

Weekly Press Review

June 4-8, 2011

The views expressed in this review are those of the named media and not necessarily representative of the Delegation of the European Union to Zimbabwe.

Politics/International Relations

Mugabe, generals give Biti ultimatum

The Standard, June 5-11, 2011

Impeccable sources say President Robert Mugabe and service chiefs on Friday ordered Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai to force Finance minister Tendai Biti to review civil servants' salaries saying the issue was now a threat to national security.

Mugabe and the security chiefs are said to be worried that if the issue of salaries for civil servants was not addressed immediately it might ignite protests similar to the ones that toppled authoritarian regimes in Egypt and Tunisia early this year.

The ultimatum also came a day after Mugabe launched a scathing attack on Biti where he came short of blaming the MDC-T secretary general for all the financial problems facing the country.

Mugabe said Biti was trying to usurp his powers, blocking funding for new farmers and failing to finance Bulawayo firms, which are closing down.

"Don't lift sanctions"

The Sunday Mail, June 5-11, 2011

US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Mr Jonnie Carson recently told the SADC facilitation team led by Lindiwe Zulu that the MDC-T had officially asked his Government not to lift the illegal economic sanctions but instead tighten them until there is regime change in Zimbabwe. The illegal sanctions have been widely condemned by many, including SADC and the AU.

EU divided over Zim sanctions-Conze

The Herald, June 7, 2011

OUTGOING German ambassador to Zimbabwe, Mr Albrecht Conze yesterday reiterated that Europe was divided over the illegal sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe.

He said he had worked hard to reverse the misconceptions about the country in his homeland during his tour of duty.

Ambassador Conze said this after bidding farewell to Vice President John Nkomo at his Munhumutapa Offices.

"This country has started to move from the doldrums.

"In Europe we have so many countries and some countries are pushing a little faster for the review of sanctions on Zimbabwe while others are hesitant," he said.

The EU imposed illegal sanctions on Zimbabwe in 2002 following the re-election of President Mugabe and as the land reform programme intensified.

There have, however, been divisions within the bloc with countries like Germany, Spain, Italy and Greece opposing the continued existence of the embargo while Britain - a powerful member of the grouping - and others insist the sanctions must stay.

Pay rise for civil servants

The Herald, June 7, 2011

PRINCIPALS to the Global Political Agreement have ordered Finance Minister Tendai Biti to award civil servants a salary increment this month.

President Mugabe, Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai and Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara met last Friday and agreed that civil servants should have their salaries raised this month.

Civil servants take home an average of between US\$150 and US\$200 per month, way below the poverty datum line estimated at US\$502.

Minister Biti has been refusing to increase civil servants' salaries arguing that Treasury had no money despite reports that the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority exceeded its target by 11 percent when it collected revenue amounting to US\$618, 9million in the first quarter of this year.

It also emerged that Treasury officials have advised the Public Service Commission that it was feasible to increase civil servants' salaries to a certain level.

Zim busts sanctions

...as State-owned Munyati power station gets spares from UK

[NewsDay, June 8, 2011](#)

Munyati Thermal Power Station is in the process of acquiring spare parts worth an estimated US\$2 million from the United Kingdom despite the fact that the country has imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe; a development described by the Minister of Parastatals and State Enterprises, Gordon Moyo, as proof that the Global Political Agreement (GPA) was moving in the right direction. Moyo added that the Government is re-engaging the European Union and other Western countries in line with the GPA.

Political Violence/Elections

SADC determined to rid region of sham polls-Germany

[NewsDay, June 4, 2011](#)

Outgoing German Ambassador to Zimbabwe Albrecht Conze says SADC leaders are keen to solve the Zimbabwe crisis and also to ensure that no country in the region holds sham elections again. Conze said the impression he got from his visit to South Africa, as well as information he received from diplomats in the region was that SADC leaders would back the decisions taken by the troika in Livingstone, Zambia. Conze also said it was unacceptable the world for the army to be involved in politics.

Service chiefs quash MDC-T allegations

[The Herald, June 4, 2011](#)

THE National Security Council met in Harare yesterday where service chiefs quashed a host of allegations raised by MDC-T against them in the recent past.

Defence Minister Emmerson Mnangagwa also presented a report clarifying the purported presence of army personnel in rural areas. The MDC-T has been claiming that soldiers have been deployed in rural areas to intimidate people ahead of elections scheduled to be held this year or early next year.

The MDC-T claimed that its supporters were targeted in connection with the murder of police officer Petros Mutedzi but the police said they were only arresting suspects and not hunting MDC-T people.

Suspected MDC-T youths murdered Inspector Mutedzi after the police had come to disperse them for holding an illegal political gathering in Glen View 3 on Sunday.

Police Commissioner-General Augustine Chihuri also denied accusations by the MDC-T that its rallies had been banned by the police.

PM told: "No negative Mugabe comments"

[DailyNews, June 6, 2011](#)

Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai failed to address a rally on Saturday after the police instructed him not to mention anything negative about President Robert Mugabe. A handful of people attended the rally amid heavy police presence. Police spokesperson Andrew Phiri queried the claims but he did not elaborate.

The MDC-T says six of its supporters were beaten and attacked by Zanu PF supporters at Machipisa shopping centre, although no one was arrested.

MDC-T got standard conditions for rally: Govt

[The Herald, June 7, 2011](#)

Secretary for Media, Information and Publicity, Mr George Charamba says the conditions given by the police to the MDC-T to hold its rally at Zimbabwe Grounds in Highfield on Saturday were standard and in conformity with the Global Political Agreement and the law. He said in terms of the Public Order and Security Act, the obligation of observance of peace lied with the convener of meetings.

He said the GPA urges political parties to refrain from hate speech and political violence, an issue police urged the MDC-T to observe, which the party now complains as "conditions" for their rally.

In granting permission to the MDC-T rally, the police had also advised the party to refrain from derogatory remarks against other political parties and co-operate with Government security agents.

Charamba said it was interesting to note that the meeting was initially dubbed a star rally but

was suddenly downgraded to an ordinary meeting after it emerged that it was flopping as the MDC-T sought to blame its failure on the police ahead of the SADC Summit in South Africa.

Human Rights Issues

Residents "limp" into court

[DailyNews, June 4, 2011](#)

Twelve of the Glen View residents arrested this week on charges of murdering a policeman limped into court yesterday as a result of alleged severe torture during the time they were in detention. Magistrate Shane Kubonera ordered that the suspects receive medical attention from Government doctors and demanded that the Attorney General's office present an impartial report on the inquiry of the alleged abuses. Riot police manned the court during the court session.

Bid to kill Biti

- **Bomb explodes at minister's house**

[DailyNews, June 6, 2011](#)

Three days after President Robert Mugabe launched a vitriolic attack on Finance Minister Tendai Biti, there was an attempt on the minister's life after an explosive device was thrown at his Glen Lorne house yesterday. The police officer who guards Biti's house had not reported for duty for five days prior to the attack.

Biti "bombing" raises questions

[The Herald, June 7, 2011](#)

THE bombing of MDC-T secretary-general Mr Tendai Biti's house in Chisipite, Harare, on Sunday morning has raised more questions than answers.

Police sources say investigations indicate that the matter appears to be the party's grandstanding ahead of the SADC summit this weekend.

The SADC extraordinary summit is slated for this Saturday and will be held on the sidelines of the Comesa, SADC and East African Community Tripartite Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Police sources yesterday said it was startling that an official report was made more than 17 hours after the incident.

The sources also claim that chances were high that evidence could have been tampered with before the report was made.

The bombing reportedly happened at around 1 am on Sunday.

I want out: Biti

- **Minister wants to quit over bomb attack**

[DailyNews, June 7, 2011](#)

Following the bomb attack on his house on Sunday morning Finance Minister Tendai Biti says he was considering quitting the inclusive Government as he fears that the country's securocrats were out to kill him and his family. On Friday Biti is said to have clashed with Mugabe over remarks the latter had made to the effect that Biti wanted to usurp his presidential powers.

Economic Issues

SA snubs America over Zim diamonds

[The Sunday Mail, June 5-11, 2011](#)

South Africa has thrown its weight behind Zimbabwe's efforts to auction Chiadzwa diamonds by strongly rebuking a senior US official who visited that country last week to de-campaign the sale of the diamonds. South African officials are alleged to have said they would not be involved in America's gripe with Zimbabwe. Mines Minister Obert Mpofu said America was on a mission to influence international buyers to shun the Chiadzwa diamonds.

Land and Resettlement

Cop accused of grabbing mine

The Standard, June 5-11, 2011

A senior police officer in Gwanda district, Matabeleland South has been accused of grabbing a gold mine in Plumtree after allegedly evicting a local miner, Nkosana Moyo from his mine in Mphoengs, Mangwe District.

The dispute has left 300 mine workers without jobs.

Moyo, who employed 280 employees, confirmed last week that because of the continued threats, he has been forced to stop all mining activities at his gold claim.

White farmers shut out: CFU

DailyNews, June 7, 2011

The Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) says Government is refusing to consider applications for land from white farmers under the land reform programme while Government says the applications will be considered once all blacks have been catered for.

Out of the 4 500 white farmers that were on the farms before the land reforms began, only 250 remain.

Zim loses assets to displaced farmers

NewsDay, June 7, 2011

The High Court in Pretoria, South Africa, yesterday rejected an application by the Zimbabwean government to block the auction of its assets to compensate white commercial farmers whose farms were seized under the controversial land reform programme.

Louis Fick, Richard Etheredge and the late Mike Campbell, who lost their farms during the chaotic and violent exercise, seized Zimbabwean government assets in Cape Town last year.

Yesterday's ruling paves the way for the assets, which include a R2,5-million house in Cape Town, to go under the hammer.

Willie Spies, the lawyer representing the three farmers, said one of the properties was not protected by diplomatic immunity because it was being rented out, making it a commercial property.

"The ruling is of historic significance. For probably the first time in international legal history, a court ruled that the assets of a country guilty of human rights violations must be sold at public auction," Spies said.

"Arrangements will be made without delay to have the properties sold at public auction."