



ZIMBABWE

Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, Zimbabwe



Preamble

Since late 1999, Zimbabwe has been in the grip of a serious political and economic crisis. Over the past five years, this crisis has intensified, with the Zimbabwean state becoming increasingly repressive. There have been numerous incidents of kidnapping, assault and torture of members of the political opposition and ordinary Zimbabweans, allegedly by members of the ruling party and security forces. The government is generally suspicious of civil society organisations, and at times has accused certain civil organisations of being the “puppets” of United Kingdom and other western powers. In this context, it is very difficult for researchers from civil society organisations to undertake rigorous research on security-related issues, such as small arms and light weapons. Hence this chapter is only able to present a limited analysis of small arms and light weapons issues in Zimbabwe, which is placed in the context of current crisis.

Introduction

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country bordered by Zambia in the north-west, Botswana in the south-west, South Africa to the south and Mozambique along its eastern border. Current estimates put the population size at 12.5 million.¹

Zimbabwe, formerly known as Rhodesia, was a British colony until 1965 when the white government unilaterally declared independence. Two years prior this, two liberation movements, the Zimbabwe African National Union and the Zimbabwe African People’s Union, were created. These liberation movements sought to bring an end white minority rule in Zimbabwe

through armed struggle. Zimbabwe became independent in 1980 following the cessation of hostilities. Since independence, Zimbabwe's ruling party has been the Zimbabwean African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), with Robert Mugabe as both the leader of ZANU-PF and head of state since independence.

In 1991 an International Monetary Fund (IMF) structural adjustment programme was introduced in Zimbabwe. This resulted in political and economic reforms, which pressured Zimbabwe in the direction of a market driven economy and multiparty democratic governance. The economic reforms however, contributed to an economic recession, which in turn led to massive job losses. The trade union movement was subsequently politicised. With the economic recession intensifying, prominent individuals from the trade union movement established an opposition political party in 1999.² During that year, the ZANU-PF government initiated a constitutional reform process, one of the objectives being to provide the President with more power and influence. In February 2000, a national referendum on the constitutional recommendations was held, in which the majority of Zimbabweans rejected these recommendations. In June 2000, national elections were fiercely contested by ZANU-FP and the opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), which ZANU-PF won under controversial circumstances. The Zimbabwean state has subsequently become increasingly repressive and intolerant of criticism from civil society and the independent media.

This report was compiled by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (Zimbabwe) (CJP[Z]). It provides an overview of the political situation in Zimbabwe between 1994 and 2003 and reflects the role that small arms play in the current political conflict. It also provides limited information about the Zimbabwe Defence Industry's ammunition production facility.

State authorities did not co-operate with CJP researchers in terms of providing firearm-related data. Requests were made for interviews with the Police Firearms Crime Investigating Department, (in Bulawayo and Harare), and the Controller of Firearms in Harare, in an attempt to obtain official data. In response, the researcher was asked to comply with Section 6 of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) before authorisation for the interviews could be granted.³ In practice, this

legislation prevents access to information rather than facilitating it. In addition, the Police and Controller of Firearms stated, in telephonic conversations, that statistics regarding the use and distribution of small arms are classified, as they are a matter of national security, and cannot be released without ministerial authorisation. Courts and hospitals in the towns of Gweru and Mutare were approached to provide information on firearm crime, injuries and casualties, but these institutions did not respond to the requests.

The Political Climate in Zimbabwe

In 2003 there were two main political parties in Zimbabwe: ZANU-PF and the opposition MDC. There are smaller opposition parties, such as the National Alliance for Good Governance (NAGG), but these have not made any significant contribution to the current party political landscape in Zimbabwe.⁴

The current politically-motivated violence can be traced back to the constitutional referendum of February 2000. The constitutional recommendations had been drawn up over a very short period of time with limited public consultation, by a Constitutional Commission (CC) appointed by President Mugabe. This process was opposed by the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA), a broad based coalition of over a hundred civic organisations, which included the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (Zimbabwe).⁵ The NCA had widely consulted with the Zimbabwe public, and held that the CC's final recommendations did not fully reflect the views of the public, particularly in relation to the powers of the president. The results of the public consultations indicated that the public generally felt that the powers of the president should in fact be reduced. This view was apparently ignored by the CC.

Calls for an expansion of individual rights and freedoms were also ignored. When challenged in a public forum about the shortcomings of the draft constitution, the CC Chair, Justice Chidyausiku, ordered the speakers' microphones to be turned off. A request by civil society organisations that a secret vote be undertaken to determine support for the draft constitution was ignored, and the document was hurriedly declared "adopted by consensus". There was particular concern about the "corrective" changes that had been made to the draft document of the deliberations by the CC,

which included provision for the seizure of land in order to redress historical imbalances. This provision had been explicitly rejected by the CC. In response, more than a dozen of the 400 CC commissioners disassociated themselves from the CC due to its lack of transparency and the failure of the draft constitutional recommendations to reflect the will of the people.

The run-up to the referendum was marked by biased press reporting in favour of the ZANU-PF position. A month before the referendum, 139 advertisements urging the public to vote in favour of the draft constitution were broadcast on national television. In contrast, during the same period, only 14 advertisements calling for a “no” vote were screened.⁶ The ZANU-PF and the War Veterans Association launched a vigorous campaign to encourage voters to accept the constitutional recommendations.⁷ There was little debate, and Zimbabweans had limited access to information about the issues involved.

Only 1 313 000 voters (26%) out of a potential 5 million participated in the referendum. Of those who voted, 55% rejected the proposed constitutional recommendations. President Mugabe made the accusation that the results of the referendum had been unduly influenced by “whites”, despite the fact that the total white population was estimated to be 80 000.⁸ The referendum was the first ever public electoral defeat for ZANU-PF. According to Martin Rupiya of the Institute of Security Studies Defence Sector Programme, “the referendum was a protest vote against poor governance, economic malaise and corruption. Zimbabweans used the referendum to express their general dissatisfaction with the ruling party.”⁹

Soon after the referendum, President Mugabe made a statement accepting the results of the referendum. A few days later war veterans and ZANU-PF youth¹⁰ began land invasions. Their programme of systematic violence and intimidation escalated steadily until the parliamentary elections in June 2000. President Mugabe refused to condemn the land invasions or sanction the removal of the invaders. He instructed farm invaders to ignore High Court rulings. Police were rendered ineffective and ordered not to interfere in political matters.¹¹

In the months leading up to the June 2000 election, large parts of the country were wracked by political turmoil as war veterans, ruling party

sympathisers and others invaded commercial farms. Much of the country descended into lawlessness and many regions, particularly but not exclusively rural areas, became no-go zones for opposition party campaigners. In spite of this the MDC won 58 of the 120 elected seats, with ZANU-PF securing 62.

The Zimbabwe Parliament enacted repressive legislation, such as the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) which have been authored by the Information Minister, Jonathan Moyo. POSA has been used to legitimate the arrests and detention of thousands of pro-democracy activists, while AIPPA permits the government to restrict public access to information. Systematic violations of human rights have occurred in conjunction with the politicisation of state security forces including the army, the police and the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO); the development of non-legislated militia forces; partisan food distribution; and the harassment of the political opposition and independent press.¹²

Attempts by concerned citizens and civil society organisations to speak out against state-sanctioned victimisation and oppression were met with brutality by the security forces and ZANU-PF militias. The enactment of the Private Voluntary Organisations Act requires civil society organisations to apply to government for permission to operate. Government has used this legislation to silence many of its more vocal critics. For example, the Amani Trust, a human rights organisation, was ordered to close in terms of this Act. The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace was also threatened with closure, but has managed to survive because Section 3 of this Act allows for the existence of religious bodies.

State-Sponsored Human Rights Abuses

Statistics compiled by the Human Rights Forum indicated that there were 1 061 cases of torture, 227 abductions/kidnappings, 121 unlawful arrests and 111 unlawful detentions between 1 June 2001 and 30 June 2002.¹³ An analysis of 978 statements from the survivors of organised violence and torture during this period reflected that murders tended to be brutal. Often knives, batons, axes, *knobkerries* (a club-like implement) or chains were used. Arrest and detention were accompanied by some form of torture such

as beatings with batons and whips: including *falanga* (beating on the soles of the feet); mock drowning; choking; sexual humiliation (including injury to the genitals); the removal of the victim's clothing before a beating; and humiliation or torture in front of family members.

Abductions and kidnappings were carried out with the intention of later torturing or interrogating victims. In many of the 86 cases of recorded deaths, death was the result of injuries sustained when the victims, in the custody of the state, were tortured. Many cases of murder involved stabbing. In a few isolated cases firearms were used.

Arson and damage to property coincided with periods of violence associated with the elections. Petrol bombings were a popular campaign tactic for both ZANU-PF and MDC. Of the 978 victims whose cases are examined in the report, 98 (10%) alleged they were abducted and taken to a militia base in their area.

The year 2003 was marked by protest actions organised by the trade union movement, including stay-aways and mass action. Statistics for the period January to April 2003 show that 250 people were tortured, 418 were unlawfully arrested, 123 were unlawfully detained and 174 were assaulted.¹⁴ Of this number more than 250 were admitted to the emergency departments of hospitals in Harare, between 20 and 24 March 2003. Many others who were injured did not seek health care from state hospitals, or were turned away.¹⁵ From May 2003 to August 2003 incidents of human rights violations perpetrated by government militias continued.

Incidents of human rights violations May-August 2003

- On 1 June 2003, a group of ZANU-PF members in Marondera broke down the doors and windows of house belonging to an MDC local government election candidate.
- On the same day, pro-ZANU-PF militias chased six MDC candidates from Marondera and prevented 30 opposition candidates in Rusape and Chegutu towns from registering to stand in the local election, after beating them up and chasing them away from nomination courts.¹⁶
- On 3 June 2003, Tichaona Kaguru, a member of the MDC's Mbare district executive committee, was allegedly abducted together with a

Mbare councillor by state security agents, who brutally assaulted them before leaving them at Chikurubi Prison camp. Kaguru later died at the prison's hospital where nurses had reportedly refused to treat him. The councillor survived the attack.¹⁷ A few days later mourners who gathered at Harare's Mbare high-density suburb for Kaguru's funeral were attacked by suspected ZANU-PF supporters.

- On 5 June, four teachers at Harare's Glen Norah Two High School were rushed to Harare Central Hospital for treatment after having been severely assaulted by suspected ZANU-PF youths.¹⁸
- On 8 June 2003, about 60 suspected ZANU-PF youths destroyed several houses and injured 20 people in Dzivaresekwa, Harare, in retaliation for the MDC-organised mass action, which took place between 1-6 June 2003. Militia members demanded Z\$20 (about US\$0,03) payment from each resident of Mbare, assaulting those who refused to comply.¹⁹
- On 6 June, police in Chinhoyi cancelled a previously approved MDC rally scheduled for 7 June 2003 citing security concerns.²⁰
- On 27 June, armed police ransacked the MDC headquarters in Harare in search of subversive and other illegal material.²¹
- On 5 July, police barred the National Constitutional Assembly from holding its political party convention in Masvingo because President Robert Mugabe was to address a rally at Chivi, some 70km away, on the same day.²²
- On 13 July 2003, addressing a rally in Chivi South, President Robert Mugabe threatened to kill all whites in Zimbabwe if the country was attacked by the USA and UK.²³
- The MDC in Gwanda alleged that on 12 August, ZANU-PF youths stepped up a campaign to bar the opposition party from holding several rallies ahead of the elections on 30-31 August 2003.²⁴
- On Friday 1 August 2003, eleven MDC members, who were prevented by ZANU-PF youths from submitting their nomination papers to contest council elections in Chegutu, petitioned the High Court to order Registrar Tobaiwa Mudede to consider their nominations.²⁵

- On 3 August 2003, more than 300 armed ZANU-PF supporters invaded Mutare homes and shops, looting and destroying property worth over \$2 million (US\$2 500).²⁶
- During the period 4-9 August 2003, civil servants in Manicaland, Masvingo and Mashonaland East provinces were forced by war veterans to pay Z\$500 (US\$0.63) towards Heroes Day celebrations to be held on 11 August 2003, as a show of gratitude to the government for awarding civil servants with salary increases.²⁷
- On 14 August, several members of the public, who were queuing for sugar at a Harare supermarket, were assaulted and dispersed by riot police who ordered that only civil servants and uniformed soldiers were to receive sugar.²⁸
- On 26 August, police in Masvingo torched 1 000 homes of resettled farmers destroying property worth Z\$100 million (US\$125 000) to make way for a government official, despite the fact that these farmers had been officially allocated the land in August 2001. They were given one week to vacate, failure of which would result in the destruction of their property.²⁹
- Violence was reported in Kwekwe, Kadoma, Norton and Gweru on the first day of the two-day urban council, mayoral and parliamentary elections held from 30 to 31 August 2003.³⁰
- On 30 August 2003, a car belonging to the MDC's Kwekwe representative was stoned and damaged, forcing him to seek refuge with the police, who refused him assistance. ZANU-PF supporters were reported to have identified MDC supporters at polling stations, who were removed from the voting queues and prevented from voting. An MDC candidate's house was attacked by a group of ZANU-PF supporters, in which the windowpanes and roof was destroyed.³¹
- In Norton, an MDC polling agent was kidnapped on the night of 29 August 2003 by two ZANU-PF members, blindfolded, and severely assaulted outside Norton before being dumped by the roadside.³²
- In Gweru, on 30 August 2003, an MDC polling agent was removed from a polling station by ZANU-PF supporters, who assaulted her.³³

- In Makonde, on 30 August 2003, local people were force-marched to attend ZANU-PF meetings.³⁴
- In Mutare, on 30 August 2003, three MDC supporters were arrested for allegedly trying to block people from entering a polling station. Another MDC activist was reportedly attacked by ZANU-PF youths, while an MDC candidate was assaulted near a polling station by ZANU-PF activists. War veterans confiscated copies of a voters roll from another MDC polling agent.

According to the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, state sponsored political violence resulted in 113 cases of torture, assault and other human rights violations in June 2003.³⁵

After a call by the opposition MDC for mass action between 1 and 6 June 2003, the military patrolled the streets of Zimbabwe's cities, and military helicopters maintained air surveillance. The army, police and the intelligence service established roadblocks along roads linking major cities. From the first day of the mass action, the government launched a crackdown on opposition party leaders. MDC President, Morgan Tswangirai, was arrested and detained and charged with treason.³⁶

In spite of the violence and political harassment of citizens, the opposition MDC won 137 Council seats, while ZANU-PF won 87 seats.³⁷ This gave the MDC a total of 11 Executive Mayor positions, which gave it influence in all the major towns and cities, with ZANU-PF only awarded four Executive Mayor positions, but these were located in the semi-rural towns of Kadoma, Kwekwe, Marondera and Bindura. However, the election process has since been undermined by the introduction of state-appointed governors in places where the ruling party refuses to work with MDC representatives.

State-Supported Militia Groups

War Veterans

The War Veterans Act of 1992 defines a war veteran as: "any person who underwent military training and participated, consistently and persistently,

in the liberation struggle which occurred in Zimbabwe and in neighbouring countries, between 1 January 1962 and 29 February 1980 in connection with the bringing about of Zimbabwe's independence on 18 April 1980". The definition makes it clear that veterans have been trained in the use of firearms.

There have been allegations that white farmers and supporters of the opposition MDC have been shot and killed by armed people claiming to be war veterans. In one case, a farmer was killed at his farm in Matabeleland South, on 18 April 2000, when approximately 120 war veterans armed with AK-47 rifles invaded his property.³⁸

Other reported incidents involving the use of firearms by war veterans include the shooting of a Harare MDC supporter on 13 October 2000 by Joseph Chinotimba, who is known to have led farm invasions.³⁹

At the end of 2003 it was not known how many armed war veterans there were in Zimbabwe, or how many firearms they possessed. It was alleged that the war veterans were armed by the state from 2001 when the responsibility for War Veterans affairs was moved from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to the Ministry of Defence, and they were accorded the status of a Reserve Army. The researcher was unable to determine which Act or statutory instrument was used by government to effect this change.

Youth Training Camps⁴⁰

In 2001 a youth recruitment drive was undertaken by the military on behalf of the Ministry of Youth Development and Employment. Youths were ostensibly to receive skills training in agriculture, carpentry and bricklaying. Military training was alleged to have been included, but this was denied by the late Minister.⁴¹

The training was initiated at the Border Gezi Camp in Mount Darwin, and gradually other training centres were established. In spite of the military training given to the youths, there are no reports of firearms having been used by the youth militia. Many other weapons have been used including, sticks, logs, chains, wire, iron bars, knives, axes and sjamboks. On completion of training, the trainees joined or formed militias.

Reports show that 97 militia bases have been established by ZANU-PF supporters, and at least 24 of these were established with the help of alleged war veterans. The bases are located at schools, community halls, farms, council offices, war veteran's offices, ZANU-PF offices and at times in private residences. They are located in business centres, resettlement areas, and mining areas. In some instances bases are reported to have been located next to police stations, making it difficult for victims to report their cases after being released, as they would be watched by their abductors.

As a result of this National Youth Training Programme, whose members appeared to replace the war veterans as leading perpetrators of politically motivated violence, the country has seen an upsurge of intimidation, abductions, illegal road blocks, confiscation of national identity cards (required for voting), torture and rape.

The only recorded case of youth militia members having been armed involved one employed by Vice President Msika at his Nyamandlovu farm as a guard. It is alleged that on 26 August 2003 the youth shot and killed the son of a newly resettled farmer suspected of poaching.

It was estimated in 2003 that between 20 000 and 50 000 youth were members of the militias.

Firearm Ownership

Prior to Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 many white and coloured (mixed race) people owned guns for personal protection during the liberation struggle, as well as for protection of businesses and for sporting purposes.

The end of the liberation struggle in 1980 left many firearms unaccounted for. After the first democratic elections, firearm owners were offered a three-month amnesty period to surrender their weapons. This offer was open to all members of the Zimbabwe People's Revolution Army (ZIPRA), the armed wing of the Patriotic Front Zimbabwe African People's Union (PF-ZAPU); and members of the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) members, the armed wing of ZANU-PF.

Meanwhile, from late 1980 a group of dissidents, sponsored by South Africa and armed with firearms, continued to operate in southern Matabeleland until the signing of the Unity Accord of 22 December 1987. In 1983 and 1984 dissidents from ZAPU were recruited from refugee camps in Botswana and trained in four camps in the Transvaal province of South Africa.⁴²

The ZANU and ZAPU liberation armies (ZANLA and ZIPRA) retained some arms caches, the whereabouts of which were known only to the commanders of these armies. A small number of these caches were discovered by government security forces in 1982.⁴³

From the 1990s there was an increase in the number of black Zimbabweans who sought to own legal firearms for self-protection and sporting activities like hunting and sports shooting.

It was impossible for researchers to gain access to recent statistics relating to civilian ownership of firearms. However, interviews were conducted with police officers in charge of the central police stations in Bulawayo, Gweru, Harare and Mutare, the four major towns in Zimbabwe, which indicated an increase since 1998 in the number of civilians carrying licenced guns. These were anecdotal discussions, without records or statistics being made available to the interviewer. According to those interviewed, Harare, the largest city in the country, has the highest number of civilian gun owners, followed by Bulawayo, the second largest city. In Gweru and Mutare the demand is mostly from the farming community.

The increase in the number of people seeking to own firearms was said to be due to increased firearm-related crimes, including household robberies and car hijackings. A Saferworld report puts the estimated number of civilian-owned small arms in Zimbabwe at 400 000, and notes that there are 125 registered firearm dealers in the country, this means Zimbabwe has the second highest number of firearm dealers in the region, with South Africa having the largest firearm retailing sector.⁴⁴

In Zimbabwe the military, police and National Parks and Wildlife Guards carry firearms during the course of their duties. The military is visible at roadblocks, airports and fuel depots. Soldiers have also been used to act against civil mass action.

The purchase, possession, manufacture and sale of firearms and ammunition are regulated by the Firearms Act of 1957. This Act states that civilians who wish to legally own firearms are required to submit an application for a firearm certificate. According to a Saferworld report, the Firearms Act makes no provision for the control of state-owned weapons.⁴⁵ The authors of this chapter could not identify legislation which pertains to such controls.

Private security firms including Fawcett Security, Midsec, Guard-Alert, NRZ Security, and Securitas operate in Zimbabwe. The majority of the small security firms, whose duties are to guard business and residential premises, are not armed.

In order to secure a legal firearm a licence application process has to be undertaken. This process is described as follows: the applicant approaches the nearest police station with relevant documentation from a firearms dealer, to indicate that the firearm which the applicant intends to purchase is indeed a legal firearm. The police scrutinise all relevant documentation and the firearm itself. They also assess the mental state of the applicant. The application is then forwarded to the regional Registrar of Firearms who, after satisfying himself that all requirements have been met, forwards the application and all other relevant documentation to the Controller of Firearms in Harare.

If the applicant is judged fit to be a firearm owner, a firearm certificate is issued on the prescribed form, which specifies the conditions under which the firearm is to be held, and the nature and serial number of the firearm. The document also states how much ammunition the licence holder may purchase or hold at any one time. One certificate may be issued for both a firearm and its ammunition, but a separate certificate is required for each firearm.

In order for a firearm licence to be issued the firearm has to bear a mark or a number of identification. The Act prohibits the pawning of firearms and ammunition.

The Saferworld report notes that the Firearms Act of 1957 had been amended a number of times, but the amendments were not made with a view to aligning it with the provisions of international arms control

agreements. The report notes that “the day-to-day operation of the firearm control system does not follow the Act”,⁴⁶ particularly with regard to the requirement for the renewal of licences. The administrative burden of following up expired licences seems to have become too great for the police force to maintain.

With regard to the destruction of surplus firearms, a representative of the Zimbabwean police, who attended a workshop organised by the Institute for Security Studies in 2002 reported that since the 1990s,

“There have been two three-month amnesties in Zimbabwe - one in 1992 and another in 2002. Surrendered firearms are destroyed by the Zimbabwe army in the presence of the police. Before destruction, which is done by melting down the weapons, an investigation is made into the reasons for surrendering the arms. It takes about six months from the time the weapon is given in to when it is destroyed. The firearms are stored for three months at provincial armouries before being taken to the national armoury, where they are registered. Both the army and police have undertaken surplus destruction exercises.”⁴⁷

Firearms-Related Crimes, Injuries and Deaths

For reasons already stated, firearms-related statistics could not be obtained from institutions such as hospitals and police stations. However, official statistics reported in the press indicate that 323 armed robberies were committed in Harare between January and October 2003, compared with 226 incidents of armed robberies during the same period in 2002.⁴⁸ The report stated that there had been a notable increase in the frequency of violent and often fatal armed robberies and car hijackings. From January to November 2003, 200 illegal firearms were recovered, including Uzis, CZ pistols, .303 rifles, AK-47s and other automatic rifles. A detective in the Zimbabwe police was quoted as saying there had been a notable increase in the number of crimes involving the use of firearms since 1995, with a sharp surge in violent crime since 2000. A police inspector was reported as saying that the police suspected that arms were being smuggled into Zimbabwe from other countries in the region.

On 29 November 2003 *The Herald* reported that Zimbabwe Police had begun a national firearm audit, “with a view to establishing the number of

weapons held by the public.”⁴⁹ The report urged licenced firearm owners to take their firearms to their nearest police station to show the police their weapon and licence:

“In Zimbabwe, people holding firearms illegally or legally have become so many that working as a policeman has become a dangerous undertaking as police officers now live in fear of being shot at in the course of duty.”⁵⁰

The report revealed that the police were concerned about the number of licenced firearm owners who had not received training in the use of a firearm and they said that:

“...the condition of gun ownership should be a required demonstration by written and practical testing, of safe use. Any violent or reckless use or display of firearms should automatically lead to the withdrawal of the weapon and conviction.”⁵¹

Zimbabwe Defence Industry (ZDI)

In 1984 the Zimbabwean government established the Zimbabwe Defence Industry (ZDI) and erected two production facilities. The government argued that “scarce foreign currency could be saved by manufacturing rather than importing armaments, and the arms factories would employ thousands of Zimbabweans.”⁵² One of the many products which were to have been produced by ZDI was firearm ammunition. Other products included explosives and pyrotechnics, anti-personnel mines, anti-tank mines, aerial bombs, light mortars, rifles and rocket launchers.⁵³ According to researcher Norman Mlambo, in 1990 only four of the nine planned projects had been implemented: the explosives filling plant, the small arms ammunition facility, a clothing factory, and a vehicle maintenance facility.⁵⁴

Mlambo notes that because the Zimbabwe Defence Force was in possession of small arms from both Nato and Warsaw Pact countries, the ammunition production facility had to have the capacity to produce 7.62mm ammunition for the AK-47 and FN rifles and 5.56 ball type ammunition.⁵⁵ The contract to build the facility was awarded to the Chinese company NORINCO in 1986 and ammunition production began in 1993. But the parastatal company was dogged with financial difficulties from the

beginning. According to Mlambo, since 1995 ZDI played the role of arms broker in regional and international arms deals and "...has sold surplus G3 guns and ammunition from the Zimbabwean Defence Forces to some United States collectors, ostensibly for use in sporting activities".⁵⁶

A Small Arms Survey report claimed that between 1996 and 1997 ZDI brokered a deal in which at least nine aircraft-loads of weapons were procured for the Democratic Republic of the Congo from China.⁵⁷ According to Mlambo, while the future of ZDI is unsure, the company hopes that its role as an arms broker will ensure its existence.

The operations of the ZDI are shrouded in secrecy and the majority of the people interviewed for this research, including those resident in Harare, were not even aware of the existence of the company. An attempt by the researcher to get information from the factory and their Harare administration offices were unsuccessful.

Conclusion

Zimbabwe ratified the SADC Firearms Protocol in June 2004 and has signed both the UN Programme of Action and the Bamako Declaration. It has been very difficult to assess whether Zimbabwe meets its commitments to the SADC Firearms Protocol.

Much remains unknown about the situation with regard to legal small arms in Zimbabwe and it is unlikely that civilian researchers will have access to this information until the political situation in Zimbabwe stabilises. It is noteworthy that the paramilitary forces, which actively support the ZANU-PF government, have relied on the use of weapons other than small arms to enforce their control of the Zimbabwe population, however, with the police and military backing them.

Endnotes

- 1 Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Fact Book: Zimbabwe*, <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook>.
- 2 Rupiya, M. "How is the Military Governed in Zimbabwe?" Presentation at a workshop on Security Sector Governance, Ghana 24 – 27 November 2003, p11.
- 3 In terms of the AIPA, Section 6, an applicant who requires access to a record that is in the custody or control of a public body shall make a request in writing, giving adequate and precise details to enable the public body to locate the information requested.

- 4 For example the Harare Central and Makonde Parliamentary by-elections and the Mayoral and Council elections held countrywide on 30-31 August 2003 were only contested by ZANU-PF and the MDC.
- 5 *Report on Zimbabwe Presidential Elections Held On 9, 10, 11 March 2002*, CJP(Z), 2002. p48.
- 6 Sanders, R. *Never The Same Again: Zimbabwe's Growth Towards Democracy*, 2000, Edwina Spicer Productions, pp 99-100.
- 7 CJP(Z) report, 2002. p48.
- 8 Sanders, R. 2000, pp 99-100.
- 9 Chandré Gould, discussion with Martin Rupiya of the Institute for Security Studies, 18 August 2004.
- 10 See below for more detail about these groups.
- 11 CCJP(Z) report, 2002 page 48.
- 12 *Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition (CZC) report* App 1, April 15, 2003.
- 13 *Are they accountable? Examining alleged violators and their violations pre and post the Presidential Election March 2002*, Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, December 2002.
- 14 *The Financial Gazette, Zimbabwe*, June 26-July 2, 2003, p9.
- 15 CZC report, 15 April 2003 report, App 2.
- 16 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Thursday 7 August 2003, p6.
- 17 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Friday 6 June 2003, p2
- 18 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Friday 6 June 2003, p7.
- 19 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Monday 9 June 2003, p3.
- 20 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Friday 6 June 2003, p3.
- 21 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Saturday 28 June 2003, p4.
- 22 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, 4 July 2003, p1.
- 23 *Daily News on Sunday, Zimbabwe*, 20 July 2003, p1.
- 24 *Daily News on Sunday, Zimbabwe*, 17 August 2003, p3.
- 25 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Saturday 2 August 2003, p1.
- 26 "ZANU-PF stepping up violent campaign: MDC", *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Monday 4 August 2003.
- 27 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Saturday 9 August 2003, p1.
- 28 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Saturday 14 August 2003, p1.
- 29 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Friday 15 August 2003, p3.
- 30 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Tuesday 26 August 2003, p1.
- 31 *Daily News on Sunday, Zimbabwe*, 31 August 2003, p1, 2.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Tuesday 29 July 2003, p3.
- 36 *Parade Magazine, Zimbabwe*, pages 6 & 42, July 2003 issue.
- 37 "MDC seals poll victory", *The Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Wednesday 3 September 2003, p 2. The losing ZANU-PF candidate for Mutare ward two is alleged to have threatened to take action against voters who benefited from her food distribution programmes but did not vote for her.
- 38 *Crisis of Governance, A Report on Political Violence in Zimbabwe*, Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (Zimbabwe) report, 2003, pp 114-120.
- 39 *Daily News, Zimbabwe*, Wednesday 6 October 2000, p6.
- 40 The information in this section is based on the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum report, "Are They Accountable? Examining alleged violators and their violations pre and past the Presidential Election" March 2002 p77 and 78; and a report by the CJP (Z) on

- "Zimbabwe Presidential Elections held on March 9, 10, 11", 2002 pp 54-55.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 "Breaking The Silence And Building True Peace", CCJP(Z) report, February 1997, p30.
- 43 Ibid., p41.
- 44 Cross, P. et al., *Law of the Gun: An audit of firearms control legislation in the SADC region*, SaferAfrica and Saferworld, June 2003, p54.
- 45 Ibid., p52.
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