living conditions, the government may respond with further oppression to curb the direct violence.

Thus people living in deteriorating socio-economic conditions and see them as unable to satisfy their needs in the face of a political system that they cannot otherwise influence, may resort to direct violence to address their needs. Likewise those in power often feel they must use direct violence to curb the unrest produced by structural violence. It is without doubt that structural violence leads to actions of direct violence. The existence of structural violence, such as

unequal distribution of resources or a corrupt political system inevitably produces conflict and often- direct violence.

Violence has to be understood within the context in which it unfolds. For Zimbabwe, the wider context of the socio-political economy has been the key in determining the nature of structural and personal expressions of violence in which vulnerability and powerlessness of the general public has been evident. The failures to redress the socio-economic issues that are bewildering society have multidimensional consequences to the direct violence that is experienced in society. There has been a growing nexus in which structural violence and direct violence have been a means and an end to depressing the achievement and enjoyment of political freedom. Thus the embeddedness of violence in social structures cannot be underestimated and, while greater attention has been put on prevention of primary direct violence more focus must be put on the detection and mitigation of structural violence as both forms of violence are threats to human security.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed three theoretical frameworks namely the Conflict Transformation Theory, Human Needs Theory and The Theory of Positive and Negative Peace that inform this study. The chapter also tried to situate each of the three theories discussed in relation to the pre and post-electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe. The next chapter looked the research methods and methodology that are used in this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design that was adopted by the study, the location of the research, the sample selection and the data collection methods. It further delves into how data was analysed and presented, discusses validity and reliability of the data collected, and gives a highlight of ethical considerations. The researcher's field experience is also presented and discussed.

4.2 Research Design

As observed by Creswell (2013) research design is the glue that holds all the elements of a research problem together. It explains how research is planned; the stages to follow while conducting the research project and how the research aims will be achieved. Kothari (2004) states that the research design serves to plan structure and execute the research to maximise the validity of the findings.

This research adopted a qualitative research design. According to Creswell (2007) qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particular to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data.

In the case of this research, which sought to identify the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe among other issues, qualitative research methodology ensured that the research extracted vital data from participants who in the case of this study were provincial chairpersons of the major political parties in Zimbabwe and the representatives of the five major civil society organizations based in the capital Harare and have an interest in the conduct of elections. Qualitative research methodology augurs well with this research because of various reasons. To begin with, pre and post-electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe are perpetrated along interparty lines involving mostly ZANU-PF supporters orchestrating state-sponsored abductions, beatings, murder, harassment and displacement of mainly opposition MDC activists. The researcher therefore ensured that he engaged party chairpersons that were seized with the mobilization and organization of their respective parties. With interparty violence sparing none of the ten Zimbabwean provinces, the engagement of provincial chairpersons put to rest how pre and post-electoral violence dynamics occur in Zimbabwe given the input and responses of the views of the provincial representatives of the major political parties who in this case are ZANU-PF and MDC. Civil society organizations have been and are still a vital cog in the observation of elections in Zimbabwe. Similarly, elsewhere in the global world, they have played a vital role in ensuring that international best practices in as far as holding democratic elections are upheld. It is therefore no surprise that this research included the five major civil society organizations in Zimbabwe by administering them with in-depth interviews so that they give their input on the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe among other issues.

4.3 Sampling and Data collection procedures

Sampling is a technique employed in research to minimize costs such as time and money. Sampling as a technique is considered to be a representative group of individuals selected from an entire population upon which a report can be made and conclusion drawn. In the context of this study, participants in the qualitative research were purposively selected because their characteristics add to and at the same time enrich the structure and character of the phenomena under study. For this reason, this study selected participants from each major political party that were representatives at the provincial level and also representatives of the five major civil society organizations in Harare that have an interest in elections in Zimbabwe.

As stated elsewhere in this research, the sources of data in this research were provincial chairpersons of the two major political parties in Zimbabwe namely ZANU-PF and MDC. Since Zimbabwe has a total of ten provinces, each political chairperson from each respective party represented each province. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with each provincial chairperson from both the MDC and ZANU-PF. It was a tedious, tiresome and an expensive exercise but the researcher had no choice but to rise to the task. In some instances, the researcher was forced to find overnight accommodation in some provinces such as Matabeleland North and South due to the fact that they are far away from Harare where the researcher lives. The researcher endured long hours of waiting for some respondents despite making prior arrangements with them at designated meeting points such as their provincial office headquarters. Most interviews were carried out the same day with the provincial chairpersons for each political party so as to cut on travelling costs on the part of the researcher who was personally funding his own studies.

Additionally, another five interviews were conducted with individuals drawn from the major civil society organizations that are based in Harare. This decision was predicated on two reasons. Firstly, all the major civil society organizations in Zimbabwe are based in Harare. Secondly, due to persecutions by the Zimbabwe government, most civil society organizations have merged so as to offer a strong challenge in their dealings with the ZANU-PF led government of Robert Mugabe. These interviews were carried out using a structured open-ended interview schedule as the point of reference. Discussions with the provincial political parties took about four weeks because the provinces are further apart from one another such that the researcher was involved in extensive travelling during the period of data collection. Discussions with the representatives of civil society organizations approximately took three hours and were conducted by the researcher. The researcher used a digital recorder to elicit and

to record the data. This recorded data together with the other interviews were given to analysts to analyse it before both sets of data were returned for safe-keeping with the researcher who subsequently put it under lock and key so as to abide with ethical issues.

There are specific limitations in the methodology. Firstly, the range of items covered in the interview schedule was exhaustive, and this tended to affect the quality of the responses towards the end of the discussion. However, this was overcome by randomising the order of questions in order to allow for an even spread of the fatigue effect. Secondly, a sample of five can hardly be 'representative' of civil society organizations in national terms. However, from inception, the study was not intended to give a representative picture of civil society responses to pre and post-electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe but to draw out a broad range of possible responses to dynamics of violence as perceived by the civil society organizations. Finally, the interviews were carried out before Mugabe further banned the few remaining civil society organizations in Zimbabwe, and the same respondents might now be persuaded, by the developments inside the country, to express different views or to modify their original stances. Despite this, however, the central views of the civil society organizations in as far as electoral violence dynamics are concerned still remain, and, the study still provides a focal point of reference.

4.4 Data Analysis and Presentation

The focus here, as observed by Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) is to interpret the data collected and presenting the findings in a language appropriate to the consensus of the specialist area of the researcher.

'Analysis is systematic, sequential, verifiable and continuous; it requires time but is not jeopardized by delay. It should entertain alternative explanations and is improved by feedback' (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The basis of my analysis was to go through transcripts and tape records. In order to come to the conclusion of data analysis, data were codified and thematically analysed. The words, the context through which data were collected, the internal consistency, frequency of responses by participants, extensiveness of comments as what was not said but expressed through gestures were considered in the final writing of this research.

In this study, data analysis was interpretive by its nature of thematic analytic methods. This method was used to identify the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe among other issues from provincial party chairpersons and representatives of civil society organizations who participated in the research. Since this is a qualitative research design, it is

assumed that meanings, attitudes and perceptions of those who participated in the study were derived from their party ideologies and life experiences, and that reality is subjective to their own conditions and circumstances rather than objective. This also means that participants' perceptions of views may differ from those of the interviewer.

Taking into account the above, it means that this approach has critical implications for research analysis. To this end, thematic content analysis was therefore seen relevant and appropriate to the research. Although the steps outlined by theorists largely overlap, the five steps outlined by Terre Blanche et al (2006) were primarily used in this study.

The first stage of data analysis involved going through each transcribed interview, reading and developing an intimate relationship with the data. This means the researcher became more familiar with the data and the content to be analysed. The analysis commenced from the onset of the interview planning and identification of participants. This suggests that before data analysis began, the researcher had a preliminary understanding about the phenomena being explored and had made preliminary conclusion of the research problem (Terre Blanche et al, 2006). This was followed by immersion in reading and re-reading transcribed texts of interviews and looking for emerging themes and developing tentative explanations. 'This also involved noting the quality of the transcripts, including the portrayed neutrality in asking questions and responding to participants' answers, and the richness of the detail in the field notes' (Ulin et al, 2002).

Secondly, themes were identified. This process was done using the same words, style, or terms used by participants from their own words. These words were again used to establish connections and 'infer general rules or classes from specific occurrences. Themes emerged from the text, rather than the researcher beginning with predetermined themes and fitting text to these themes. The identification of these themes was more than simply summarizing content' (Terre Blanche et al, 2006). Subsequently, identified information to be relevant to this theme was displayed in detail, and then it was reduced to its essential focus. Next step was to have each theme and examined in an attempt to discover the underlying core meanings and feelings of the participants. Finally, an overall evaluation and interpretation was done, assessing the emergent themes and how they related to each other (Ulin et al, 2002).

In the third stage, elaboration occurred: data were divided into themes, 'events and discussions no longer appeared in sequence'. Common topics and sub topics which were expressed in several ways were grouped together under a single theme. Elaboration then occurred as each

theme was studied and considered in more detail. This allowed for the subtle nuances to emerge (Terre Blanche et al 2006).

The final stage in the data analysis of this research entailed bringing together the interpretation of the data and checking it (Terre Blanche et al, 2006). The interpretation was reviewed, and identified deficiencies were attended to by the researcher. The researcher's personal role in the entire process was also reviewed and considered.

4.5 Validity and Reliability of the Data

This study determined the validity and reliability of the data as follows: After seeking the views of research participants, the researcher estimated the relevance of the methodological tools to the objectives of the study. After judgment and assessment, revisions were done accordingly. The researcher examined instruments used to collect data and reviewed researcher observation in order to establish its validity. With regards to the reliability of the instruments, interviews were carried out and responded to by 20 provincial chairpersons of both ZANU-PF and MDC in Zimbabwe. Similarly, revisions of in-depth interviews were continuously done until it became apparent to the researcher that 5 civil society organizations' participants volunteered the required responses. In an effort to ensure the reliability of findings, the consistency of the responses to each question was put to test. Sullivan (2001) defines reliability as concerned with consistency, stability and repeatability of the informants. It is also concerned with the investigator's ability to collect and record information accurately. The reliability of the research tools refers to the extent to which the responses to the question can produce consistently the same results if used repeatedly over time on the same people. In this research, the report is based on the responses of participants in relation to the three major objectives of this study and the research questions.

Silverman (2006) states that credibility is important for any type of study. Several steps were taken to ensure the validity of this research some of which are; multiple methods were combined in collection and analysis of data to ensure high credibility and accuracy rather than being reliant on a single method and importantly, the researcher allowed his understanding to be confirmed and amended by those whose opinions, experiences and views were called for in this research. As such, 'the participants remained part of the process, that is, from the field work to the analysis of the data' (Silverman, 2000, 2006).

4.6 Ethical Considerations

According to Raniga (2000) the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the research participants. This research was approved by the Higher Degrees Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The consent of the participants was sought at every level of the research which included the administering of the questionnaire and face to face in-depth interviews, as well as the use of a voice recorder during the interviews with prior permission by the interviewees. The participants were assured of confidentiality and were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any instance if they felt so. The questionnaires and interview data on the voice recorder were transcribed and locked in a personal computer using a password. Pseudonyms were used to encode the transcribed information and any evidence which revealed personal identity was disguised to ensure confidentiality.

The research was conducted in a way which ensured that none of the respondents were harmed or suffered adverse consequences from research participation. Respondents were not coerced to respond and the research was conducted with utmost respect of ethical values, moral expectation, and rules and regulations governing the conduct of a research especially in areas of data collection.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the research methods and methodology that is how the researcher carried out the in-depth interviews with the 25 respondents to this research that included provincial party chairpersons and the representatives of civil society organizations based in Harare and have an interest in Zimbabwe's electoral processes. The next chapter looked at the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 5

DYNAMICS OF PRE AND POST-ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN ZIMBABWE

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyzes the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe as suggested by twenty provincial chairpersons from both ZANU-PF and the MDC. The presentation and analyses are based on the participants' points of views regarding the first objective of this study which is to identify the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in

Zimbabwe. Additionally, the views and perceptions of five civil society organizations' representatives who participated in the in-depth interviews are presented in this chapter.

Due to the question of confidentiality and anonymity, respondents are identified as R1 to R20 for the provincial chairpersons and the year the interview was carried out. For instance, respondent number one is represented as (R1, 2017). The 5 civil society organizations' representatives are represented as Kilo, Oscar, Sierra, Tango and Victor, followed by the year of the interview; for instance (Oscar, 2017). Direct quotations from the participants are provided from the responses to each question.

5.2 Demographic Information of Participants

This section provides the demographic information of the respondents to this study. Variables such as their sex, age, and level of education are key in determining their understanding of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Similarly, such variables as age-group may also determine the way one's age shapes the way they view and can identify the pervasion of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Further to this, variables such as one's level of education cements one's comprehension of the issues that are under discussion. It therefore follows that when respondents suggest their views; it is highly likely that they would give informed responses that enrich the findings of the subject that is under synthesis because they are able to thoroughly understand the issues that are being investigated by the study. It is the contention of this study that the demographic information of the respondents proved to be worthwhile to this research since valuable responses were proffered by each and every respondent that took part in the study.

The table below shows the demographic information of the participants.

Interview	Sex of respondent	Age group of respondent	Level of education of respondent
Respondent 1	Male	18 – 30 years	Tertiary
Respondent 2	Female	18 – 30 years	Tertiary
Respondent 3	Male	31 – 40 years	Tertiary
Respondent 4	Male	31 – 40 years	Tertiary
Respondent 5	Female	31 – 40 years	Tertiary
Respondent 6	Female	31 – 40 years	Tertiary

Respondent 7	Female	41 – 50 years	Tertiary
Respondent 8	Male	41 – 50 years	Tertiary
Respondent 9	Male	41 – 50 years	Tertiary
Respondent 10	Male	41 – 50 years	Tertiary
Respondent 11	Female	41 – 50 years	Tertiary
Respondent 12	Male	51 – 60 years	Tertiary
Respondent 13	Female	51 – 60 years	Tertiary
Respondent 14	Female	51 – 60 years	Tertiary
Respondent 15	Female	51 – 60 years	Tertiary
Respondent 16	Female	51 – 60 years	Tertiary
Respondent 17	Male	Over 60 years	Tertiary
Respondent 18	Male	Over 60 years	Tertiary
Respondent 19	Male	Over 60 years	Tertiary
Respondent 20	Male	Over 60 years	Tertiary

Figure 1: Demographic information of participants.

The table above shows that out of the 20 respondents that were interviewed, 11 were males while 9 were females. This shows that Zimbabwean politics is predominantly male although the variation is not that big. On the other hand, it also shows that women are actively involved in the politics of the country since quite a considerable number of them are provincial chairpersons of the two major political parties of Zimbabwe. Although there is a gender disparity in terms of representation, it shows that Zimbabwean politics is making major strides to bridge the gap between men and women in the political affairs of the country.

Out of these twenty respondents, the age group 18 – 30 years had 2 respondents, which shows that the youth are playing a part in the politics of their country. This is a positive step because the youth are the leaders of tomorrow such that grooming them into politics at a young age is good for the country. The age group 31 – 40 years had 4 respondents; this group blends the youth and those that are in the middle ages which is also a positive development because the political parties are involving the young and the middle-aged in the political affairs of their country. The age-group 41 – 50 years had 5 participants, these people are now mature and they have acquired relative experience in the political affairs of the country. The age group 51 – 60 years had 5 respondents, this group consists of those people that are looking into retirement

and are experienced veterans of the political affairs of the country. The age group Over 60 years had 4 respondents; most of these people are now old given the life expectancy of the country which at the time of this study was at 55, so these politicians may retire from political life in the near future and leave it to those that are still very active. Suffice to say President Mugabe at the time of this study was 93 years old and still clinging to power despite his advanced age. The table further shows that all the 20 respondents who took part in the study had reached the tertiary level of education.

5.3 Dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Respondents suggested that the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe are: militarization of elections, murder of MDC activists, ethnicity, war rhetoric and narratives by Mugabe, destruction of opposition homes, violent land grab by Mugabe, draconian legislations, Mugabe's belief in one party state, state sponsorship of violence, illegal sanctions, incitation of violence by the MDC, the absence of a succession plan on the part of Mugabe, political intolerance between parties, politics of the belly and polarization of political parties. The five civil society organizations' representatives weighed in with their dynamics as diagrammatically presented below. It is imperative to state that some of the dynamics they suggested are more or less the same as those suggested by the twenty provincial chairpersons. Be that as it may, they might have suggested a few other dynamics that were raised by the provincial chairpersons. The dynamics they suggested are: attack on private media by Mugabe, culture of violence traced to colonialism, draconian pieces of legislation, economic decay leading to redundant and idle youth, persecution of voters by Mugabe, the military factor and threat of positions.

Table 2: Dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe as suggested by respondents.

Civil Society Organizations	MDC	ZANU-PF
Violent land grab by Mugabe	Draconian legislations	Ethnicity
Politics of the belly	Destruction of opposition homes	Illegal sanctions

Polarization of political parties	Mugabe's belief in one party state	Absence of succession plan on the part of Mugabe
Ethnicity	State sponsorship of violence	MDC incites violence
Political intolerance between parties	War rhetoric and narratives by Mugabe	Politics of the belly
	Militarization of elections	
	Ethnicity	

5.3.1 Militarization of elections as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Upon analyzing the root causes of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe, the findings to this study show that participants believed that militarization of elections was the main cause of electoral violence in Zimbabwe. This submission was advanced mainly by the MDC provincial chairpersons and a considerable number of ZANU-PF chairpersons too. The opposition has borne the brunt of the militarization of elections by President Mugabe in most of Zimbabwe's successive but contentious elections. The army usually targets opposition party supporters to force them to vote for ZANU-PF and President Mugabe. However, with Mugabe's continued stay in office, it seems even some of his provincial chairpersons were supporting the views raised by the MDC chairpersons in as far as militarization of elections is concerned. This is largely so because at the time of this study there were intra-party squabbles and violence in ZANU-PF between two groups that were positioning themselves to succeed the incumbent namely G40 led by his former typist and wife Grace and Team Lacoste led by the Vice-President Mnangangwa.

So intense is the intra-party violence that most of the provincial chairpersons seem to be against Mugabe and are now taking sides with the opposition to secretly condemn the militarization of elections in Zimbabwe. However, there were still some provincial chairpersons that supported the militarization of elections as a necessity because they allege that the MDC wanted to effect regime change in Zimbabwe at the instigation of the West who support them financially. Civil society organizations seemed to agree with those that suggested that militarization of elections in Zimbabwe was the chief architect of violence. The respondents' varied views are shown by their direct submissions below:

President Robert Gabriel Mugabe has appointed the military in key positions in almost all government departments such as the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission which is headed by former military officer George Chiweshe and also has Major Utoile Silaigwana as one of its senior officers. The appointment of these military officers into the ZEC ensures that they will manipulate the vote in favour of Mugabe even if the opposition wins the election as what happened in the year 2008, which culminated in the formation of the Government of National Unity even though Mugabe was defeated by Morgan Tsvangirai (RI, 2017).

Another respondent on militarization as a cause of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe had this to say:

Mugabe's real strength and power lies in the absolute coercion and force which emanates from the security forces including the army, police, prisons and the central intelligence organization as well as the liberation war veterans. He is using these security forces to the maximum and this militarization will be beneficial to him even if the MDC does well in any elections that might take place in Zimbabwe. Before and after every plebiscite in Zimbabwe, the security forces are unleashed everywhere so that they intimidate the electorate into voting for Mugabe for fear of being beaten. Moreover, the soldiers openly declare that they would never salute anyone without liberation war credentials even if they were to be elected as president of Zimbabwe (Victor, 2017).

Contrary to the submissions above, one participant had this to say:

The military are not apolitical, only mercenaries are apolitical because they are only interested in getting paid for their services. There is nothing wrong with our soldiers supporting President Mugabe and the revolutionary ZANU-PF party; they are free to choose a party of their choice and their choice is ZANU-PF. Our soldiers will never support the MDC because they are Western sell-outs bent on effecting regime change in our country (R15, 2017).

The submissions of some of the participants confirm previous studies that assert the militarization of Zimbabwe elections as a cause of violence (Masunungure, 2011; Todd, 2007; Murithi and Mawadza, 2011; Muzondidya, 2009). Although ZANU-PF is in denial of militarization of elections as a cause of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe; this argument is supported by the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in the year 2008 because Mugabe had lost the election to Morgan Tsvangirai. SADC had to intervene

through the then South African President Thabo Mbeki after realizing the expansive role of the military in the disputed plebiscite.

5.3.2 Ethnicity as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Findings to this study revealed that ethnicity has played an integral role in causing pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. This stems from the fact that Zimbabwe has two major dominant ethnic extractions which are the majority Shona and the minority Ndebele. These two ethnic groups have been in constant and sustained conflict since pre-colonial times. Previous studies suggest that when the Ndebeles migrated from South Africa in the middle to late 1890s, they raided the Shona and took away their women, children, livestock and grains such as maize, rapoko and sorghum (Comaroff, 1997; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008; Sithole, 1995). That effectively put the two groups at war with one another since that time to this day. In support of these submissions among others, this is what two of the respondents said:

The issue of ethnicity has some traits which date back to pre-colonial times mainly between the Shona and the Ndebele speaking people of Zimbabwe. In the distant past, the Ndebele were renowned for being a warlike and powerful tribe that thrived and survived by raiding the Shona for cattle, crops and women. These Ndebele practices created very serious ethnic rifts between the Shona and the Ndebele people. The enmity partially subsided with the coming of the white settlers to Zimbabwe. This ethnicity challenge however resurfaced during Zimbabwe's war of liberation when two parties emerged to fight the Chimurenga war separately. This is what culminated in the formation of ZAPU under Joshua Nkomo and ZANU then under Herbert Chitepo, then Ndabaningi Sithole and later Robert Mugabe. The reason was because of ethnic differences (R8. 2017).

Another participant to this study had this to say:

The post-colonial nation building project in Zimbabwe was convulsed by ethnic conflict between the periods 1982 to 1987. The trigger of the ethnic conflict was the ZIPRA military cadres who objected to the post-independence reintegration where ZANLA and ZIPRA wings were merged. ZIPRA combatants thus started a rebellion at Entumbane and other places and this is what prompted ZANU to conduct a crackdown in an operation that became known as the Gukurahundi to quell the rebellion by ZIPRA forces. The ensuing civil war was estimated to have resulted in the deaths of an estimated 20 000 people mainly in Matabeleland (R17. 2017).

These submissions by participants to this study clearly show that ethnicity is one of the main causes of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Ethnicity has also resulted in the death of other innocent people apart from those that perished from both sides during the civil war of 1982 to 1987 which resulted in the signing of the Unity Accord between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU. This resulted in the formation of the Unity Government led by Robert Mugabe. Ever since its formation, Zimbabwe has had two vice presidents from these two major ethnic groups to represent the interests of their ethnic groupings.

Despite political party differences, both ZANU-PF and MDC chairpersons seemed to agree that ethnicity cuts across political boundaries in Zimbabwe. This is further supported by previous studies that submit that ethnicity is one of the causes of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe (Comaroff, 1997; CCJP and LRF, 1997; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008).

5.3.3 Illegal sanctions as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

The other issue that arose as causing pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe from the participants to this study was illegal sanctions. This was in apparent reference to punitive measures imposed on the Mugabe regime by the European Union (EU) and the US for gross human rights abuses and electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Participants had divergent views on the effects of the sanctions with mostly ZANU-PF chairpersons alleging that the sanctions were the cause of the economic meltdown in the country while the MDC chairpersons and the civil society organizations were alleging that the economic meltdown was due to Mugabe's misrule.

Most companies have shut down citing viability challenges while others suggest that the environment is no longer conducive to do business because of a plethora of policies by Mugabe, chief among them the indigenization law that requires companies to cede fifty one percent ownership of their shares to local people. Over the past decade and a half, Zimbabwe, once the bread basket of southern Africa has been reduced to a basket case.

The following statements from key participants support these assertions:

President Mugabe has run-down this country. Right now we do not have our own currency as a country since the Zimbabwean dollar was relegated to the dustbin by hyper inflation way back in 2008 after Mugabe stole the election. The United States dollar that he has adopted as surrogate currency has disappeared from the country, even the South African rand. Most private businesses have closed shop in this country, the government is failing to pay the civil service on time and to worsen the scenario, and the recently introduced bond notes have also

disappeared. Prices of goods and services are skyrocketing by day right under the nose of Mugabe and his recycled bunch of clueless ministers. They are to blame for this chaos in the country. Imagine, the rate of unemployment is now over ninety percent. Every Zimbabwean has been turned into a vendor due to Mugabe's misrule, our graduates have been reduced to airtime sellers by the street corners, this is absolute failure on the part of Mugabe, and he must go! (R15, 2017).

The other key informant had this to say:

Our president is a victim of the machinations of the West who are trying to cause havoc in the country so that they effect regime change. Look at the way they sponsor the MDC to protest and cause unnecessary problems in this country. The Americans and the British want to propel Tsvangirai to power because he is their puppet and he was created by them to further their post-colonial agenda and imperialism in Zimbabwe among other African countries. President Mugabe has the mandate to rule the country because he was voted into office by the majority of Zimbabweans. It must be categorically stated that this regime change agenda perpetrated against him by the MDC and their western handlers is bound to fail (R12, 2017).

These divergent views of the illegal sanctions as dynamics of violence in Zimbabwe seem to stem from the parallel ideologies of ZANU-PF and the MDC. There is open animosity and aggression between these two antagonistic parties such that the blame game is always passed back and forth in an effort to rule the country by these two fierce competitors.

5.3.4 Absence of a succession plan on the part of Mugabe as dynamics of pre and post electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Mugabe has ruled Zimbabwe for a record thirty-seven years to date, since independence from British colonial rule in 1980. Participants to this study including the MDC, civil society organizations and even ZANU-PF suggested that Mugabe has failed to handle succession issues in his ruling ZANU-PF party such that with his advancing age, other party members are fiercely engaged in intra-party fights in order to succeed him when he eventually abdicates the throne. So fierce and sustained are the fights that are now pitting his wife and former typist Grace and one of the current vice-presidents Emmerson Mnangagwa. In the recent past, the internecine fights have included food poisoning between these front-runners to succeed the nonagenarian Mugabe. To compound this problem, his wife Grace has arguably usurped executive powers due to Mugabe's advanced age yet she is merely a controversial women's league chairperson. At the time of writing this thesis, plans were afoot to hold a special congress

in ZANU-PF in December to catapult Grace to be one of the other vice-presidents of the country. It is widely believed that Mugabe has earmarked her to take over the position of Mnangagwa.

One of the participants said the following:

Developments in the recent past have confirmed that Mugabe is preparing his own wife to take over the presidency of the country. Grace has but usurped all the executive powers of the presidency yet she is merely a party chairperson of the women's league. Astoundingly, even the senior ministers including the two vice-presidents are now towing to Grace's commands in the day to day business of ZANU-PF. Despite fierce criticism from within ZANU-PF, which has resulted in numerous purges, Grace seems to be succeeding in her unbridled quest to become the next president of Zimbabwe thereby creating a Mugabe dynasty. The woman is rough, shoddy, uncouth and uncultured as shown by casualties lying all over in her road to succeed her ailing and frail husband (R4, 2017).

The other participant aired their views as follows:

You will recall that there are two factions in ZANU-PF namely the G-40 allegedly led by Grace and Team Lacoste led by Mnangagwa. It is evidently becoming clear by day that Mugabe himself is the leader of the G-40. He is actually propelling his wife to the presidency; look at how she publicly scolds senior party officials such as George Charamba while Mugabe keeps quiet, where does Grace draw this power from? Mugabe is the real culprit here, he is a wily old fox cunningly positioning his wife to take over and protect his family's interests when he is gone (R19, 2017).

5.3.5 Murder of MDC activists as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

It is instructive to note that a number of studies conducted in this field argue that pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe resulted in the murder of hundreds of MDC supporters and activists (Human Rights Watch, 2008; Bratton and Masunungure, 2008; Dzimiri et al 2014; Alexander and Tendi, 2008). The findings of these other studies were confirmed by this current study particularly with the views of the opposition MDC and civil society organizations. It is also very important to state that although the MDC and the civil society organizations were in collusion that the murder of activists and supporters was among the prime causes of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe; ZANU-PF was in denial. ZANU-PF chairpersons argued

that the murder of opposition supporters happens everywhere in other African countries and Zimbabwe was not exceptional. They further argued that the murder of the opposition activists should be viewed in the broader context of what happens in the electoral processes of other African countries such as Kenya, Burundi and South Africa among others where numerous lives have been lost due to electoral violence. One of the participants remarked:

The murder of opposition supporters happens in most African countries, Zimbabwe is not an exception. Look at what happened in Kenya in 2008 and what is also happening now in the same country. Similarly, the same scenario is occurring in pretty every election in South Africa where ANC councillors are shot dead in broad daylight due to electoral violence. Elsewhere, the trend has been the same in Burundi, where people are killed almost on a daily basis because Nkurunziza is clinging to power at all costs. We are living in perpetual fear especially this time where we are heading for general elections in the year 2018, events on the ground are pointing towards insecurity in this country (R11, 2017).

When the researcher probed further into this issue about the murder of opposition activists as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe, it was notable that most opposition chairpersons showed a great sense of insecurity for their own lives and those of their party supporters. They were reluctant to openly talk about their experiences in the murder of their fellow activists because it tended to open old wounds that were never healing and also that if they openly shared this information, the very people that murdered their supporters would also do the same to them since they believed that these murders were sponsored by the state. A statement from one of the chairpersons illustrates this feeling:

Yes, we lost a considerable number of our supporters to these ZANU-PF thugs sponsored by Mugabe. We know the culprits and most of them are moving freely in our cities, villages and towns, they even boast that they can also do the same thing to us. This is grossly unfair; we live in perpetual fear for freely exercising our democratic right to choose a part that we want to support as enshrined in the Zimbabwean constitution. One day, this shall come to an end; God will judge these brutal thugs for killing our supporters (R6, 2017).

5.3.6 War rhetoric and narratives by Mugabe as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

While analysing the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe, the findings on previous studies that submitted that Mugabe uses war rhetoric and narratives to coerce voters were confirmed (Raftopoulos and Alexander 2006; Muzondidya, 2010; Matlosa, 2011;

Makumbe, 2009). This study confirmed that whenever elections are impending, it has become routine for Mugabe to remind the electorate that Zimbabwe's independence came through the shedding of blood and that a repeat of this could reoccur should voters vote against him and ZANU-PF. These were the views of the opposition MDC and the civil society organizations, to contrast these views, ZANU-PF chairpersons were in the defensive mode as usual; to them, there was nothing sinister about the citizens being reminded of the history of the armed struggle that brought independence to Zimbabwe. If needs be, they asserted, the ideals of the liberation struggle should be inculcated in the hearts and minds of every patriotic Zimbabwean. In their views, the ZANU-PF chairpersons submitted that there was therefore nothing amiss in President Mugabe invoking the narratives of the war of liberation to protect the gains of Zimbabwe's hard-won independence. Below are direct statements from the participants:

Mugabe is on record saying our votes must go with our guns; after all any vote... shall have been the product of the gun. The gun, which provides the votes, should remain its security officer, its guarantor. Now, in the face of these threats from the president himself, do you think the violence would subside? No, Mugabe is further stalking the flames of violence so that he stays in power (R4, 2017).

In support of these sentiments stated above, another key participant had this to say:

Mugabe and ZANU-PF have learnt the art of intimidating the people of Zimbabwe to vote for him against their will. That's the reason why you see him on all state media many times before the elections issuing threats of returning to war if he loses the elections. He knows that the people of Zimbabwe are scared of going back to war especially those that witnessed the armed struggle of Zimbabwe's war of liberation. So, issuing out threats of violence has become one of his tactics to coerce the electorate into voting for him for fear of going back to war (R15, 2017).

In direct contrast to the above submissions, the following is what one respondent had to say:

Our independence as a nation came as a result of the bitter execution of the armed struggle against the British colonial rule. Many of our gallant sons and daughters of Zimbabwe paid the price with their lives so we could have freedom in this country. Isn't it prudent then to safeguard our hard-won independence by reminding all the patriotic citizens of where we came from as a country? The liberation struggle is the cornerstone on which the very foundations of Zimbabwe are built upon (R19, 2017).

5.3.7 Destruction of opposition homes as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe

While analysing the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe as raised by some participants, especially the MDC chairpersons and the civil society organizations, the destruction of opposition homes was suggested as a major cause of violence. ZANU-PF chairpersons defended the destruction of these homes as a mere clean-up campaign that was intended to get rid of criminals and to maintain high levels of hygiene and also to reduce overcrowding in high density suburbs throughout the country. Although there was a fierce debate concerning this issue among the participants, previous studies that suggested that the destruction of opposition homes in Zimbabwe was one of the chief dynamics of violence were confirmed (Chitiyo, 2009; Coltart, 2007; Brett, 2010; Reeler, 2009).

Soon after the presidential elections of 2002, Mugabe's government went on a nationwide campaign in all major cities and towns destroying dwellings in an Operation called Murambatsvina (Clear the dirt) as punishment to all the perceived MDC strongholds for having voted against him and ZANU-PF. Although the government tried to down-play the operation as nothing other than a clean-up campaign, analysts contended that this was punishment for opposition supporters. Even the then UN Habitat for human settlements, Tibaijuka condemned the destruction of these dwellings because it left almost 900 000 people homeless, among them, women and children. Participants identified the destruction of homes as a very painful cause of violence in most of their supporters; it seemed their understanding of this dynamic of violence was very clear from one person to the other. This is shown by their submissions below:

Mugabe is a heartless and ruthless tyrant. Imagine destroying people's homes and livelihoods just because they did not vote for him? Most of those houses that were destroyed throughout the country belonged to opposition activists; women and children were left out to die in the cold and rain. Most of those people will never be able to own a house in towns and cities again because they cannot afford to do that again given the perennial economic meltdown that has become a permanent feature in Zimbabwe (R6, 2017).

The other participant had this to say:

The largest number of those houses that were destroyed by Mugabe and his government belonged to poor people such as vendors, traders, housemaids and others who are employed in the informal sector. No wonder why most of those houses were sub-standard. Now, most of

those people relocated to their rural areas after the demolition of their homes, others are still roaming on the streets and sleep on pavements at night because they have nowhere to go (Tango, 2017).

In direct contrast to the above submissions, this is what the other participant had to say:

In the early 2000s, there were a lot of criminal activities that were going on in most high density suburbs throughout the country, as a policy measure the government decided to intervene to deal with that ever-growing menace. It became incumbent that this threat of insecurity because of theft and muggings among our urban dwellers had to be dealt with once and for all. Similarly, overcrowding and low levels of hygiene were other issues that needed immediate intervention of the government to nip them in the bud. This whole exercise was never directed to a particular group of people or political party (R15, 2017).

5.3.8 Violent land grab by Mugabe as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Violent land grab by Mugabe and his government was highlighted as one of the root causes of pre and post-electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe. Participants had very divergent views on the issue of the violent land grab. To the MDC and civil society organization representatives; it was alleged that Mugabe embarked on a violent and chaotic land grab exercise throughout Zimbabwe to dispossess mainly white farmers of their prime land and to redistribute it to the black Zimbabweans. They further allege that the whole exercise was violent and chaotic in its nature. On the other hand, ZANU-PF chairpersons were for the land redistribution in its entirety; they supported it because they said it was necessary so as to correct the imbalance in land ownership that was concentrated in the hands of the few whites at the expense of the majority Zimbabweans.

In a counter offensive, the MDC further alleged that the whole exercise of land redistribution only benefitted people that had ZANU-PF links and not landless Zimbabweans as what the government wants to portray to the whole world. Studies that were also carried out on the contentious and volatility of the land issue in Zimbabwe and elsewhere especially in Africa were further confirmed (Ndulo, 2010; Mutua, 2008; ZESN, 2008; Sithole and Makumbe, 1997; Stiff, 2000, Reeler, 2009).

Other analysts suggested that the violent land grab by Mugabe was necessitated by Tony Blair's government's refusal to honour the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979 where the British were

to fund land acquisition on a willing-buyer-willing-seller basis. When Blair and his government disowned the agreement, Mugabe was enraged and he forcefully invaded all the white-owned commercial farms. The participants from civil society organizations and the opposition MDC admitted that although the principle of land redistribution was noble, it was the violent way that it was done that was improper. Moreover, they further alleged that the whole exercise benefitted mostly ZANU-PF supporters instead of ordinary landless Zimbabweans. The mixed views of the participants are captured below:

When whites colonized Zimbabwe, they used violence. So, it should come as no surprise that ZANU-PF and other nationalist parties had to use violence to get rid of colonialism; violence had to be met with violence; simple. President Mugabe inherited the use of violence from the Smith regime that was brutal in the way it treated the black Zimbabwean. Moreover, most white farmers were known racists who lived lavish and expensive life-styles whilst their mostly black farm labourers were languishing in abject poverty; they were merely fit for nothing in the eyes of the white men save for being hewers of wood and drawers of water. How on earth could the minority whites who were about 4500 in total take away all the prime farming land of Zimbabwe while the majority who were more than 10 million were relegated to unproductive, dry and rocky black reserves fit for raising donkeys only because of their ability to withstand harsh conditions. Mugabe was right! (Sierra, 2017).

The other respondent had this to say:

Zimbabwe's economy is agro-based, so land redistribution should be understood in this context, because it underscores the need of sustenance on every citizen of the country. In other words, land is the economy; and the economy is land. It does not matter how Mugabe expropriated the land, at the end of the day what matters most is the saying that the means justifies the end. Land redistribution was an emergency, each and every citizen had to have their own piece of land so that they become productive; therefore land redistribution was a noble cause (R14, 2017).

5.3.9 Draconian legislations as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Draconian legislations were some of the major causes of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe as suggested by participants to this research. Participants had varied views concerning draconian pieces of legislation with the usual antagonism between ZANU-PF and the MDC coming to the fore over this contentious dynamics of violence. To ZANU-PF chairpersons, POSA and AIPPA were necessary evils that ensured that the opposition MDC

and their supporters were kept in constant check so that they would not cause unnecessary anarchy in the country. They alleged that before the promulgation of these two pieces of legislation, the MDC including the private media were staging protests against a democratically elected government of President Mugabe at the slightest provocation so that they please their funders including the British.

On the other hand, the opposition MDC chairpersons and the civil society organizations representatives charged that in his quest to stay in power, Mugabe had employed every trick to stifle their democratic space. To them, this is what resulted in the promulgation of a plethora of laws that close every space for the opposition and civil society activism in Zimbabwe. Moreover, they charged that the ever increasing popularity of the opposition with the voters was the reason why Mugabe decided to adopt these repressive legislations in order to contain the opposition. The following are the views of the participants:

Before the institution of POSA and AIPPA, the MDC was causing a lot of havoc and mayhem across the country by holding unnecessary and endless protests to effect regime change in Zimbabwe as instructed by their handlers in the US and in Europe including Britain. Their agenda was very clear, they wanted to portray our democratically elected government as tyrannical so that the British would find a scape-goat to invade us as they did in Libya. Now, with the introduction of POSA and AIPPA, things are normalising in the country because these people no longer have the leeway to do what they want (R11, 2017).

In direct contrast to these submissions, the following is what the other participant had to say:

The private media is stifled and its space is effectively closed by Mugabe, journalists are beaten, arrested, threatened and murdered by his regime. Media houses are burnt for reporting against ZANU-PF such as what happened to the Daily News in 2000. Draconian pieces of legislation such as POSA and AIPPA are put in place to deny the opposition space to campaign. Mugabe uses State media to instil fear into voters by continuously bombarding them with liberation war discourse and episodes where uncensored images of events that happened in the war are screened. To assert his grip on power, Mugabe uses the military to routinely tell the electorate that the gun is mightier than the pen, such that even if they vote for Tsvangirai, they would subvert the will of the people to keep Mugabe in power (Victor, 2017).

Another participant who supported the same views had this to say:

In order to deal with the ever increasing popularity of the opposition MDC, Mugabe ensured that POSA was promulgated as a law which effectively made it difficult for the opposition to

assemble their supporters without being cleared by the police. AIPPA was meant to give a total media black-out on issues of arrests of journalists, murder of activists and displacement of opposition supporters among other human rights abuses by Mugabe and ZANU-PF (R4, 2017).

5.3.10 Mugabe's belief in one-party state as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Several studies that revealed that Mugabe's ambition to have a one-party state in Zimbabwe were confirmed by this study (Sithole and Makumbe, 1997; Dzimiri et al 2014; CCJP and LRF, 1997). Since independence in 1980, Mugabe wanted to have a one-party state in Zimbabwe. This argument is supported by the fact that he went on to fight PF-ZAPU led by the late Joshua Nkomo in a civil war mainly in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces so that he stamped his authority as the only party existing in Zimbabwean politics. A few other parties that were formed such as ZUM among others were also violently dealt with by Mugabe to their extinction. Hence it comes as no surprise that in this age of democracy and pluralism, Mugabe still believes that the only legitimate party that should exist in Zimbabwe is ZANU-PF. These views were shared by the MDC and the civil society organizations. ZANU-PF chairpersons had varied views; to them there was nothing wrong in having a one-party state in Zimbabwe. They cited examples of China where they alleged had only one party and the country is thriving under that system. They further stated that President Mugabe was now looking east as one of his government's policies because the Chinese were the epitome of success as witnessed by them being the world's largest economy. The views of the participants are captured below:

ZANU-PF wants to maintain a one-party Marxist state. Mugabe is feared for dealing decisively with parties like ZAPU, ZUM among others, to him, the MDC is not an exception and it must be ruthlessly crushed. He also uses the liberation war mantra persistently and perpetually to cow voters, especially those that witnessed the horrors of the liberation war because they fear war should ZANU-PF lose elections. Mugabe accuses the West of sponsoring the opposition MDC to effect regime change in Zimbabwe; he therefore uses the military to thwart any move to achieve that goal by the opposition (Oscar, 2017).

The other participant had the following to say:

The People's Republic of China is a one-party state and it is thriving economically and politically too. In fact it is arguably the world's largest economy followed by the US. This is the reason why our visionary leader President Mugabe is now looking east as one of his government's policies (R17, 2017).

5.3.11 State-sponsorship of violence as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Upon analysing the findings to this study, it was evident that opposition chairpersons believed that pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe was sponsored by the state. While they suggested this, their counterparts, the ZANU-PF chairpersons vehemently denied that violence was sponsored by the state. The MDC chairpersons and representatives of civil society organizations allege that the perpetrators of violence are largely structures of government and ZANU-PF such as the army, police, the CIO, war veterans and the youth. Additionally, participants believed that the violence was state-sponsored because in cases where violence was reported, no arrests were made and in other instances, participants suggested that their tormentors were just given petty sentences like fines and set free by the courts. This is despite the gravity of the offences committed which included murder, torture, disappearances and destruction of property and homes for suspected opposition activists. Below are direct quotations that show mixed views from the participants:

The youths that were beating up our supporters in this province in the previous harmonized elections were moving in army trucks. Sometimes they would mount roadblocks in various places in the province before the elections flushing out known opposition supporters before force-marching them to re-education camps where others disappeared while some returned with multiple injuries due to beating and torture. When victims reported these cases to the police, they were told to seek treatment at clinics and hospitals and no arrests of the perpetrators were ever made. Some of the youths were camped at the local police stations in the province singing their party songs and forcing people to attend their all-night-meetings (R8, 2017).

The other key informant had this to say:

The most appalling scenario is that our police force has become partisan; they have now become part and parcel of ZANU-PF. We are no longer protected as citizens of Zimbabwe; in fact the police together with the soldiers are now our biggest threat, they are working in connivance with Mugabe to suppress any dissenting voice from the people. That is the reason why most ZANU-PF supporters beat up people at will, they know that the police will never arrest them (Tango, 2017).

In direct contrast to the above submissions, one of the participants had this to say:

President Mugabe is always advocating for peace in our country; it is a lie by the opposition and their sponsors that ZANU-PF supports violence. The opposition party supporters are the ones that provoke our security forces by taking orders from their leader Tsvangirai to violently remove a democratically elected government. Now, when the government sends the security forces to deal with them, they cry foul. Do you expect the government to fold their arms and watch while the MDC is causing havoc in the country? No ways (R13, 2017).

5.3.12 Incitation of violence by the MDC as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Participants to this research suggested that pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe was largely incited by the MDC. This view was advanced by the ZANU-PF chairpersons; on the contrary, their MDC counterparts including civil society organizations were in denial of this submission. Previous studies seemed to support the MDC because it was their supporters and those from the civil society organizations including journalists who bore the brunt of violence by ZANU-PF; in incidences where the opposition supporters were caught up in violence, it was largely in self-defence from the ZANU-PF youth and the war veterans (Alexander and Tendi, 2008; Coltart, 2007; Brett, 2010). Similarly, when MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai was arrested and charged with inciting his supporters to violently protest against the government, the case crumbled due to the absence of evidence to that effect. This suggestion could be an act of trying to play the blame game on the opposition by ZANU-PF chairpersons. Below are direct quotations from the respondents:

The MDC supporters are the ones that start violence all the time, and when ZANU-PF retaliates they always cry foul and run to the private newspapers to report that they have been assaulted. Morgan Tsvangirai was on record urging his supporters to take ZANU-PF head-on so that they remove a democratically elected government through the use of violence. We know that his British and American handlers are the ones that are ill-advising him to destabilize the country. He must be reminded that ZANU-PF is here to stay; Tsvangirai will never rule this country (R15, 2017).

5.3.13 Political intolerance between parties as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Participants to this study seemed to agree that there was political intolerance between ZANU-PF and the MDC leading to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Previous studies

which stated that there were irreconcilable ideological differences between Zimbabwe's two main political parties were confirmed (Makumbe, 2009; Raftopoulos and Alexander, 2006). Although all participants including the representatives of civil society organizations agreed that party intolerance between ZANU-PF and the MDC causes violence, their comprehension of intolerance seemed to differ as shown in their responses below:

Mugabe and ZANU-PF have ruined this country, they are a total disaster, he must go so that we can save this country from total collapse. His Marxist and Leninist policies are not paying any dividends; it's the Chinese and the Russians that are benefitting from all his policies, they have looted all our diamonds and other precious minerals while the ordinary Zimbabwean is struggling to make ends meet, this state of affairs should never be allowed to persist, it must come to end, Mugabe is a failure (R6, 2017).

The other respondent had this to say:

Regime change agenda by the western-sponsored MDC is doomed to fail in Zimbabwe just like it has done in other countries like Venezuela, Iran and North Korea. President Mugabe is a strong leader; he will not be removed by the MDC puppets, never ever! There will be bloodshed, this country gained independence after a long and protracted war with the same British that are supporting the MDC to cause problems here in Zimbabwe; they are doomed to fail (R12, 2017).

5.3.14 Politics of the belly as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Participants to this study suggested that politics of the belly was among the causes of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Their argument seemed to stem from the fact that although each and every political party in Zimbabwe is guided by its own ideology, individual leaders within these parties will always safe-guard their interests in terms of benefits. Even the civil society organizations asserted that political leaders are prone to rise to the defence of their positions once they are threatened by different factors including elections. By so doing, this defence of positions that are beneficial to them and their families comes with its own violent proportions that are more often than not of staggering proportions. This argument from participants is supported by the following excerpts from the participants:

Positions in any institution come with its own benefits to the individual and their families among others. It therefore comes as no surprise that ministers and members of parliament resort to the use of sustained violence in order to keep their positions in any political party.

These positions guarantee them their own bread and butter and that of their families and other dependents too (R19, 2017).

The other key informant had this to say:

Do not be fooled that all these aspiring leaders have the interests of the people at heart, no; it's a game of ensuring their own survival. Why would a person kill, shoot or torture someone? It is because they stand to gain from the state of affairs, losing an election to them also means loss of popularity, status, livelihood and other things (R8, 2017).

5.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to present and analyse the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe as suggested by participants to this research. In order to achieve the objectives of this chapter and the study as a whole, the findings from the interviews conducted with 20 provincial chairpersons and 5 civil society organizations' representatives were the points of reference. The findings of this chapter identified the dynamics of violence as follows: militarization of elections, murder of MDC activists, ethnicity, war rhetoric and narratives by Mugabe, destruction of opposition homes, violent land grab by Mugabe, draconian pieces of legislation, Mugabe's belief in one-party state, state sponsorship of violence, illegal sanctions imposed by the US, Britain and the European union, inciting of violence by the MDC, absence of a succession plan on the part of Mugabe, political intolerance between parties, politics of the belly and polarization of political parties. The next chapter looked at the existing mechanisms to stem electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 6

EXISTING MECHANISMS TO STEM VIOLENCE IN ZIMBABWE

6.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. It is important to state that this is the second objective of this study which is to determine the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. The points of departure are the views from the 20 provincial party chairpersons and the 5 representatives of the civil society organizations that took part in the study.

6.2 Existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

The following diagram shows the responses that were given by representatives of civil society organizations:

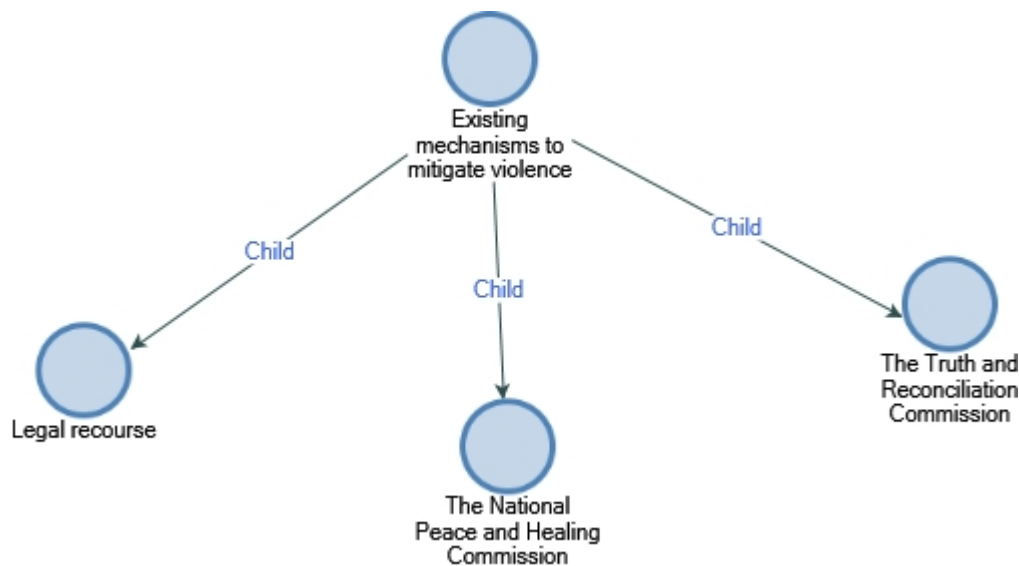


Figure 3: Existing mechanisms to mitigate violence Model as coded by NVIVO.

The diagram above shows the findings that were suggested by participants as the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. These mechanisms are: legal recourse, the National Peace and Healing Commission (NPHC) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The findings from the initial interviews from the 20 respondents concurred with the findings from the 5 civil society organizations' representatives save for civic education as a mechanism to stem violence that was raised by the former group of participants to this research. This mechanism that was suggested shall also be discussed in this section of this chapter. Participants in both categories strongly agreed that there were limited mechanisms that existed to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Moreover, participants alluded to the fact that even in cases where the mechanisms existed, their effectiveness left a lot to be desired and hence the perpetual existence of pre and post-electoral violence in all successive elections in Zimbabwe.

6.2.1 Legal recourse as an existing mechanism to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

While all the participants to this research agreed that legal recourse was an existing mechanism to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe, some, especially the opposition MDC chairpersons were decrying the effectiveness of this existing mechanism to mitigate violence. They argued that most judgments pronounced by the courts always favour ZANU-PF and that in itself shows that the courts were on the side of Mugabe since he is their appointing authority due to executive powers vested in him by the constitution of Zimbabwe. Representatives of

civil society organizations seemed to collude with the views of the opposition chairpersons by further suggesting that Zimbabwean courts have become corrupt and partisan in the execution of their duties and therefore could not be trusted to handle cases regarding pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. They asserted that in most cases of electoral violence, the opposition supporters were the victims, yet the courts seemingly mete out very light sentences to perpetrators of violence because they support Mugabe and ZANU-PF.

On the other hand, ZANU-PF chairpersons were opposed to the submissions of the MDC and civil society organizations representatives; they maintained that the judiciary was very competent and that it was impartial too. They argued that the opposition MDC and their supporters lose those court cases because they were always fabricating stories of violence because they are bent on destabilizing the country. They also said this was the reason why the MDC and their supporters were always losing the court cases because they were in most cases fabricated and cooked up so that they portray ZANU-PF as a violent party. The views from the participants are captured below:

Mugabe has captured the judiciary; our courts of law are only serving the interests of Mugabe and ZANU-PF. In all the previous elections to date, violence is astoundingly pervasive, yet no arrests of the perpetrators of violence are made, these very perpetrators are mostly known ZANU-PF supporters including the security forces. In cases where these perpetrators are brought to the courts; they are released without even going on trial or the sentences are very light. Perpetrators of violence even boast that these courts of law are controlled by ZANU-PF and therefore they would be released even if victims would report them to the police or if they were taken to court. So, it's a sheer waste of time for the aggrieved party to approach the courts of law for redress. The judgments are always predetermined in favour of ZANU-PF (R5, 2017).

Another respondent reacts this way:

President Mugabe is the appointing authority of all senior positions in the judiciary system of Zimbabwe. Moreover, even the newly appointed Minister of Justice, Happyton Bonyongwe is a former military officer and war veteran of the second Chimurenga. There are many other judges such as Justices Bhunu among others who are former war veterans and supporters of Mugabe. Their appointments to the Ministry of Justice confirms the militarization of all state departments among other places by Mugabe to ensure that he has effective control of the country. All these people are staunch ZANU-PF supporters; you can then imagine going to the same courts to seek a redress! It becomes a total joke (Tango, 2017).

Contrasting the above submissions; one of the participants had this to say:

Zimbabwe has one of the best judiciary systems in Africa and the whole world; our judges and lawyers are so competent such that they are practising in other countries. Our problem is therefore not the judiciary system, the real problem is the opposition MDC who are always trying to attract attention from the world by claiming that they are victims of non-existent violence; ZANU-PF is a peaceful organization. This is the reason why all their cases are lost at the courts of law because they are porous (R20, 2017).

Despite these accusations and counter-accusations from the participants, this study noted that previous studies on the absence of strong institutions to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe were further confirmed. Literature is awash with critics sighting the state-capture of the judiciary by Mugabe to maintain his grip on power. The late Justice Mutambanengwe resigned from the bench and left to work in Namibia citing interference by Mugabe in matters judicial. In the recent past, the former Prosecutor General (PG) Tomana was sacked from his post by Mugabe after allegedly ruling in favour of the latter's opponents in a case that was before the courts of law. He was subsequently replaced by Goba (Ndulo, 2010; Sithole and Makumbe, 2009; Brett, 2010; Bratton and Masunungure, 2008).

6.2.2 The National Peace and Healing Commission as an existing mechanism to stem violence in Zimbabwe.

Although participants from across the political divide and the representatives of the civil society organizations agreed that the NPHC was another mechanism to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe; they fiercely differed on whether this commission has contributed meaningfully to mitigate violence since its formation. The opposition MDC chairpersons suggested that since the formation of this commission by an act of parliament, it has virtually done very little in as far as stemming pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe is concerned. Representatives of civil society organizations supported this view by further stating that despite the existence of the NPHC, pre and post-electoral violence was pervasive in Zimbabwe.

On the other hand, ZANU-PF chairpersons argued that the NPHC was slowly but surely asserting its authority in as far as stemming pre and post-electoral violence was concerned. They further asserted that in a country ravaged by punitive sanctions imposed by the US,

Britain and the EU, funding was a major challenge that the commission was facing in executing its mandate to mitigate pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Participants' views are captured below:

Our hope and confidence in the National Peace and Healing Commission are fast vanishing into thin air; the commission is merely a paper tiger; it has absolutely no teeth with which to bite. Its very existence is threatened on two fronts; firstly, the broke government cannot afford to spare any funding for its sustenance because it is itself living on hand to mouth, secondly, mostly people believe that this commission has to be restructured, Mugabe ensured that his blue-eyed boys were smuggled there to serve his own selfish interests and not the interests of the general Zimbabweans (Oscar, 2017).

The other key informant had this to say:

Can you imagine that almost five years have passed since the National Peace and Healing Commission was formed? It has done no meaningful business at all; we are witnessing an escalation of violence as we heading to the 2018 elections, but the commission is silent; it is nowhere in the picture, this is just another commission, it's dormant to say the least; it was largely dysfunctional from its very inception (Kilo, 2017).

In direct contrast to the above submissions, one of the participants had this to say:

The NPHC is in its embryonic stage; it is facing a plethora of challenges; chief among them is funding because of the sanctions imposed on our country by America and other western countries including Britain. In fact, the commission is doing its best under very severe and hostile conditions that were brought to Zimbabwe at the invitation of the opposition including the current illegal sanctions. People have to be patient with this commission because it is doing everything possible to deliver (R17, 2017).

6.2.3 The Truth and Reconciliation Commission as an existing mechanism to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe

When analysing the views of participants on the existence of mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe, it was observed that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was closely related to the National Peace and Healing Commission. The difference was that whereas the former deals with issues of reconciling the perpetrators of violence with their victims; the latter was more into peace-building so that violence would not re-emerge from

future electoral processes. Opposition parties and civil society organizations have been at the fore-front, calling for retributive justice from the government for its role in pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. It is also worthwhile to mention that some opposition parties have been calling for restorative justice without retribution.

On the other hand, provincial chairpersons from ZANU-PF suggested that this commission as with the other commission must be supported by funding from government so that it could effectively carry out its mandate of stemming pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. They further suggested that elsewhere in the region there were commissions like these before and they did not provide solutions to challenges faced by the country such as violence overnight, but after a lot of hard work.

It is also imperative to mention that this commission is almost a replica model of the famous South African Truth and Reconciliation commission that brought victims and perpetrators of apartheid violence together and it was led by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Direct quotations as suggested by respondents are shown below:

Mugabe and ZANU-PF must be held accountable for the murder of opposition supporters in their hundreds. They must never be allowed to get away with their madness and barbarism, so many of the opposition activists were killed in cold blood by ZANU-PF supporters; until this day, the perpetrators of violence have never been brought to book. These perpetrators are known; Mugabe is protecting them because he sponsors the violence. If he does not want to appear before the commission to compensate the relatives of the victims he murdered, he must surely stand trial at The Hague for crimes against humanity. Mugabe is the chief murderer; he must go to jail (Oscar, 2017).

The other respondent was equally blunt as follows:

Loss of human life due to electoral violence in Zimbabwe must be condemned in the strongest terms; surprisingly in our situation, this genocidal act is deodorised by Mugabe. Not even on a single day has he stood out as the president to condemn violence, instead, he is always issuing more threats of violence on the opposition supporters. Mugabe is a brutal and heartless dictator in the mould of Adolf Hitler! His appearance before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as the architect of violence against the MDC and other opposition parties is long overdue (Sierra, 2017).

The other participant who had an opposing view had the following to say:

The SADC region has various commissions that were put in place in different countries to ensure that pre and post-electoral violence was mitigated. A closer look at some of these commissions such as the post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa shows that expected solutions to the problems bedevilling the country then were not done overnight; so why should our case be an exception? Yes, it's been sometime since the inception of the commission and people expect results; but, we are saying let us be patient as Zimbabweans (R14, 2017).

While all the participants acknowledged the existence of this commission among other existing mechanisms mentioned in this section, their grave concern was the absence of the enforcement punch that is needed to bring victims and perpetrators of electoral violence together for meaningful peace-building. Pre and post-electoral violence persists in each and every successive election in Zimbabwe despite the existence of these mechanisms that are meant to stem violence. The submissions of the participants to this research further confirm previous studies that showed that Zimbabwe has been a hot-bed of pre and post-electoral violence and that the mechanisms that are in place to stem the violence are heavily compromised (Brett, 2010; Sithole and Makumbe, 1997; Masunungure, 2011; Dzimiri et al 2014). This is largely so because electoral violence is sustainably pervasive in Zimbabwe.

6.2.4 Civic education as a mechanism to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Participants to this study suggested that civic education was one of the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. The opposition MDC provincial chairpersons concurred with representatives of civil society organizations that citizens must be given space to participate in the governance matters of their country regardless of their political affiliation. However, both decried the promulgation of laws that criminalized the freedom of expression and gathering such as POSA and AIPPA that constrained the democratic space of citizens and the civil society organizations enacted by Mugabe as hindrances to civil society participation and activism. They further argued that civic education must be allowed to address the central truths about political life so that pre and post-electoral violence could be mitigated in Zimbabwe.

On the other hand, ZANU-PF chairpersons argued that civic education was being abused as a way of promoting lawlessness in the country by the civil society organizations and their opposition counterparts. They asserted that while civic education was a necessary evil in the

democratic world, it has to be regulated by checks and balances as what obtains in Zimbabwe otherwise the country would degenerate into anarchy. ZANU-PF chairpersons also raised the existence of an anti-government alliance by the opposition MDC and civil society in Zimbabwe which they stated was tantamount to undermining the authority of a democratically elected government of Mugabe all the time to please western countries that they alleged are supporting regime change. Below are the divergent views of the participants:

The space for civic education and activism is effectively closed in Zimbabwe. Look at the way activists are harassed by the government left, right and centre, while others for example Itai Dzamara have disappeared without trace to date! Given these occurrences, the conditions under which civil society activism operates under Mugabe's rule in Zimbabwe is appalling. I don't think there is anywhere in the world where this kind of oppression to activism occurs (Tango, 2017).

The other participant that supported the above submissions had this to say:

Mugabe and ZANU-PF are afraid of freeing the space for civic education because of their excesses in mismanaging the country. They are aware that citizens are not happy with their oppressive type of governance and that the citizens are bound to keep rebelling against this oppression until they are free. For that reason among others, Mugabe employs stringent and restrictive pieces of legislations and laws that deter civic education participation. This is the reason why this existing mechanism lacks the killer punch in stemming pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe (R8, 2017).

One of the key respondents who had contrasting views to the above submissions had this to say:

We know that civil society organizations and the opposition MDC harbour a regime change agenda for Zimbabwe. The US and the EU including Britain are sponsoring and funding them to remove President Mugabe from power. So they must be under constant check because their agenda is sinister. We have evidence to the effect that some of the funders of civic society organizations that are mushrooming in every corner of Zimbabwe are disgruntled former white farmers who lost their farms and are now funding the MDC and civil society so that they cause mayhem in the country (R14, 2017).

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter presented and analysed the findings from the 20 provincial chairpersons and the 5 civil society organizations' representatives who took part in the in-depth interviews to this study concerning the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Participants suggested that these mechanisms are: legal recourse, the National Peace and Healing Commission, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and civic education. The next chapter looked at the contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 7

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HAVE SUSTAINABLE, PEACEFUL, FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

7.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to contribute strategies to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe as suggested by respondents to this study. The points of departure are the in-depth interviews with the 20 provincial chairpersons and the 5 representatives of civil society organizations in Zimbabwe. It must be restated that this is the third objective of this research.

7.2 Contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

The following diagram shows the contributions as given by civil society organizations.

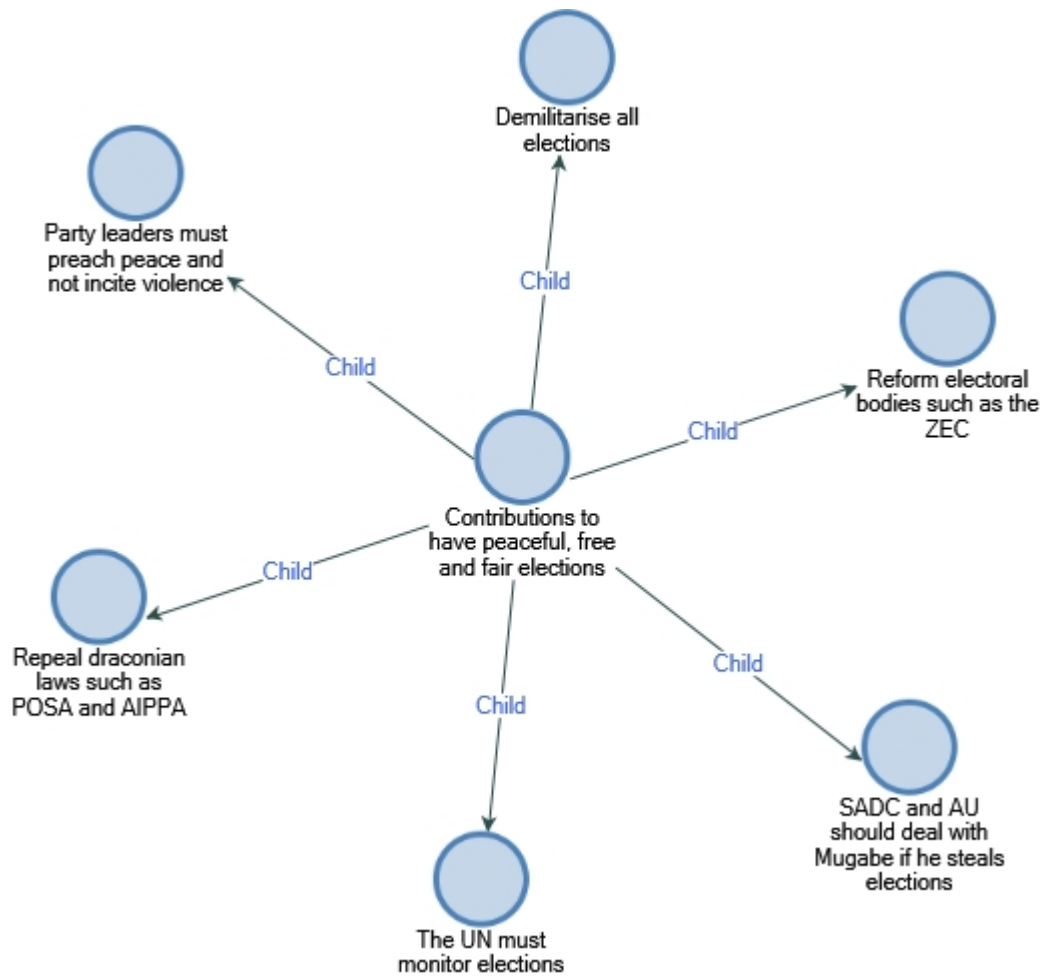


Figure 4: Contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe Model as coded by NVIVO.

The combined participants to this research suggested the following contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe: demilitarization of all elections, repeal of draconian pieces of legislations such as POSA and AIPPA, monitoring of elections by the UN, reform of electoral bodies such as the ZEC, preaching of peace by party leaders and also desisting from inciting violence by the same party leaders such as Mugabe and Tsvangirai, the intervention of SADC and AU if Mugabe continues to steal elections as in numerous previous cases, institution of national programmes on anti-violence in Zimbabwe, levelling of the electoral playing field tilted in favour of Mugabe, removal of ethnicity from Zimbabwe elections, encouragement of dialogue between ZANU-PF and the MDC, objectivity of private media when reporting about ZANU-PF, stopping the West from meddling in Zimbabwe elections, the presence of observers on the ground well before and after elections in Zimbabwe and the removal of military personnel such as Major Silaigwana from the ZEC.

7.2.1 Repeal of draconian legislations such as POSA and AIPPA as contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

The MDC chairpersons and the civil society organizations' representatives decried the promulgation of draconian pieces of legislation such as POSA and AIPPA that were put in place by Mugabe to constrain their democratic space in Zimbabwe. They condemned these two pieces of legislation because they felt that their existence makes it a punishable and prosecutable offence only for opposition parties and their supporters to assemble without the approval of the police. Even the civil society organizations protested that they were also unable to gather or assemble prior to the approval of the ZRP and that in most instances; gatherings of any nature were denied by the Mugabe regime. They further raised concerns on the selective application of these laws which seemingly do not apply to ZANU-PF and their supporters but to the opposition MDC and civil society organizations. For these reasons among others, the MDC chairpersons and the civil society organizations suggested the urgent repeal of POSA and AIPPA to free the political and civil space for them in Zimbabwe.

Contrary to these submissions, ZANU-PF provincial chairpersons submitted that POSA and AIPPA were very necessary and needed in Zimbabwe because the MDC and civil society organizations were bent on trying to cause disorder due to their non-recognition of a democratically elected government. They argued that these laws were put in place to ensure public order in a country threatened by anarchy from the opposition MDC and their counterparts in civil society. They alleged that most western governments such as Britain were behind the sponsorship of the MDC so that it could effect regime change that would in turn be exploited by the western imperialistic agenda for Zimbabwe. The direct quotations from the participants are below:

The freedom to assemble by opposition parties and civil society organizations including ordinary citizens is effectively closed by POSA. Its selective application to the MDC makes it a dubious piece of law that was specifically crafted to close the political space for the opposition parties in Zimbabwe. ZANU-PF is never affected by this law because it is always cleared in advanced to hold its rallies whenever they want to do that, on the contrary, if the opposition wants to assemble, the police always gives flimsy excuses such as shortage of manpower to deal with large crowds in the event that violence breaks out among other reasons. Such blatant application of the law clearly shows that it was enacted to deal with the opposition parties in Zimbabwe (R4, 2017).

The other respondent had this to say:

AIPPA makes it a prosecutable offence to report on matters that are political such as the torture, beating, murder and sometimes disappearance of opposition activists. This is the reason why most journalists especially from the private media have been ceaselessly harassed by ZANU-PF and its supporters when they cover these issues in the newspapers and other forms of media. Most of these journalists and activists have disappeared without any trace to date such as what happened to Itai Dzamara who is suspected to have been abducted by state agents (Sierra, 2017).

The other participant contradicted the above submissions as shown below:

POSA and AIPPA are very useful pieces of legislation that are there to stay; no amount of politicking will cause their removal; the MDC and their allies in the civil society are bent on causing lawlessness in the country so that they further their regime change agenda. We are always ahead of them to deal with these threats as a government, and these are the counter measures we have put in place so that peace prevails in Zimbabwe (R19, 2017).

7.2.3 Demilitarization of elections as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

MDC chairpersons with the support of civil society organizations suggested that Zimbabwe elections were heavily militarized, which results in high incidence of violence. They sighted the involvement and presence of military personnel in all previous electoral processes as one of the reasons why electoral violence pervaded Zimbabwe's elections. Their submissions agreed with previous studies that asserted the militarization of the electoral processes in the country as one of the chief causes of violence (Masunungure, 2011; Dzimiri et al, 2014; Human Rights Watch, 2008; Marowa, 2009). While these previous studies confirmed the militarization of elections mainly in the strongholds of ZANU-PF, this study found out that militarization of elections now pervades each and every province of Zimbabwe. This study further found out that all critical government departments among them the ZEC were now lead by former military personnel. The MDC chairpersons together with the civil society organizations

therefore suggested that the immediate demilitarization of elections would lead to future elections that are sustainable, peaceful, free and fair.

On the contrary, ZANU-PF provincial chairpersons argued that the military were assisting the ZRP to maintain law and order during the electoral processes and that there was nothing amiss with their presence. They denied the allegations that the military were involved in the murder, torture, beatings and in some cases disappearance of opposition supporters and civil society activists. They also dared the MDC supporters to provide evidence that it was the military that were committing these violent acts during electoral processes. Further to these submissions, ZANU-PF chairpersons stated that for as long as there were threats of instability in the country caused by electoral processes, the military would always be present in future elections because it was their duty to defend the country from threats of aggression from within and outside Zimbabwe. The views of the participants are shown below:

The occurrence of electoral violence in Zimbabwe cannot be explained in isolation of the role played by the security forces. Their involvement in these electoral processes underscores the very existence of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. In almost all the elections that took place in Zimbabwe to date, it is the security forces that spearhead the onslaught of the opposition by beating, killing, torturing and maiming their supporters. The security forces are the bedrock on which Mugabe's violence is built upon. If ever Zimbabwe is to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, all electoral processes must be demilitarized (R9, 2017).

The other respondent had this to say:

It has now become routine that before, during and after each and every election in Zimbabwe, the army is out in full force throughout all the provinces, coercing people to vote for ZANU-PF. The same applies to the police, prisons and the central intelligence organization assisted by youth's militias and war veterans. Their imposing presence almost everywhere in every province resemble war zones such that citizens are forced to vote for ZANU-PF and Mugabe in order to save their lives from these marauding and ruthless security forces (Oscar, 2017).

In direct contrast to the submissions above, the following is what one of the participants to this study had to say:

Our police force is usually overwhelmed by incidence of violence during and after elections in Zimbabwe; it is due to the nature of the violence that soldiers are called upon to assist the ZRP. Zimbabwe has been under threats of insurrection for a long time due to the violent nature and

sophistication of the opposition MDC who are supported by the West to remove our government and cause lawlessness in the country. It is for this reason that our soldiers are out in full force to deal with those elements that seek to destroy the country to please their handlers including Britain (R11, 2017).

7.2.4 Encouragement of dialogue between ZANU-PF and the MDC as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

Both MDC and ZANU-PF chairpersons seemed to agree that the encouragement of dialogue between their two major political parties would lead to sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. The civil society organizations also submitted that dialogue was the missing cog between the MDC and ZANU-PF; and that this is one of the reasons why violence is sustainably pervasive in the electoral processes of the country. They further submitted that if only dialogue was given a chance, violence associated with electoral processes in Zimbabwe could be contained to allow for elections that were sustainable, peaceful, free and fair. Civil society organizations further stated that the two major political parties are always trading accusations against one another; the political discourse of each one of them is laden with chalice for the other all the time.

The opposition MDC is characterized as traitorous to the nation by ZANU-PF; in collusion with foreign powers; agents of Western regime change agenda; puppets, and in effect beyond the protection by the judiciary. On the other hand, ZANU-PF is seen as ideologically bankrupt and corrupt; clueless regarding challenges bedevilling the country and brutally dishonest in governing the country. They further stated that this deep polarization and lack of dialogue between these belligerents to Zimbabwean politics impedes any imagination of meaningful negotiations to finding sustainable solutions in mitigating electoral violence.

The following is what participants said concerning the encouragement of dialogue between ZANU-PF and the MDC as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe:

There are far harder boundaries between ZANU-PF and the MDC in Zimbabwe such that finding common ground for the betterment of the country is almost impossible. There are ideological differences that seemingly keep these foes apart, there is a permanent wedge that is stuck between them; if only this barrier could be uprooted to allow for political dialogue and

interface between them, sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections could become possible (R15, 2017).

The other participant had this to say as an encouragement of dialogue between the MDC and ZANU-PF:

It is incumbent upon us as the two major political parties in the country to sit down and try to iron out differences if any prospects of sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections are to be entertained in Zimbabwe. Our country has been plagued with violent elections for a very long time now and the power is in us as political party stakeholders to sit down and find common ground in as far as peaceful elections are concerned; it is high time that differences are put aside for the benefit of Zimbabweans regardless of political affiliation (R7, 2017).

In support of these submissions, one of the respondents further said this:

The two major political institutions in Zimbabwe should set their ideological and other political differences aside and come to the negotiating table so that electoral violence can be contained leading to sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. Party representatives are encouraged to meet and discuss the perennial violent nature of Zimbabwe elections in order to ensure the prevalence of peace (Oscar, 2017).

7.2.5 The levelling of the electoral playing field as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

MDC participants to this study suggested that there was need to level the electoral playing field that they felt was tilted in favour of Mugabe and ZANU-PF. The civil society organizations representatives concurred with the submissions of the MDC provincial chairpersons. These respondents' understanding of the levelling of the electoral playing field seemed to vary one from the other even though their contributions tended to converge. Among them, some spoke about the involvement of the security forces in electoral processes as a clear advantage to ZANU-PF while others spoke about the staffing of the ZEC with former military personnel such as its former president Justice Chiweshe and the current president Rita Makarau who is also a judge in the Zimbabwean High Court. Others further spoke about the non-adherence to the SADC principles and guidelines governing democratic elections on the part of Mugabe by instituting legislative measures that have an exclusionary effect on the full participation of the opposition parties in electoral processes.

On the other hand, ZANU-PF provincial chairpersons disagreed with these submissions of the MDC and the civil society organizations and insisted that the electoral playing field was already level and that the opposition were always electoral cry-babies. To them, there was nothing amiss with practising or former military personnel being seconded to various government departments that needed their skills. On the involvement of soldiers in the electoral processes of the country, the ZANU-PF chairpersons argued that the military were free to support a political party of their choice. The following direct quotations are what participants said:

The current social, political and economic problems bedevilling Zimbabwe are a direct result of Mugabe's skewed electoral policies that allow him to rig elections in his favour. His continued rule is illegitimate because the electorate rejected him since the late 90s when the MDC entered the political fray led by the charismatic Morgan Tsvangirai. Mugabe is using the army to force people to vote for him so that he dies in office, even the SADC knows that Mugabe is an illegitimate president of Zimbabwe. No wonder why he conceded to form a government of national unity in the year 2009; he had dismally lost the election to Tsvangirai; he had also lost the other previous elections (R5, 2017).

In more or less the same way, one participant articulated their views as follows:

Most of the elections held in Zimbabwe since the year 2000 do not conform to the SADC principles and guidelines governing democratic elections. SADC was one of the regional bodies that condemned Zimbabwe's elections as being not peaceful, free and fair in the year 2008. They were also joined by a chorus of other international organizations such as the AU among others who said Zimbabwe elections fell short of the guidelines governing the conduct of free and fair elections; in fact, they stated that the elections were a sham (Sierra, 2017).

In direct contrast to the submissions above, one participant had this to say:

The electoral playing field in Zimbabwe has always been even; the MDC have been losing the previous elections because they are not popular with the electorate of Zimbabwe. Instead of campaigning rigorously to win the elections, they are either having their intra-party squabbles or are trying to find scape-goats such as the involvement of the army in electoral processes. The army and the rest of the security forces are Zimbabweans too, they are free to support any political party of their choice. If our security forces have the required skills and qualifications to run government departments, should they be denied that opportunity just because they were former soldiers? I suppose common sense should prevail here! (R15, 2017).

7.2.6 The removal of ethnicity as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

When analyzing findings to this research, it was revealed by participants from both ZANU-PF and the MDC that ethnicity played an integral role in causing electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Even the civil society organizations' concurred with the submissions of the provincial chairpersons of the two major political parties that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable elections, ethnicity had to be dealt with. There are also numerous studies that were confirmed by these submissions of the participants to this research about ethnicity being one of the major causes of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe (CCJP and LRF, 1997; Comaroff, 1997; Diamond, 2008; Msindo, 2004). Although these studies confirmed the existence of ethnicity as a cause of electoral violence in Zimbabwe, they referred to ethnicity as existing between the Shona and the Ndebele and ignored other ethnic groups of Zimbabwe such as Nambya, Venda, Tonga, Chewa and Kalanga among others. Participants to this study revealed that even the minority ethnic groups are also caught up in the matrix of electoral violence in Zimbabwe. They revealed that the current second Vice President of Zimbabwe at the time of the writing of this thesis was Mphoko who is a Kalanga by ethnic extraction and that his elevation to that position was fiercely opposed by the Ndebele who were trying to disown him in favour of their own.

Participants further argued that ethnicity was rearing its ugly head in the MDC which purports to champion democratic principles. At the centre of intra party ethnic violence were two of the three Vice Presidents namely Thokozani Khupe and Nelson Chamisa; where the former was allegedly beaten by party supporters aligned to the latter and party leader Morgan Tsvangirai because she was of Ndebele ethnic extraction. Similarly, other party leaders within the MDC notably Mackenzie of Binga who is Tonga by ethnic extraction jumped to the defence of Chamisa and stated that he wanted Khupe's position given to the Tonga because they were also marginalized within the opposition MDC. Below are direct quotations from the respondents to this study:

Although it used to be the two major ethnic groups of Zimbabwe namely the Shona and the Ndebele who were divided by ethnicity, other minority ethnic groups have also joined the fray. There is now visible animosity among all the different ethnic groups in Zimbabwe in as far as electoral violence is concerned. While this incompatibility among the different ethnic groups persists mainly in the current Zimbabwean politics, it used to be rampant between the Shona and the Ndebele (Tango, 2017).

The other participant was equally blunt:

The Gukurahundi massacres of the mid-80s are still fresh in the minds of many people who lost their loved ones in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. To say the least, these people shall never forgive Mugabe because of those killings. Similarly, ethnic violence reared its ugly head again during the 2008 elections when Mugabe lost the election to Tsvangirai. Unless the issue of ethnicity is thoroughly dealt with, there shall always be violence in Zimbabwe's electoral processes (R3, 2017).

The other participant had this to say:

The current government of Zimbabwe is seized with ethnic tension that has scalped several senior people in ZANU-PF namely Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa who was sacked by Mugabe because he allegedly harboured presidential ambitions while he comes from the Karanga of the Midlands province. His fierce competitor and critic was none other than Mugabe's former typist and wife Grace, who was also seeking elevation to the same position and she is Zezuru by ethnic extraction. So fierce was the ethnic violence that many intra party skirmishes occurred leading to Mnangagwa fleeing the country to China (R16, 2017).

7.2.7 Stopping the West from meddling in Zimbabwe elections as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

ZANU-PF provincial chairpersons suggested that if Zimbabwe was to ever entertain prospects of having sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, the western countries such as Britain among others must be stopped from meddling in the country's electoral processes. This confirmed several such discourses especially from the state media in Zimbabwe that the violent conduct of the country's electoral processes were as a direct result of the west trying to effect regime change. While the western interference was confirmed, ZANU-PF participants to this study went another step higher to submit that western countries had infiltrated ZANU-PF structures and that they were now trying to have President Mugabe assassinated with the assistance of his lieutenants such as the sacked for Vice Presidents Joyce Mujuru and Emmerson Mnangagwa among other prominent leaders in the party. The findings further confirmed that the opposition MDC was no longer the only threat to Mugabe's life and position as president of Zimbabwe but also his own inner circle had been infiltrated by the British so that they remove him from power at all costs. The ZANU-PF provincial chairpersons suggested

that this was the reason why there were continuous purges in their party in recent years to the time of the writing of this thesis.

In direct contrast to these submissions by ZANU-PF, the MDC chairpersons and representatives of civil society organizations argued that Zimbabwe is in serious social, economic and political problems because of Mugabe's misrule for over three decades and a half. They also submitted that Mugabe and ZANU-PF were trying to blame the targeted economic sanctions imposed upon them as the reason for the economic decay yet the real problem lay with Mugabe's misgovernance and excessive use of violence to maintain power despite losing successive elections. The MDC chairpersons and civil society organizations alluded to receiving funding from some western countries but argued that it was the norm elsewhere in the world that political organizations ask for funding to be able to function and carry out their day to day activities. They even argued that even ZANU-PF was receiving western funding since its days in the liberation of Zimbabwe from countries such as Sweden for example. They further argued that ZANU-PF had alienated itself from the global world of politics by perpetuating electoral violence in Zimbabwe resulting in most sponsors and former funders shunning them thereby enraging Mugabe and ZANU-PF to attack them at the slightest provocation. The following are the views of the participants:

The problems besetting Zimbabwe are as a result of the machinations of the western countries led by Britain in their quest to remove President Mugabe by force. We know that they are the ones that sponsor Tsvangirai and even some of our own leaders within the party to assassinate our president. Our great revolutionary leader will continue to rule this country because he has the mandate of the people; just like what our First Lady said, the President shall rule from the grave (R15, 2017).

The other respondent who had contrasting views had this to say:

Mugabe and ZANU-PF have totally destroyed this country; they have alienated themselves from accessing funding to turn-around the spiralling economic decay by sustaining violence in all our electoral processes. Our country used to be the bread basket of Southern Africa, but Mugabe has reduced it to a basket case. The MDC receives funding from various organizations around the globe; and even ZANU-PF too, it used to receive funding from the Swedish government during the liberation for Zimbabwe. Mugabe is now crying foul because his excesses in governance have attracted the wrath of all democratic countries in the world among them Britain and the US (Victor, 2017).

In support of the submissions above, one of the participants had this to say:

All countries in the world are put under scrutiny to ensure that they abide by international best practices in their electoral processes and for that reason, Zimbabwe is not an exception. Most western countries including Britain and the US among others are leading democracies and would therefore want to see democratic tenets spreading throughout the world instead of dictatorships as what obtains in Zimbabwe where voters are violently coerced to vote for Mugabe and ZANU-PF (R7, 2017).

7.2.8 Observation of elections by the UN as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

MDC provincial chairpersons suggested that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, the observation of future elections by the UN was a prerequisite. Their views were supported by the civil society organizations who also called for the international organization's observation of all future Zimbabwe elections. They argued that all previous elections were dogged by violence and that they were largely contentious in their nature since independence in 1980.

In direct contrast to these suggestions, ZANU-PF chairpersons stated that all previous elections were credible, free and fair and that it was only because the MDC were perennial losers that was the reason why they always disputed the electoral results. They further stated that even if the UN were invited to observe elections; the MDC would still lose because they were not popular with the electorate as was the case with ZANU-PF and Mugabe. The views of the participants follow below:

Since independence in 1980, Zimbabweans have been coerced through the sustained use of violence in each successive electoral process to vote ZANU-PF or to face the brutal consequences such as torture, murder or disappearance. Most voters fear for their lives especially those that witnessed the brutal armed struggle, so, they end up voting Mugabe and his party. In order to stop these brutalities by Mugabe and ZANU-PF, we demand that the UN be the observer of any future elections in Zimbabwe (R4, 2017).

In support of this submission, one other participant said:

Holding elections in Zimbabwe without meaningful reforms such as the supervision of elections by credible observers in the mould of the UN is a sheer waste of time because Mugabe will always use violence. Suffice to say most previous elections after independence in 1980 were

supposedly won by Mugabe through the covert and overt use of pre and post-electoral violence. Mugabe is a master in as far as the use of sustained violence is concerned; so the UN must be close by to stop him from employing his usual brutal and violent tricks (Kilo, 2017).

One of the participants who had contrasting views had the following to say:

ZANU-PF has won all the previous elections because its popularity with the electorate is growing day by day; it is the opposition MDC who have lost the successive elections dismally. With or without the observation of future elections by whoever including the UN; President Mugabe will still win. The MDC must accept the fact that they are perennial losers; they are alienated from the voters because their ideology is against the empowerment of the Zimbabwean masses and hence the rejection at the ballot by the electorate (R13, 2017).

7.2.9 The observation of elections by the AU and other international observers as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

Closely linked to the previous contribution presented and analyzed above civil society organizations suggested that the AU and other international observers must be invited to supervise Zimbabwe's elections if violence is to be averted in all future elections. The opposition MDC chairpersons chipped in by stating that Mugabe has a record of inviting his own sympathizers from dubious organizations in the region and abroad to rubber-stamp his electoral fraud and manipulation. They suggested that such dubious organizations include one from the US led by a Coltrane Chimurenga who always certifies Mugabe's alleged win in elections despite glaring evidence to the contrary as what happened in 2008.

On the other hand, ZANU-PF chairpersons insisted that even if future elections were observed by the AU, their party would still win the elections. They also stated that all previous organizations that were invited to observe electoral processes in Zimbabwe were credible including Coltrane Chimurenga and his team of observers. They further stated that President Mugabe has the prerogative to invite whoever he wants to observe Zimbabwe's elections and inviting organizations that were friendly to ZANU-PF was one of his choices as enshrined in his executive powers as head of state and government in Zimbabwe. The following direct quotations are from the participants:

Our hope for sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections lies in the observation of elections by the AU or other international observers that are neutral and credible. Most of our previous elections were observed by dubious organizations that were handpicked by Mugabe; no wonder why most of those elections were condemned as not credible, free and fair. The major political parties must have a say in inviting observers that come to monitor Zimbabwe elections; it must never be the prerogative of Mugabe alone (R1, 2017).

The other participant had this to say:

For as long as Mugabe is given the freedom to invite observers of his choice, all the future elections will remain a sham as was the case with the previous elections. ZANU-PF is quite aware that their strength lies in vote rigging with the assistance of election monitors who remain quiet when they rig those elections. This is the reason why Mugabe ensures that reputable organizations especially those from the west and the US are not invited to monitor Zimbabwe elections (Sierra, 2017).

The other participant had the following to say:

Just like we have said before, ZANU-PF is a revolutionary party and it is popular with the electorate because of its policies which are pro-people. It is for that reason that the revolutionary party will always win elections; even if observers would come from Mars; President Mugabe and ZANU-PF will still win. All the previous observers that came to Zimbabwe were very competent; so where is the problem here? In any case, President Mugabe has the final say on who is invited to observe our electoral processes (R20, 2017).

7.2.10 Disallowing Mugabe to steal elections by SADC as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

MDC provincial chairpersons to this study suggested that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections SADC must disallow Mugabe to steal elections. They stated that Mugabe was in the habit of stealing elections since the year 2008 among other years when he was defeated by Tsvangirai. Representatives of civil society organizations concurred with the submissions of MDC chairpersons and further stated that the GNU in 2009 was as a result of Mugabe being defeated at the polls by the opposition MDC. Both the MDC and the civil society organizations stated that it was after the condemnation of the elections as a sham by renowned international organizations such as the AU and the UN that SADC which had been quiet added their voice in the condemnation of the elections. This is the reason why they

suggested that SADC should be firm with Mugabe and not allow him to steal future elections the same way he did in 2008.

Although ZANU-PF chairpersons denied that the 2008 elections were stolen by Mugabe, they could not explain why the GNU was formed if Mugabe and his party had won the elections. They argued that SADC was silent because it knew that Mugabe had won the elections but failed to explain its climb-down in the condemnation of the election as a sham and not credible, free nor fair. The following direct quotations are what the participants said:

The SADC has been very inconsistent with its dealings with the electoral violence in Zimbabwe. During the 2008 plebiscite, the regional grouping was completely mum on the countrywide violence that was unleashed by Mugabe so that he retains power at all costs. SADC only joined the condemnation of the elections only after reputable organizations such as the AU, UN and other organizations had concluded that Zimbabwe's elections fell short of being free or fair (R1, 2017).

The other participant that colluded with the above submissions had the following to say:

Mugabe was defeated at the polls by Tsvangirai in 2008, although he tried at all costs to cling to power. There was widespread violence that claimed the lives of hundreds of opposition supporters and the MDC was forced to withdraw from the run-off that followed for fear of his life and for losing more supporters to ZANU-PF. It was astonishing to realize that SADC never took any initiative to mitigate the widespread violence; it only started to condemn the violence after the intervention of the UN (Kilo, 2008).

Another participant had this to say in direct contrast to the above submissions:

Tsvangirai did not out-rightly win the 2008 general elections; he was leading but did not acquire the 50 plus one votes required to be declared the winner. President Mugabe resoundingly won the run-off election after Tsvangirai decided to pull out because he knew that he was going to be defeated. This is the chief reason why SADC was silent; the elections were credible and represented the will of the people (R19, 2017).

7.2.11 Presence of observers on the ground well before and after elections as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

The MDC chairpersons together with the civil society organizations suggested that incidences of violence are very high either before or after each election in Zimbabwe. For that reason, they

stated that if Zimbabwe was to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in future, observers should be on the ground well before and after elections. These two groups of participants seemed to have a clear understanding of the role of observer missions in making sure that violence does not occur in Zimbabwe's electoral processes. On the other hand, ZANU-PF chairpersons contended that while it was a noble idea to have observers on the ground well before and after elections, it was actually the MDC and their allies in civil society that were causing anarchy in Zimbabwe's electoral processes by urging their activists to remove a democratically elected government of President Mugabe violently from power. They further stated that observer or no observers; if the MDC and the civil society organizations incite violence; they shall be met with violence. The following direct quotations are from the three categories of respondents to this study:

There are many reports of violence that occur throughout Zimbabwe either before or after elections that are not noticed by observers because they normally arrive in the country a few days before Election Day. By the time they arrive most of the violence would have subsided because the perpetrators of violence would be trying to create an impression that violence was absent. This has now become the routine in Zimbabwe where Mugabe and his supporters go out nationwide in full force beating, killing and torturing opposition supporters and only stop a few days before the Election Day to fool observers (R3, 2017).

The other participant had this to say:

You will recall that Operations Murambatsvina (Clear the Dirt) and Operation Makavhoterapapi (Who did you vote for?) all happened a few days after Mugabe and ZANU-PF had lost the elections to the opposition. By the time these two operations that were characterized by violent destruction of homes and the torture of opposition supporters, observers had since left the country and were therefore unable to witness the magnitude of the violence. It was only after the outcry by the opposition that the UN representative for Habitats, Tibaijuka was sent on a fact finding mission to Zimbabwe, and she witnessed the violence first hand leading to its condemnation worldwide; this was the reason why the violence came to an abrupt end (Sierra, 2017).

In direct opposition to the above views, one of the participants had this to say:

Morgan Tsvangirai is on record saying that if he failed to remove President Mugabe from power through the ballot, he would remove him violently. Bearing these inflammatory

statements coming from the leader of the opposition MDC; who is the villain here? It is him and his rogue supporters. If Tsvangirai incites his supporters to be violent, they shall be met with violence even if observers are on the ground or not. Our government cannot sit back and allow lawlessness from the violent MDC supporters to persist in our country, we want peace in Zimbabwe and not war (R20, 2017).

7.2.12 Removal of military personnel such as Major Utoile Silaigwana from the ZEC as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

Civil society organizations' representatives and the MDC provincial chairpersons highlighted the removal of military personnel from the ZEC if Zimbabwe was to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in future. This suggestion by participants to this study confirms previous studies that stated that Mugabe was militarizing almost all strategic institutions in government in order to solidify his grip on power despite losing successive elections to the opposition (Masunungure, 2011; Brett, 2010; Dzimiri et al 2014; Sithole and Makumbe, 2009). What these previous studies did not confirm was that apart from ZEC being led by former military personnel like Justice George Chiweshe, it also had other several military personnel in its middle management such as Major Utoile Silaigwana.

While ZANU-PF chairpersons agreed that there were other former military personnel currently serving in the ZEC at the time of the writing of this thesis, they vehemently denied that these people were influencing elections in favour of President Mugabe and ZANU-PF. They argued that anyone who possesses the required qualifications and skills can work at the ZEC and these former military personnel were no exception. They further submitted that the removal from ZEC of all these military personnel could not have a positive outcome to the MDC because they will still be defeated at the ballot regardless of who was employed at the electoral institution. The following are direct statements from the respondents:

Look at the militarization of state institutions where a growing number of senior military officers were appointed by Mugabe to lead strategic state institutions such as the ZEC, GMB, NRZ and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife among others. This is but a militarized form of electoral authoritarianism which comes to rest on the interpenetration of two key organs of authority; ZANU-PF and the security forces (Victor, 2017).

The other participant to this study was equally blunt as follows:

ZANU-PF and Mugabe heavily rely on the use of their blue eyed boys that have been deployed in every strategic government institution such as the ZEC among others to ensure that they rig and manipulate elections in their favour. We demand the removal of all soldiers from the ZEC with immediate effect; they are colluding with Mugabe to continuously manipulate the votes (R8, 2017).

The other respondent who had contrasting views had this to say:

The ZEC as an electoral institution and competent employer does not discriminate anyone on the basis of where they have worked before; for as long as those people have the required qualifications they can be employed by the electoral body. It also does not follow that if those people with a military background are removed from the ZEC then the opposition would win the elections, no, they will still lose to ZANU-PF (R11, 2017).

7.2.13 The objectivity of the private media when reporting about ZANU-PF as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections.

ZANU-PF provincial chairpersons suggested that if Zimbabwe is to have future elections that are sustainable, peaceful, free and fair, the private media have to be objective when reporting about President Mugabe and ZANU-PF. They argued that the private media always major on the negative things that ZANU-PF does and that they never report on anything good that is done by President Mugabe and ZANU-PF. They also further asserted that the private media are mouth-pieces of foreign governments especially the British and the Americans who are bent on influencing regime change in Zimbabwe because they want to install a puppet government led by Tsvangirai in the country.

On the other hand, the MDC argued that the private media were doing a splendid job of exposing the electoral violence caused by ZANU-PF to the outside world. They further argued that the State media was silent on matters to do with electoral violence caused by ZANU-PF and it was only the private media that were bringing these serious abuses to the fore. The representatives of civil society organizations supported these submissions by further alleging that it was ZANU-PF that burnt the headquarters of the Daily news in the year 2000 because they were revealing Mugabe's violent tendencies to the outside world. These submissions confirmed previous studies that stated that Mugabe promulgated repressive pieces of legislations such as AIPPA before the 2002 presidential elections in order to muzzle the private media on issues of rampant use of violence by ZANU-PF throughout the country (Sithole and Makumbe, 2009; Coltart, 2007; Murithi and Mawadza, 2011). What these previous studies did

not reveal was the use of arson by Mugabe and ZANU-PF in order to silence the private media on issues of violence that they were exposing. Respondents had the following to say:

Why is the private media always reporting negatively about President Mugabe and ZANU-PF while their reports about the opposition MDC are always good? Am I missing something here? It goes to show, as President Mugabe has always said, that the opposition and the private media are the same side of the coin. Both harbour a regime change agenda, and are puppets and agents of their paymasters including the west and the US. They will never succeed in Zimbabwe; we shall always deal with them (R14; 2017).

The other respondent who had an opposing view had the following to say:

Mugabe and ZANU-PF are trying to muzzle the private media so that they do not report about their excesses in terms of electoral violence in Zimbabwe. AIPPA is meant to ensure that issues of arbitrary arrests and harassment of journalists in the private media practice are stifled. No wonder why Mugabe and ZANU-PF often resort to bomb private media headquarters such as what they did to the Daily News (Sierra, 2017).

7.3 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe; the points of departure were the suggestions from the 20 provincial party chairpersons and the 5 representatives of civil society organizations that took part in this study. Participants suggested that the contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe are: international supervision of elections, observation of elections by the UN, SADC must not allow Mugabe to steal elections, removal of military personnel such as Major Utoile Silaigwana from the ZEC, observation of elections by the AU, the presence of observe on the ground well before and after elections, the West must not meddle in Zimbabwe elections, the MDC must gracefully accept defeat, repeal of draconian pieces of legislation such as POSA and AIPPA, private media should be objective when reporting against ZANU-PF, encouragement of dialogue between ZANU-PF and MDC, demilitarization of elections, level the electoral playing field, remove ethnicity from Zimbabwe politics and the institution of programmes on anti-violence. The next chapter looked at the discussion of all the findings of this research.

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

8.1 Introduction

The findings of this research are categorized into three major themes and numerous sub-themes. The three major themes are: dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe, existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe and contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. The findings from these three major themes and the numerous sub-themes are discussed in detail in this chapter. The discussion starts with the findings on the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence, followed by existing mechanisms to stem violence and lastly by the findings on the contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

8.2 Dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

This section of this chapter discusses the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe as suggested by participants to this study.

8.2.1 Militarization of elections as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

In the findings of this research, participants suggested that the militarization of elections was one of the major causes of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) has always been pro-Mugabe since independence and on several occasions, when it mattered most, has led vicious and violent campaigns against the opposition including the MDC. The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) and the Central Intelligence

Organization (CIO) have also played a crucial role regarding the militarization process of elections in Zimbabwe. On numerous and various occasions, the security forces have issued out threats to the opposition and all Zimbabweans at large that they would neither salute nor support anyone without liberation war credentials even if he/she was to be elected as the president of Zimbabwe through the ballot. Perceptions from within and without Zimbabwe conceive this as apparent reference to Tsvangirai the MDC leader, who did not fight in Zimbabwe's war of liberation against the Ian Smith regime. These sentiments and beliefs by the military echo the submissions of Masunungure (2008) who states that the 27 June Presidential Run-off in Zimbabwe was a purely militarized election. He asserts the brazenly intrusive and expansive role of the security forces complex in the run-off and the consequent omnipresent fear that engulfed the whole country in 2008. The systemic violence and intimidation by the military was so intense that the opposition presidential candidate was forced to withdraw from the plebiscite, paving the way for Mugabe to have a one-horse election.

Masunungure (2008) observes that the run-off election degenerated into a typical Zimbabwean election, one without a choice. In support of these observations, Galtung (1996) in the theory of Positive and Negative peace states that the central idea was that violence exists because of the structure and the actors merely carry out that violence. He defines violence as being 'present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations' (Galtung, 1996:168). This definition is much wider than violence as being merely somatic or direct and includes structural violence. This extended definition of violence leads to an extended definition of peace, where peace is not merely and absence of direct violence (negative peace) but also the absence of structural violence (positive peace). He alludes that structural violence, as what obtains with the militarization of elections in Zimbabwe, stems from violence in the structure of society, rather than the actor-generated personal and direct violence.

Similarly, Haessly (2011) observes that when people are denied freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, a kind of violence is occurring, even if no bullets are shot or no clubs are wielded. Structural violence can include political repression, lack of human rights and the denial of self-determination and it takes place at the macro and micro-levels. At the macro-level, organized structural violence include the establishment of state-sponsored political systems and structures that result in brutal repression by the security forces on the hapless and helpless general populace. Participants to this study concur with these submissions because

they submit that this has been the norm in nearly every successive election held in Zimbabwe since independence in 1980.

8.2.2 Ethnicity as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

According to the findings of this research, ethnicity is one of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. This is largely so because Zimbabwe has two major ethnic groups which are the Shona and the Ndebele, the former comprises about eighty-two (82) percent of the population whereas the latter makes about twelve (12) percent while the remaining percentage is accounted for by the other minority ethnic groups such as Nambya, Tonga and Nyanja among others. It is imperative to mention that even the other minority ethnic groups have not been spared by the pervasion of ethnic tensions and violence in Zimbabwe. Soon after independence in 1980, ZIPRA forces, mainly of Ndebele ethnic extraction took up arms and rebelled against Mugabe's government. The country literally degenerated into a civil war that was fought in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces from 1982 to 1987 to quell the rebellion. The ensuing war resulted in what became known as the Gukurahundi where an estimated 20 000 people died mainly from these provinces. Since then, most people from these provinces feel segregated on the grounds of ethnic extraction, such that to the present day, Zimbabwean politics is polarized along ethnic identity. That is the reason why since 1987, after the Unity Accord, Zimbabwe has had two vice-presidents, one from the Shona and one from the Ndebele. This is necessitated by the feelings of each group that they have to be represented at the highest level by one of their own ethnic grouping.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2008) concurs with these submissions in the literature review of this research where she states that the issue of ethnicity in Zimbabwe has some traits dating back to pre-colonial times, mainly between the Shona and Ndebele speaking people. Other authorities such as the CCJP and LRF (1997) who state that the dissident activities by members of ZIPRA prompted ZANU-PF to conduct a crackdown in an operation code-named Gukurahundi, also agree with the submissions of Ndlovu-Gatsheni. Both the submissions resonate with Conflict Transformation Theory that tries to build and restore a good relationship between two parties in conflict, or build one if there wasn't one there (Fischer et al., 2003:7). In support of the same argument, Lederach (1995) argues that political conflict is started by two parties engaged in a relationship and the transformation of such conflict will involve the need to change and transform the mindset of both parties involved in the conflict. In similar vein, Best (2006) argues that conflict transformation goes beyond conflict resolution because it builds long lasting relationships and it takes conflict away from violence and takes it towards development.

Conflict Transformation Theory helps us understand how a conflicting relationship between individuals and groups, in this case the Shona and the Ndebele, can be transformed from hostile to peaceful relationships. Theorists such as Burton (1990), Lederach (2003) and Fischer et al (2000) argue that Conflict Transformation Theory is important in addressing the issue of conflict. Its focus is on change and the processes of the conflict rather than an explanation why conflict occurs. Conflict Transformation theory focuses on changing relationship of conflicting parties such as what obtains between the Shona and Ndebele in terms of ethnicity, changing expectations and shifting the environment in which they exist, as well as building and rebuilding the relationship between conflicting parties to create an enabling environment for forgiveness and reconciliation (see Galtung 1998:32). For Miall (2007) by 'structure' is meant the pattern of relationship between the actors in conflict, and the surrounding social and political forms and institutions which determine these relationships. It may be difficult to resolve conflict between parties when the issues in conflict concern fundamental asymmetries, such as dominance over minorities by majorities or similar power relations between groups stratified by ethnicity or beliefs, such as what obtains among the ethnic groups of Zimbabwe even though it used to be mainly between the Shona and the Ndebele.

8.2.3 Illegal sanctions as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Participants to this research suggested that illegal sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe by the European Union (EU) and the US are other dynamics that contributed to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. The opposition alleges that ZANU-PF and its government sponsor idle youths to cause violence by paying them during, before and sometimes after elections. The youths are largely unemployed due to the fact that most industries closed shop in Zimbabwe citing viability challenges ever since the country was slapped with economic sanctions by the West and the US as stated above because of Mugabe's excesses in his governance style which they view as tyrannical in its nature. Now, with unemployment hovering around ninety percent, most people including the youth are jobless. It was the contention of the respondents that Mugabe then uses this vice to his advantage by paying these youth through cash and kind to advance his strangle-hold on power. This argument coincides with Human Rights Watch (2008) in chapter two of this research wherein they state that war veterans and youth militia were reportedly operating from army bases and camps throughout the country. Victims also reported that in some incidents the youth militia were using army trucks and pick-ups to carry out raids on the homes of MDC activists and supporters. This explains why Maslow, the Human Needs theorist argues that food, water and shelter are basic needs that every human being

should have, failure to which they fall prey to anyone who can give them these basic needs for self-sustenance. In support of this argument, Max-Neef (2005) also observes that idleness leads to manipulation in his presentation of human needs.

On the other hand, ZANU-PF believes that the MDC is sponsored by the West to encourage its youth to protest and demonstrate against its rule. It argues that the economic melt-down is as a result of punitive measures imposed on Mugabe and not his mismanagement of the economy as advanced by the MDC. It further believes that the MDC youth are wayward because they are being influenced to trade their national identity by the West who occasionally pays them handsomely for causing mayhem in the country. In support of this argument Danielsen (2005) submits that identity is one of the most vital needs that human beings need in order to reach self-actualization.

8.2.4 Absence of a clear succession plan by Mugabe as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Findings from this research suggested that the absence of a clear succession plan by Mugabe is one of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Participants argued that Mugabe has been in power since independence in 1980 and has ruled the country for a record thirty-seven successive years and at the time of this study he had declared his ambition to contest the oncoming elections despite his advanced age and alleged mismanagement of the country. The resultant scenario has been internecine intra-party violence as members try to strategically position themselves should Mugabe finally abdicate the throne. It is also believed that most participants from ZANU-PF who took part in this study secretly support former vice president Joyce Mujuru who was sacked by Mugabe on allegations of plotting to unseat him. So fierce are the levels of intra-party violence in ZANU-PF such that two distinct camps have emerged to position themselves to eventually succeed Mugabe; one is allegedly led by his wife and former typist in his office Grace whilst the other one is led by one of his vice presidents Mnangagwa. Although ZANU-PF tries in vain to play-down the fierce intra-party violence, both private and public media in Zimbabwe are awash with news of violent clashes between these two rival camps within ZANU-PF in an attempt to outdo one another in the succession battle.

In support of this argument, Maslow (2003) alludes that each human being is trying to meet needs on a certain level at any one time. An individual looking to meet needs for food and water will not be looking to meet needs of belonging, love or self-esteem. Only when the needs

on the lower end of the pyramid are met, will humans look to meet their needs for personal fulfilment. It is therefore no surprise that individuals within ZANU-PF see themselves as Mugabe's potential successors and are positioning themselves to take over the reins of the party and government.

8.2.5 Murder of MDC activists as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Participants to this study suggested that the murder of MDC activists is one of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. The MDC has lost a considerable number of its supporters in the successive elections in Zimbabwe as shown by respondents to this research. This suggestion resonates with Human Rights Watch (2008) in chapter two of this study wherein they state that ZANU-PF officials and war veterans were beating and torturing suspected MDC supporters in hundreds of base camps established across the provinces as local centres of operations. ZANU-PF supporters, government officials, war veterans and state security forces were conducting brutal 're-education' meetings in which they were beating and torturing and at times killing local residents to force them to denounce the MDC and to swear allegiance to ZANU-PF. There were a spate of abductions and murder of known MDC activists by suspected state agents, ZANU-PF supporters and war veterans throughout all the provinces of Zimbabwe. In support of these assertions, Galtung (1996) says a society commits violence against its members when it forcibly stunts their freedom and undermines their well-being, whether because of political affiliation or some other political reason. Structural violence can include political repression, lack of human rights and the denial of self-determination. These are political persuasions that lessen freedom of choice that oppresses or repress others, lessening the quality of life for both individuals and groups.

8.2.6 Destruction of opposition homes by ZANU-PF as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Participants to this research suggested that the destruction of opposition homes by ZANU-PF is one of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Almost all the previous elections have seen sustained violence by ZANU-PF supporters and their backers in government to orchestrate destruction of property including homes of suspected opposition supporters. This view is also shared by Human Rights Watch (2008) which submits that in the immediate aftermath of the 2005 elections in Zimbabwe, the government embarked on Operation Murambatsvina (Clear the Dirt), a destructive and eviction campaign that left almost 900 000 people homeless and without livelihoods. These evictions were carried out throughout

all the urban high-density areas of Zimbabwe. Although the government claimed that the operation was carried out to remove criminal elements and clean up the towns, Human Rights Watch and others contended that its aim was to punish those in the high-density suburbs who voted for the MDC during the 2005 plebiscite. In support of this argument, Abraham Maslow, in his presentation of the hierarchy of needs, states that some needs are more urgent than others. On the base of the pyramid he places food, water and shelter and argues that each human being is trying to meet needs on a certain level at any one time. Now, here we witness actions that contrast these submissions, people's homes and livelihoods are destroyed simply because they are exercising their democratic right to vote for a party of their choice as provided for in the constitution of the country. This level of violence, as suggested by respondents is dehumanizing and cruel because citizens are left without shelter. This view is further shared by Danielsen (2005) who states that needs for food and shelter should be met before considering needs for self-esteem, self-fulfilment and protection.

8.2.7 Violent land grab by Mugabe as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Respondents suggested that one of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe was the violent land grab by Mugabe in the late nineties which continues at the time of this research albeit on a lesser intensity. This is in apparent reference to the land redistribution campaign that the government embarked on to reclaim prime land that was in the hands of a few mostly white farmers. Most people believe that although the principle of land redistribution was noble, the whole exercise was violent, chaotic and the beneficiaries were mostly ZANU-PF supporters and not the general populace of Zimbabwe.

This policy difference resonates with Sachikonye (2005) who states that racial antagonism resurfaced in Zimbabwean politics when war veterans embarked on the invasion of White owned farms, popularly known as Jambanja in local parlance. In order to bridge the polemic gap on land ownership, the war veterans supported by the ruling ZANU-PF embarked on violent land seizures. Some scholars have argued that the real motive behind the attacks of white farmers was the unexpected defeat in the year 2000 of ZANU-PF by the Whites' supported MDC in the referendum to a new constitution which contained provisions for the government to compulsorily acquire White owned land (see Brett 2010, Chitiyo 2009, Diamond 2008, Makumbe 2009, Muzondidya 2013, Dzimiri et al 2014).

This effectively suggests that the racial dimension of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) violence in Zimbabwe was motivated by ZANU-PF's desire to punish White commercial farmers for supporting the MDC. To further buttress this submission, Sandy and Perkins (2000) state that positive peace entails recognition of universal human rights, which reduces the feelings of racialism and injustice, and transforms into the development of relationships which can restore and preserve citizens' values and economic needs that lead to self-actualization. They also argue that positive peace is the sense of the full enjoyment of the entire range of human rights by all people regardless of their colour, race or ethnic extraction.

8.2.8 War rhetoric and narratives by Mugabe as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Respondents suggested that war rhetoric and narratives by Mugabe are other dynamics to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. They pointed out that it has become routine that whenever elections are impending, Mugabe takes the initiative to remind citizens that independence came after a protracted armed struggle and as such, his government would always be prepared to shed more blood should anyone vote against it. This is perceived as a ploy to coerce the electorate to vote for ZANU-PF for fear of another war especially for those who witnessed the brutalities of the war for independence in Zimbabwe. This collusion augurs well with the assertions of Bratton and Masunungure (2008) in the literature review chapter of this study wherein they state that for Mugabe, elections are a continuation of war by other means. A senior army officer made this unambiguously clear in the run-up to the run-off when he publicly declared that ZANU-PF captured power after a bitter and protracted war and would not surrender the country unless it was defeated by the MDC in a war. In the words of Major-General Engelbert Rugeje: 'This country came through the bullet, not the pencil. Therefore, it will not go by your X of the pencil.' He also chillingly promised his Masvingo audience of villagers that on his return after the vote, 'the helicopter will be full of bullets, and if you vote for MDC in the presidential run-off election, you have seen the bullets; we have enough for each one of you, so beware'.

In support of this assertion, Miall (2007) posits that another level in conflict transformation is at the level of events: the behaviour, communications, perceptions and cognitions of individuals, leaders and groups. These are the warp and weft of conflict; the statements, promises, threats, interpretations, and actions which make up the day-to-day history of conflict. It is evident that conflict behaviour can settle into long patterns of destructive and antagonistic behaviour, and that communication can become locked into negative pattern in which 'no' is

the only message heard and expected of the other. The gestures, signals and initiatives which alter these flows open the possibility of de-escalation and of re-framing of the conflict configuration may be steps towards the transformation in the conflict's tone.

8.2.9 State sponsorship of violence as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Participants to this research identified state sponsorship of violence as one of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Since the inception of multi-party democracy in Zimbabwe, successive opposition parties have borne the brunt of state-sponsored violence by Mugabe's government. These sentiments of participants are echoed by Timberg (2008) in the literature review of this study where he states that in three months between the 29th March vote and the June 27 run-off election, ruling party militias under the guidance of 500 senior army officers battered the MDC, bringing the opposition party's network of activists to the verge of oblivion. By election-day, more than 100 opposition supporters were dead, hundreds were missing, thousands were injured and hundreds of thousands were rendered homeless. Tsvangirai, the party's leader, dropped out of the contest and took refuge in the Dutch Embassy.

The vicious campaign was code named CIBD, an acronym for Coercion, Intimidation, Beating, and Displacement. In fact, the vicious campaign went beyond CIBD to include murder. This bloody campaign was also christened 'Operation Makavhotera Papi?' (Operation Who Did You Vote For?). It was orchestrated and systematically executed by soldiers, police, state security agents, ZANU-PF militia and veterans of the struggle. The violence took the form of intimidation, kidnapping, torture, arson and murder of suspected opposition activists and their leaders (Timberg, 2008).

Miall (2007) observes that for conflict transformation, the perspective of human rights forces a greater emphasis on structural conditions, especially the role of the state, systems of governance and issues of power in generating, escalating and transforming violent conflict. Considering human rights in relation to conflict transformation, moreover, highlights the need to employ a holistic, multi-dimensional understanding of human rights. It is evident that as suggested by respondents to this study, Mugabe's government seems to be in serious abuses of human rights due to its alleged sponsorship of pre and post-electoral violence.

8.2.10 Mugabe's belief in one-party state system as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Findings from this study revealed that Mugabe's belief in a one-party state system contributes to the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. In support of this assertion Sithole and Makumbe (1997) state that the Matabeleland violence of the eighties was mainly due to incompatible vision of the future of Zimbabwe between the two liberation parties. They allege that ZANU-PF wanted to propagate a 'one-party model' while PF-ZAPU advocated a 'multi-party' democratic system. Mugabe faced opposition because Muzondidya (2009) alludes in chapter two of this study that the late Edgar Tekere, formerly ZANU-PF secretary general, opposed the idea of introducing a one-party state model soon after the signing of the Unity Accord. Together with other disgruntled members of ZANU-PF, Tekere formed the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) in 1989 and contested the 1990 elections. ZANU-PF perpetrated violence against ZUM leadership which resulted in the shooting of the late Patrick Kombayi who had challenged the late Vice President Muzenda for the Gweru parliamentary seat.

In support of this argument, Miall (2007) observes that in contexts where a particular group or elite has captured the state and government institutions, it means that calls for wider political participation or self-determination; all of which can be framed in terms of rights and relate to needs of identity, access and security; are likely to be perceived as threats by those in power, limiting the potential for accommodation. In the case of Zimbabwe, in this instance, the unwillingness of Mugabe to ensure the rights and accommodate the interests of political opponents, and widespread exclusion, has been the cause of violent conflict. Excluded opponents have very few political avenues at their disposal to express dissent due to repression embedded in the nature of the political system in Zimbabwe. Access to justice and freedom of expression are almost non-existent for Mugabe's political opponents, and law enforcement is politicized, corrupt, and violent and replicated and sustained political discrimination.

8.2.11 Draconian pieces of legislation as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Respondents to this research suggested that draconian pieces of legislation instituted by the Mugabe led government are dynamics to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. These submissions are in apparent reference to pieces of legislations such as POSA and AIPPA mentioned by authors in chapter two of this study. These were enacted by Mugabe in order to effectively deal with the threat posed by the MDC. POSA, authors argue, was enacted to ensure

the opposition MDC would not have the freedom to assemble without first seeking permission from the police force which participants viewed as always pro-ZANU-PF. They further argue that POSA only applies to the opposition in most cases since ZANU-PF is always cleared ahead of time to hold their rallies. AIPPA, they allege, was also enacted to ensure that the opposition MDC was given a total media black-out so as to deal with its ever-growing popularity with the electorate. CCJP (2008) resonates with this assertion when it states that the MDC was not allowed in any form to hold a meeting or any form of gathering. If by any chance they attempted to meet, they (meetings) were either broken away by the police, army or the ZANU-PF youth militia.

In support of this argument Naidu (1986) in the theory of positive and negative peace states that structural violence is legalized political oppression with direct and overt use of violence. Structural violence is exploitation and injustice, much of which is institutionalized and also politically and psychologically internalized. The deeper right would be the human right to live in a political and world structure that does not produce oppression and repression such as what obtains in Zimbabwe.

8.2.12 Incitation of violence by the MDC as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Respondents pointed out that one of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe was its incitation by the MDC. This assertion is most likely to be advanced by ZANU-PF supporters so as to shift the blame game on the MDC. Contrary to this submission, Alexander and Tendi (2008) make an interesting observation in chapter two of this research where they point out that the security forces were the key organizers and perpetrators of violence, often using party youth and veterans to carry out beatings, intimidation and torture, but with senior military, intelligence and political coordination. This was centrally orchestrated violence, isolated incidents where MDC supporters struck back in self-defence proved the rule.

Conflict transformation theorists agree that it tries to build and restore good relationships between antagonistic parties (Fischer et al., 2003:7). While Lederach (1995) asserts that political conflict is usually started by two people whose political views are incompatible and the transformation of such conflict will involve the need to change and transform the mindsets of both parties involved in the conflict. In similar vein, Best (2006) states that conflict transformation goes beyond conflict resolution because it builds longer lasting relationships and it takes conflict away from violence and takes it towards development.

8.2.13 Polarization of political parties as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Participants suggested that polarization of political parties was one of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. Both ZANU-PF and the MDC are polarized on ideological differences. Dzimiriri et al (2014) allude to the same submission in chapter two of this research where they state that the targets of violence in 2008 were overwhelmingly MDC leaders and their constituencies. To them, this was an ideologically driven battle, as much of the post-2000 violence had been; it was ideas that mattered. The opposition is characterized as traitorous to the nation, in league with foreign powers, and in effect beyond the protection of the law. The deep polarizations of Zimbabwean politics that this state of affairs underscores emerged repeatedly in understandings of the meaning of the vote...The MDC will never be allowed to rule this country, never ever. According to Lederach (1995) this assertion is not a useful way to look at conflict. Both ZANU-PF and the MDC need to understand that there has been an increasing alienation on behalf of each party, building enemy images of the other. The other becomes a threat to my existence, and elimination and/or suppression therefore seems to be the only viable solution.

8.2.14 Politics of the belly as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Findings to this research suggested that ‘politics of the belly’ was one of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. This assertion seems to apply to both ZANU-PF and the MDC in the sense that political positions in Zimbabwe are considered a gateway to riches among other things. The trend since independence in 1980 has been that once politicians are voted into office, they become wealthy over-night by assumedly looting and plundering state wealth at their disposal. It therefore follows that everyone, be they ZANU-PF or MDC want to get into power so that they enrich themselves once their political dreams are fulfilled. While it is true that both parties fight tooth and nail to advance their respective party ideologies, personal fulfilment by individual politicians also come into the matrix. It so often follows that when these politicians’ positions come under threat due to an election, they resort to violence to maintain the status quo. In support of this argument, a Max-Neef (2005) states that violence surges when individuals or groups want to satisfy their needs and that violence in itself is an attempt to meet such needs. These needs may include safety, subsistence, respect and recognition among others.

8.2.15 Attack on private media by Mugabe as dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Findings to this study revealed that one of the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe was the attack on private media by Mugabe. The private media is stifled and its space is effectively closed by Mugabe and his government, journalists are beaten, arrested, threatened and murdered. Media houses are burnt for allegedly reporting against ZANU-PF, a case in point was the burning of the Daily News in 2000. This view is supported by Ranger (2008) when he states that it is difficult to understand how abnormal the situation in Zimbabwe has been between the March and June elections. Scores of journalists and MDC MPs have been arrested on charges ranging from child abduction, organising violence and reporting falsehoods; many others are hiding. Zimbabwe has hardly had a functioning civil society. Its human rights bodies have been raided and all non-governmental organizations have been prevented from operating in rural areas. Journalist have been beaten, arrested, and killed (Ranger, 2008).

In support of this argument, Burton (1990) observes that a close link between freedom of expression, human rights and basic human needs exists, arguing that the denial of rights implies a frustration of needs related to identity, welfare, freedom and security, which are fundamental for human survival, expression and development. Rights are a means to satisfy needs; they are ‘an instrument of individual and collective struggle to protect core interests.’ If rights are frustrated, it creates a potential for violent conflict as people seek to find ways to address their basic needs, since these are non-negotiable (Parlevliet, 2002).

8.3 Existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

This section of this chapter discusses the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe as suggested by participants to this study.

8.3.1 Legal route as an existing mechanism to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Respondents suggested that pursuing the legal route was one of the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe even though they felt the outcomes always favoured ZANU-PF. As submitted in chapter two of this research by Human Rights Watch (2008) ZANU-PF enjoys the support and patronage of the military including the partisan police force and most of the violence that takes place is sanctioned by the State with the military taking a leading role in orchestrating the violence. It is for this reason that the police force drags

its feet in arresting the perpetrators of pre and post-electoral violence because they are partakers in the same violence together with their army counterparts. Respondents pointed out that if at all the perpetrators were arrested by the police, the courts would always release them or they simply mete out very light sentences to make a face-saver. This is so because all the senior appointments at the courts including judges are made by Mugabe and these will always give judgements that are favourable to ZANU-PF. On the other hand, respondents suggested that the MDC has very little option but to approach the same courts for redress even if the judgments are not favourable to them.

In support of this assertion Bratton and Masunungure (2008) state that post-election violence in 2008 did not arise spontaneously. There was credible evidence that senior police officers at the local and national level of government were organizing and inciting violence. They interviewed more than 60 victims and eyewitnesses who implicated by name senior army, police and agents from the CIO involved in serious human rights violations. This includes evidence that those who directly committed these abuses were acting under the orders or with the acquiescence or complicity of senior ranking army and police officers.

In further support of this assertion, Miall (2004) posits that State violations of civil and political rights 'provide a clear link to escalation' and argue that 'State repression is a major risk factor because it can transform latent grievances into active antagonisms, providing the persecuted with strong motivations for violence.' If, on the other hand, political opponents adopt a strategy of violent rebellion, this is likely to result in a destructive cycle, as it may prompt government repression and conflict escalation. Various factors influence the choices made and strategies adopted by political actors, including structural ones, which impact on the prospects for conflict transformation. Similarly, Thoms (2007) states that an important structural factor is whether legitimate and effective mechanisms exist through which individuals and groups can raise their discontent if their needs are frustrated or their rights are denied. The presence or absence of institutional checks and balances on the use of force by the state is also relevant, as is the extent to which the rule of law is upheld, subverted or manipulated by the state and political elites in government.

8.3.2 National Peace and Reconciliation Commission as an existing mechanism to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Findings showed that the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) formed after the 2008 violence was another existing mechanism that stems pre and post-electoral violence

in Zimbabwe. This is largely so because pre and post-electoral violence dynamics that pervaded Zimbabwe's electoral landscape since independence in 1980 reached their peak in 2008, culminating in the formation of the NPRC. At the announcement of the formation of this commission, many people especially those who had borne the brunt of the violence thought that victims and perpetrators of the pre and post-electoral violence were going to be reconciled. Contrary to their expectations, several years after its formation, the commission is yet to find its footing, it still lacks the professionalism expected of it and it is also riddled with many deficiencies especially with regards to its staffing because respondents alleged that it is infested with Mugabe's blue-eyed boys. Be that as it may, respondents still believed that the commission would function one day if it is continually supported financially and otherwise to execute its mandate.

Jonsson (2005) states that bringing together many actors such as commissions, churches, trade unions, traditional leaders and other players to focus on mitigating ongoing violence through negotiation of peace accords and addressing contentious issues brings about lasting peace. These dialogue and problem-solving interfaces prompts the various stakeholders to engage across racial, cultural, party political or religious boundaries, recognizes others' humanity and develop a practice of participatory peace-building and collaboration. It also encourages conflicting parties to take responsibility and get involved in the peace-building of local problems (Parlevliet, 2009).

8.3.3 Civic education as an existing mechanism to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Respondents suggested that another mechanism that existed to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe was civic education. Civic education has been stifled in Zimbabwe by the promulgation of laws that deter civil gatherings for fear of protests by the government. These laws include but are not limited to POSA and AIPPA as mentioned elsewhere in this research. This assertion resonates with the submissions of Makumbe (2009) in chapter two of this study wherein he states that the passing of repressive pieces of legislation prior to the March 2003 presidential elections legalized violence by ZANU-PF. POSA and AIPPA were all enacted in order to restrict the political space for opposition parties and non-governmental organizations that were perceived as educating the citizens on issues of human rights. AIPPA was meant to create media blackout on matters of arbitrary arrests of human rights activists, and beatings, torture and political killings of MDC supporters (Coltart, 2007). POSA ensured that civil society organizations and the opposition would not hold any gatherings without the

approval of the police. Since the police are usually at the service of the state, all civic society meetings were declared illegal because they were perceived as sympathetic to the MDC and labelled as British puppets (Chitiyo, 2009).

Conflict transformation theorists suggest that it allows for ebb and flow in conflict, and sees the presenting problem as a potential opportunity to transform the relationship and the systems in which violence is embedded. The process of transformation begins with unmasking violence and uncovering hidden conflict in order to make their consequences visible to victims and communities. It aims to challenge adversaries to redirect their conflicting interests towards the common good (Botes, 2003:6).

8.3.4 The Truth and Reconciliation Commission as an existing mechanism to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Respondents to this study suggested that another mechanism that existed to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This commission, which is almost similar in its mandate to that of the NPRC, was also formed recently after the adoption of the new constitution in 2013 to reconcile the victims and perpetrators of violence. At its formation, respondents suggested that they hoped there was going to be both restorative and retributive justices in Zimbabwe because of the sustained pervasion of pre and post-electoral violence. Respondents suggested that both the Gukurahundi killings of the early to mid-1980s and the 2008 electoral violence required for retribution and restoration because most of the perpetrators of the violence are known. However, as with the other mechanisms that exist to stem violence, this commission also seems to be without the teeth with which to bite. This assertion is supported by ZESN (2008) which states that there was overwhelming evidence that the army, senior police officers and the CIO at both local and national levels of government went on the rampage organizing and inciting violence against perceived opposition supporters throughout the country.

Miall (2004) states that various factors influence the choices made and the strategies adopted by political actors, including structural ones, which impact on the prospects for conflict transformation. An important structural factor is whether legitimate and effective mechanisms exist through which individuals and groups can raise their discontent if their needs are frustrated and their rights are denied.

8.4 Contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

This section of this study discusses the contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections as suggested by participants to this study.

8.4.1 Repeal of POSA and AIPPA as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

Participants to this research suggested that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, repressive and severe legislations such as POSA and AIPPA have to be repealed. This is so because these pieces of legislation have but constrained the political space for the opposition and civil society in Zimbabwe and have resulted in the arbitrary arrests of opposition activists and anyone that tries to peacefully protest against Mugabe's violent disposition so that he upholds the rule of law and create democratic space for every citizen without violence. This contribution echoes the submissions of Dzimiri et al (2014) in chapter two of this study wherein they state that ZANU-PF systematically resorted to violence in order to scare away the opposition from gathering and also to 'force populace compliance.' Increased reliance on force for political support saw the ZANU-PF led government being at war nationally with those viewed as opposition supporters and sympathizers. The promulgation of repressive pieces of legislations prior to the March 2002 presidential elections legalized political violence by ZANU-PF. POSA and AIPPA were all enacted in order to restrict the political space for the MDC (Coltart, 2007). As a result, the political terrain became uneven as evidenced by continuous harassment, murder, intimidation and torture of opposition supporters.

In collusion with these submissions, Miall (2007) observes that conflict transformation entails transforming the very systems, structures and relationships that give rise to violence and stifle citizens' freedom and participation in electoral processes. It seeks to address underlying structures, cultures and political institutions that encourage and condition violent conflict.

8.4.2 Demilitarization of elections as a contribution to sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

Participants to this study suggested that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, all future elections have to be demilitarized. The military have played an integral role in spearheading violence against the opposition in the successive Zimbabwe elections. The violence ranges from abductions, torture, murder and destruction of home for suspected opposition activists among other things. This explains the reason why a significant number of

respondents suggested that Zimbabwe's elections have to be demilitarized if violence is to be mitigated. This view is shared by Bratton and Masunungure (2008) in chapter two of this study where they assert that the April to June 2008 election interregnum was a militarized moment. A ZANU-PF that had been de-stooled as the ruling party in parliament was not prepared to be dislodged from State House. A pivotal player in the militarized elections was the Joint Operations Command (JOC) a military/security body comprising the heads of all security organs (army, air force, prison service, police and intelligence) which decided to deploy a strategy of violence in order to hold onto power.

In collusion with these assertions, Isakovic (2001) observes that structural violence can include political repression, denial of freedom and self-actualization. It occurs when people are deprived of their potential by the structure of society. It is exploitation and injustice, much of which is institutionalized and also culturally and psychologically internalized. The deeper right would be the human right to exercise freedom of choice, speech and the right to live in a world structure that does not produce torture.

8.4.3 Dialogue between ZANU-PF and MDC as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

Respondents to this study suggested that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, dialogue must be encouraged between ZANU-PF and the MDC. It is evident from submissions made in this study that the targets of violence in Zimbabwe since independence in 1980 were overwhelmingly opposition leaders and their constituencies. This is an ideologically driven battle, as much of the post-2000 violence has been and there are far harder boundaries between parties in Zimbabwe. Where the opposition is characterized as traitorous to the nation, in league with foreign powers, and in effect beyond protection of the law, side-switching between these two major political parties is almost impossible. The deep polarization of Zimbabwean politics impedes any imagination of meaningful negotiations to finding sustainable solutions in mitigating electoral violence.

In support of these assertions, Gerwin (1991:77) observes that positive peace is a condition of society in which relationships between individuals and political groups are conducted on the basis of trust, honesty and consent, and there is a known disposition for all parties to continue such practices. Furthermore, groups are free to do, be or become what they desire unless this infringes upon the ability of any others to do the same.

8.4.4 Levelling of electoral playing field as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

Respondents to this study suggested that in order for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair electoral processes, there was urgent need to level the electoral playing field, which they felt was skewed against the opposition. This assertion resonates with the submissions of Alexander and Tendi (2008) in chapter two of this research where they state that the stakes against the opposition come in the form of militarized elections and repressive legislations among other forms. They further state that electoral bodies like the ZEC are suspected of working in connivance with ZANU-PF so that they always ensure that elections are rigged in favour of Mugabe to maintain the status quo. Its chairperson Makarau is a former senior judge in Mugabe's government such that her impartiality as the ZEC president is questionable. This suspicion is compounded by the 2008 experience where ZEC connived with ZANU-PF to delay the announcement of the presidential elections by more than a month after realizing that Mugabe was trailing Tsvangirai by a wide margin.

In collusion with these submissions, Timberg (2010) states that as the results flowed officially and unofficially, via a slow drip of pronouncements from the official ZEC and a much more rapid outpouring from the MDC and from the text messages and pictures on people's cell phones of results posted at each station, a sense of euphoria took over in the MDC camp and of foreboding among ZANU-PF. But the delay was carefully engineered; the presidential results were not officially announced until May 2, and while they confirmed a Tsvangirai victory, they did not give him the necessary 50% plus one vote necessary to avoid a run-off, an outcome that sparked much suspicion.

In the same vein, (Lederach 2003; Miall 2004 and Isakovic 2001) state that conflict transformation is particularly relevant in the context of asymmetric conflicts, where transforming power imbalances and unjust social relationships is key. It addresses the wider social, political and cultural sources of conflict and hence does not only focus on addressing the behavioural and attitudinal manifestations but also on deeper structural origins. In more concrete terms, responding to conflict transformation is not about making a situation of injustice more bearable, but about transforming the very systems, structures and relationships which give rise to violence and injustice.

8.4.5 International supervision of elections as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections.

Participants to this study suggested that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections there was need for international supervision of elections. This contribution could be attributed to varied reasons, to begin with, Zimbabwe elections have been plagued by violence and their resultant outcomes have always been disputed. Citizens have therefore lost confidence in all electoral processes whose outcomes are seemingly predetermined. It is against this alleged background of electoral manipulation and violence by ZANU-PF that the opposition are now calling for a neutral observer. The feeling here is that even citizens have lost faith in the local electoral body namely the ZEC because of its previous conduct hence the belief that its credibility to supervise elections is questionable hence the appeal to tried and tested global bodies like the UN. Still linked to the discourse of electoral supervision, respondents further suggested that the Africa Union (AU) should be called in to observe the elections if credibility is to be observed. Most of these international organizations have previously condemned Zimbabwe elections as violent and not peaceful, free nor fair as pointed out in chapter two of this study.

In support of this argument, Bratton and Masunungure (2008) point out in chapter two of this study that many other observers; regional and international, friend and foe of Zimbabwe's post-harmonized elections scene arrived at the same conclusion that the elections were a total sham. For instance, the Pan-African Parliament Observer Mission which arrived in the country on 14 June 2008 to observe the run-off warned that 'violence is at the top of the agenda of this electoral process' and that it had received 'many horrendous stories. The election is a far cry from what we had (in March).' Tanzanian Foreign Minister Bernard Membe, speaking on behalf of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security lamented the dim prospects for a free and fair election: 'There is every sign that these elections will never be free or fair.' Across the Atlantic both the United States and the UN expressed their deep anxiety with Condoleezza Rice, then United States Secretary of State, accusing Mugabe and his regime of having given up 'any pretence that the 27 June elections will be allowed to proceed in free and fair manner.' Five days before polling, the UN Security Council unanimously condemned the politically motivated violence. 'The Security Council regrets that the campaign of violence and restrictions on the political opposition has made it impossible for a free and fair election to take place on 27 June.'

In collusion with this argument, Bloomfield et al (2006) observe that conflict transformation focuses attention on peace-building in the local context and only highlights the role of external and international interveners when there are gross human rights abuses in the obtaining conflict. Human rights can be defined as ‘internationally agreed values, standards or rules regulating the conduct of states towards their own citizens and towards non-citizens.’ Some instruct states to refrain from certain actions (e.g. killing, torture) while others impose obligations on the state to act in certain ways (e.g. ensure citizens exercise their democratic rights). Civil and political rights fall within this domain, and the state must protect citizens against unwarranted interference and abuse of power by the state; examples are rights to life, to freedom of expression and assembly and to due process. Strictly speaking, only the state can violate human rights, since they principally exist to protect people from political, legal and social abuses by the state.

8.4.6 Removal of military personnel from the ZEC as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

Respondents to this study suggested that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, military personnel such as Major Utoile Silaigwana must be removed from the ZEC because they are suspected to be ZANU-PF implants. It is generally believed that ZEC has been colluding in rigging elections with ZANU-PF for a long period of time. This suggestion is supported by Raftopoulos (2008) in chapter two of this research where he asserts that the year 2000 was a turning-point in civil-military relations. With the emergence of the MDC challenge, the military’s involvement in political life became increasingly open. The militarization of the state took the form of a growing number of senior military officers being appointed to lead strategic state institutions including Zimbabwe Prison Services (ZPS), the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO), the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), and parastatals such as Grain Marketing Board (GMB) among others. This view is further shared by Makumbe (2009) who states that it is quite clear that Mugabe’s real strength is the coercion which comes out of the army and the liberation war veterans. He is using it to the full and the militarization will be to his benefit even if the opposition does well in any elections which might take place.

In support of this argument, Miall (2007) states that in contexts where a particular group or party has captured the state and government institutions, this means that calls for wider political participation and self-determination; both of which can be framed in terms of rights and relate

to needs of identity, freedom, participation and self-esteem, are likely to be perceived as a threat by those in power, limiting the potential for accommodation.

8.4.7 Presence of observers before and after elections as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

Participants to this study further suggested that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, observers must be on the ground well before and after elections. This is largely so because most of the violence either occurs before or after voting day. This has been the trend of violence in Zimbabwe elections; now observers have a tendency to arrive a few days before elections and leave a few days after elections, and won't be able to witness all the violence that occurs. This assertion is supported by Human Rights Watch (2008) in chapter two of this research where it states that in the run-up to the parliamentary election of June 2000, international organizations such as Amnesty International documented extrajudicial executions, torture, beatings and abductions, the vast majority committed by supporters of ZANU-PF. Further state-orchestrated violence took place in the run-up to the 2002 presidential election, as documented and criticized by members of the observer missions from the US, Norway, SADC and the Commonwealth present during that election, as well as international non-governmental organizations.

Human Rights Watch (2010) buttresses these submissions by stating that elections in 2005, although flawed, were significantly more peaceful in the run-up. However, in the immediate aftermath, the government of Zimbabwe embarked on Operation Murambatsvina (Clear the Filth), an eviction campaign that left more than 900 000 people without homes or livelihoods simply because it was suspected that they had voted for the opposition MDC during the 2005 plebiscite. In support of this argument, Tomas (2005) refers to the relevance of rights for organizing and governing the interaction between state and citizens, amongst individuals and groups in society, so that these are constructive, geared towards nonviolence and allowing the recognition of self-esteem in citizens.

8.4.8 Disallowing the West from meddling in Zimbabwe elections as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

It was also the suggestion of participants to this study that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, the West should be stopped from meddling in Zimbabwe elections. Mugabe and ZANU-PF believe that the West sponsors the MDC in order to effect

regime change in Zimbabwe through a raft of measures such as economic sanctions among others to encourage rebellion against its rule. This discourse is supported in chapter two of this research by LeBas (2008) who asserts that ZANU-PF faced serious challenges in 2008, prime among them was its inability to control Zimbabwe's planet-leading rates of economic contraction and record-breaking inflation (officially over 2 million percent in July 2008). In language tired from years of repetition, ZANU-PF sought to blame everything from the very existence of the opposition to the devastated economy on the country's neo-imperial enemies abroad. It portrayed itself as engaged in mortal combat with the MDC and its allies who together had impoverished the people through the imposition of sanctions.

In support of these submissions, Galtung (1998: 32) observes that conflict transformation focuses on changing relationships of conflicting parties, changing expectations and shifting the environment, in which they exist, as well as building and rebuilding the relationship between conflicting parties to create an enabling environment for possible prospects for re-engagement and reconciliation.

8.4.9 Acceptance of defeat at the polls by the MDC as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

It was also suggested by participants to this study that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, the opposition MDC must gracefully accept defeat at the polls. ZANU-PF views the MDC as its nemesis to their continued mis (rule). This collusion is shared by Sithole and Makumbe (2009) in the literature review of this study where they state that in the year prior to the 2008 elections, a systematic attack on the MDC leadership and structures in Harare, overwhelmingly focussed on the opposition further undermining its organizational capacity. Tsvangirai and other opposition leaders were viciously beaten in and outside police custody and his stronghold Harare was subsequently subjected to a campaign of abductions, torture and police intimidation.

This assertion is supported by Parlevliet (2009) in the theoretical framework chapter of this study (see chapter3) wherein her iceberg image is introduced, which provides a useful tool to classify interventions in conflict situations. At the level of human rights violations as symptoms (e.g. violence and torture) the primary objective is to protect people from further abuses and halt ongoing direct, physical violence through peace-building. The focus here is on structural violence and on working towards positive peace, through, for example, institution building, accommodation and strengthening the rule of law.

8.4.10 Removal of ethnicity as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

Participants suggested that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, ethnicity must be removed. Ethnicity cuts across the political divide in Zimbabwe and it is a contentious issue in the conduct of electoral processes. In collusion with this submission, Sithole (1995) posits that the challenge of ethnicity in politics manifested during Zimbabwe's war of liberation of 1963 to 1979. The Southern Rhodesia African National Congress (SRANC) that was established with the motive of waging a war of liberation in 1957 was spoiled by ethnic barriers between the Shona and the Ndebele people. The same ethnic tensions surfaced again when the Front for Liberation of Zimbabwe (FROLIZI) which was formed in 1971 was crippled by ethnic tensions between the Shona and Ndebele speaking groups. Political mobilization therefore became an ethnic play where ZANU had to mobilize from the Shona and ZAPU had the Ndebele as its resource base (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008b).

In support of this argument, Miall (2007) observes that it may be difficult to resolve conflict between parties when issues in conflict concern fundamental asymmetries, such as dominance over minorities by majorities or similar power relations between groups stratified by class, ethnicity or beliefs.

8.4.11 National educational programmes on anti-violence as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

It was suggested by participants that in order for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, there was need to institute national educational programmes on anti-violence. Violence has pervaded almost all elections held in Zimbabwe since independence in 1980. Educating the citizens on the fundamentals of tolerance and co-existence so that sustainable electoral processes are achieved is an important stride towards peace-building. In support of these submissions, Weber (1999) states that positive peace is only achieved if direct, structural and any form of political violence is eliminated. Positive peace includes structures and values that enhance freedom, protection, participation, protection and security for all citizens. Peace should mean an opportunity for aesthetic, intellectual and political development and a chance of seeking personal fulfilment.

8.4.12 Objectivity of the private media as a contribution to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

It was also suggested by respondents that for Zimbabwe to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections, the private media was supposed to be objective when reporting about Mugabe and ZANU-PF. Mugabe has on numerous occasions been on a collision course with the private media whom he accuses of biased reporting against him and his rule. It is glaringly evident that there is bad blood between him and the private media, and this animosity allegedly led to the bombing of the Daily News headquarters in 2000 because Mugabe felt that their reporting was always biased against him and ZANU-PF. The private media also fingered Mugabe and his party in the disappearance of journalists and civil rights activists such as Itai Dzamara among others. In collusion with these submissions, Botes (2003) states that conflict transformation aims to expose human rights violations, uphold rule of law, encourage freedom of speech and find ways to restore freedom and participation within society.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter was divided into three parts, the first section discussed the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe, the second section discussed the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe and the third section discussed the contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. In each instance, the points of departure were the views of the participants to this research with regards to the objectives as outlined in Chapter One.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters findings from the research as suggested by participants were presented, analyzed and discussed. The points of departure were the research results from the 20 party provincial chairpersons and the 5 representatives of the major civil society organizations based in the capital Harare and have a direct interest in the electoral processes of Zimbabwe. In this chapter the researcher draws conclusions and examines whether the research aims and objectives were achieved. The research results and conclusions are based on the objectives and serve to answer the research questions that were raised earlier in Chapter 1. The three research objectives set for the purpose of this study were all fulfilled. These objectives were chosen with the aim of identifying the dynamics of pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe, to determine the existing mechanisms to stem electoral violence in Zimbabwe and to contribute strategies to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. Based on the research results, conclusions and recommendations are proposed in this chapter. The conclusions are followed by recommendations to the two major political parties in Zimbabwe namely ZANU-PF and the MDC for sustainable, peaceful, free and fair future elections in the country.

1.13.1 9.2 Conclusions on the identification of the dynamics leading to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

Objective 1: To identify the dynamics that lead to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

One of the objectives of this research was to identify the dynamics that lead to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe. The research therefore concludes that the dynamics that lead to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe are as follows: militarization of elections, murder of MDC activists, ethnicity, war rhetoric and narratives by Mugabe, destruction of opposition homes, violent land grab by Mugabe, draconian pieces of legislation, Mugabe's belief in one-party state, state sponsorship of violence, illegal sanctions imposed by the US, Britain and the EU, inciting of violence by the MDC, the absence of a succession plan on the

part of Mugabe, political intolerance between parties, politics of the belly and polarisation of political parties.

9.2 Conclusions on the determination of the existing mechanisms to stem electoral violence in Zimbabwe

Objective 2: To determine the existing mechanisms to stem electoral violence in Zimbabwe.

The second objective of this research was to determine the existing mechanisms to stem electoral violence in Zimbabwe. The research therefore concludes that the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence dynamics in Zimbabwe are the following: legal recourse, the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and civic education.

9.3 Conclusions on the contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe

Objective 3: To contribute strategies to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

The third objective of this research was to contribute strategies to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. The research therefore concludes that the contributions to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe are: international supervision of elections, the UN must observe elections, SADC must not allow Mugabe to steal elections, removal of military personnel such as Major Utoile Silaigwana from the ZEC, the AU must observe elections, observers must be on the ground well before and after elections, the West must not meddle in Zimbabwe elections, the MDC must gracefully accept defeat, repeal draconian legislations such as POSA and AIPPA, private media should be objective when reporting about ZANU-PF, encourage dialogue between ZANU-PF and MDC, demilitarize all elections, remove ethnicity from Zimbabwe politics, level the electoral playing field and institute national educational programmes on anti-violence.

9.4 Recommendations

This research makes the following recommendations:

. The UN must observe all future Zimbabwe elections so that the pervasion of electoral violence is stopped.

. The military/security must be confined to their barracks during electoral processes in Zimbabwe because they should be non-partisan.

. All Zimbabweans must be encouraged to break ethnic barriers that separate them and realize that they are one and the same people who should co-exist despite their different political affiliations.

. Regional and international organizations such as SADC and AU must always monitor member states to ensure that incidence of violence are dealt with timeously and effectively.

9.5 Chapter and overall study conclusion

This chapter presented the conclusions and made the conclusions. The central main findings from the research were presented in this chapter together with the recommendations that political parties, Zimbabweans as well as regional and international organizations should make so that pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe is stopped so that elections become sustainable, peaceful, free and fair. Chapter one of this study presented the background to the and research aim, questions and objectives. Furthermore, the chapter highlighted the significance of the study by explaining that it may help in policy formulation regarding elections in Zimbabwe and that it could also be used by scholars who are interested in Zimbabwe's electoral processes.

This was followed by chapter 2 that looked mainly at the scholarly views and arguments related to the study objectives. Thus literature review of this research was moulded around the main research questions and objectives which were to identify the dynamics that lead to pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe, to determine the existing mechanisms to stem pre and post-electoral violence in Zimbabwe and to contribute strategies to have sustainable, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. Chapter 4 of the study adopted a qualitative phenomenological descriptive research design. The interview guide was used as the primary research instrument. Primary data for this study was analyzed using NVIVO software and the research findings were presented, analyzed and discussed in chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8. Chapter 3 of the study looked at the theoretical frameworks that underpin this research.

The research concluded by making recommendations to mitigate electoral violence in Zimbabwe derived from the shortcomings identified in the research findings. It is hoped that further research needs to be conducted into this area maybe from another perspective not adequately covered by this study.

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