

# Suspend Competitive Elections in Zimbabwe: Heal The Nation First.

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There is palpable anger, bitterness and hatred that permeates the Zimbabwean society. These three are very strong emotions that are dangerous and counterproductive.

Zimbabwe needs LOVE. Love for ourselves and for one another. Love for Zimbabwe as a brand. These ideals require a deliberate concerted effort and selflessness from all of us.

Just observe how we treat each other on the roads, in the bus and at the market place. A broken down traffic light equals a traffic jam. We throw litter into the drainages. Look at the exchange rate indiscipline driven by greed and profiteering. Look at our social media space; the vulgarity, the insults, the intolerance, the anger, the name calling, the bitterness, the list goes on. We are a broken society. We need healing. We are clearly not ready to hold a civilised competitive election.

Let us not forget the law of the harvest. "You reap what you sow". We cannot sow hatred, bitterness and anger then hope to reap peace, harmony and development. Impossible!

One thing we all agree on is that we are a heavily polarised nation. Highly toxic. However, we cannot agree on what or who caused this polarity. What is then evident as a direct consequence of this is that we are dangerously divided as a nation.....and falling. We are in a de facto civil war.

The opposition and its supporters hate Zanu PF with a passion. They hold on strongly to their opinion that all the problems bedeviling Zimbabwe are caused by Zanu-PF while the opposition is innocent.

On the other hand, Zanu-PF is clearly bitter and angry at the opposition. They hold on to their strong opinion that the opposition is made up of saboteurs who connive with Western Countries to undermine our sovereignty and want to effect regime change. This means that we are a country at war. There can only be very serious implications.

This impasse means we are guaranteed that any elections held under the current toxic political environment are **already disputed**. We know all too well what a disputed election means to the ordinary Zimbabwean. Suffering on end.

Elections in Zimbabwe have become 'a poisoned chalice'. As long as the opposition is characterised as an extension of the West's regime change agenda, competitive elections can never solve the Zimbabwe problem. Sadly, the opposition itself has done very little, if any, to extricate itself from this characteristic.

A serious mediated dialogue between the Ruling party and the opposition is required as a matter of urgency. The real issue at hand here is to seek a consensus on what our national identity is. It is very clear that we are defending two totally different nations. The one seen through the lens of the opposition and the other one seen through the lens of Zanu-PF. We need TRUE LOVE to be able to resolve this contradiction.

Zimbabwe needs LOVE to be the dominant emotion again. We must Let Love lead. Not just in rhetoric but it must be backed by concrete actions. **National healing and unity must be our priority. Not competitive elections. We are not ready as a people.**

**Remember the famed... 'Glass is half-full or half-empty' perception of life.** The idea is that if you say the glass is half empty, you see the world in a negative, or pessimistic way. If you say the glass is half full, you have a more positive and optimistic viewpoint.

All of us are glasses that are half-full and half-empty. None of us is perfect. Same applies to our leaders. They are not perfect. We must praise them in Love and also criticise them in Love but not from hatred, bitterness and a judgemental attitude.

We must never allow ourselves to become judges. That is why even Jesus refused to condemn the woman who was caught in adultery. Not because she did not sin, but because her fellow sinners had become judges.

I posit that it is now time for us, Zimbabweans as a collective, to focus on the positive aspects of ourselves and our leaders, magnify those positives and grow our nation from there. There are lots of positives that we can use as a spring board for national growth. Prophet Makandiwa has shown us the way in this regard.

Unfortunately, so far, we have expended a lot of energy on negativity and hatred (the Half-empty mind-set). It is time for a change of attitude and mind-set. Let us be deliberately positive towards each other and towards our government as a people (the Half-full approach). God will not let us down.

Therefore, we propose that President Munangagwa representing the ruling party Zanu PF and Advocate Chamisa representing the entire opposition, should urgently dialogue and agree on a moratorium on elections for two seasons – 2023 and 2028. We then use that period to heal and unite the nation. We may then have elections from 2033 going forward.

The two leaders must create a government of national unity, like, now. Not next year. We cannot afford another year of polarisation, bitterness, hatred, anger and toxicity. We are in May 2022, and July 2023 is more than a year from now. We need unity now. Collaboration, not competition.

We propose that President Munangagwa remains in office until 2028. Then advocate Chamisa is guaranteed a presidential term from 2028 to 2033. We then hold competitive elections in 2033 and Advocate Chamisa will be eligible to contest to complete his second term.

Elections for the sake of elections is clearly not in Zimbabweans' best interest. Remember the constitution was made for the people by the people to serve their best interests. The people were not made for the constitution. When the constitution or a part thereof no longer serves the people, it is the people who must alter it to serve their collective interests. Therefore, a legal framework can always be crafted to serve the interests of the people. We have enough legal brains in Zimbabwe to do that. All we have done is to propose the concept.

The Zimbabwean problem is a deep-rooted one and its solution is definitely NOT a winner-take-all election approach. It requires a negotiated settlement born out of the realisation that the nation is deeply divided and chronically polarised.

What we need is a Win-Win-Win scenario where the people of Zimbabwe win, President Munangagwa wins and Advocate Chamisa wins.

For that to happen, they both must first recognise the importance of the other and deliberately inject positive energy and love into our society. That is,

1. Advocate Chamisa must recognise that President Munangagwa is an indispensable resource who is the custodian of loads and loads of classified national information which he is duty bound to pass on to the next generation.
2. President Munangagwa on his part must realise that Advocate Chamisa needs to be nurtured and tutored and that he represents the incoming generation to which he must hand over the baton. This handover is a process and not an event. It requires great wisdom, skill and maturity to navigate and execute.
3. They must both actively deal with the scourge of what I would term 'sensationalised mis-information'.
4. They must overcome their two most difficult obstacles, namely;
  - a. Their personal egos
  - b. The sovereignty question

Zimbabwe is at a crossroads. A wrong turn may lead us to the abyss. The correct turn will lead us to the Promised Land.

## **WHY I SAY PRESIDENT MUNANGAGWA IS INDISPENSABLE**

We have heard all the negatives about President Munangagwa's 42 year presence in government.

Now let us focus on the positives that his being in government for 42 years brings to the table.

- i) President Munangagwa is probably the only Zimbabwean alive today who has first-hand knowledge and experience of every stage of our journey as a nation from the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chimurenga to the present day. He knows every twist and turn. He has records of all classified information. He is what we call in Shona, '*Denhe Roruzivo*'.
  - He was a member of almost every cabinet since independence. He was not just an ordinary cabinet minister but he held very influential portfolios such as State Security, Justice Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Defence, Speaker of Parliament, Vice Presidency and now the Presidency. He is highly intelligent and shrewd.
  - That means he accumulated a body of critical knowledge that no one else has in Zimbabwe at the moment.
  - By God's wisdom, he is in office at the very end of the life cycle of the old guard and he represents the perfect opportunity for a proper transition from the liberation movement to the next generation.

The point I am making is that, the new generation of politicians should view President Munangagwa as a valued resource. A source of authentic invaluable information most of which cannot be found in books and newspapers. Information they can only glean when they spend time in intimate conversations with him. This can only happen if they are working with him on a daily basis. That is why we propose that Advocate Chamisa should be incorporated into the Presidium in a Government of National Unity from hence forth until 2033. This would allow him to 'download' all the important files of this nation from source unadulterated.

- ii) President Munangagwa deserves due credit for the deliberate demonstration of a commitment to redress the imperfections of the Mugabe era. He has shown astute boldness and an undying love for his country. Let us look at some of the observable points;
  - Reaching out to former Prime Minister Tsvangirai.
  - His appointment of Professor Mthuli Ncube

- His appointment of Minister Winston Chitando
- His appointment of Kirsty Coventry
- His engagement with and consulting Eddie Cross
- His compensation of white former commercial farmers for improvements made on farms
- His toning down of the business indigenisation laws
- His engagement and re-engagement policy
- The creation of ZACC the anti-corruption commission
- The creation of a non-partisan Presidential Advisory Council (PAC)
- His decision to award road construction contracts to local companies
- His decision to erect the statue of Mbuya Nehanda
- His desire to complete national projects on time

All the above examples and more, serve to prove the genuineness of our President. I hope Advocate Chamisa is willing to decipher that. I also hope he realises the reality that the Zimbabwe question, as of now, cannot be solved by electoral votes.

I am confident that if the two leaders can overcome their egos and put the people of Zimbabwe first, they will see sense in dialogue and establish a Government of National Unity.

However, if dialogue fails, my advice to the President is that, he should be prepared to administer TOUGH LOVE and take drastic measures to recover the economy because ultimately he is the responsible authority and the buck stops with him.

He cannot outsource responsibilities to an irresponsible population.

For example, the exchange rate issue. It is not a problem of not having economic fundamentals in place. Rather it is a political sentiment issue buttressed by greed and profiteering as well as outright sabotage. The correct value of the Zimbabwe dollar is about 16(sixteen) Zim Dollars to 1USD. What we see on the market is fictitious.