

1004 Zimbabwe - State of Denial

Thirty years after becoming a nation, and 30 years after Robert Mugabe and ZANU PF came to power, Zimbabwe does not appear to have fulfilled the hopes that so many had at independence.

A country which was meant to have buried the racism of white minority rule has once again become a place where some Zimbabweans are more equal than others. A land which once exported billions in agricultural products will, it seems, spend another year reliant on food aid.

The disputed 2008 election brought about a government of national unity in which ZANU PF, in theory, ceded some of its power to the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC).

But this is a marriage of convenience which appears to have satisfied neither party.

ZANU PF feel they should not have to share power with a party they consider to be a puppet of the West, while the MDC are unable to exercise authority as an equal partner in government.

Morgan Tsvangirai, the head of the MDC, has been sworn in as prime minister, and the MDC have been given several other ministries, including finance, but ZANU PF refuses to swear in their choice for deputy agriculture minister, Roy Bennett, or to sack Gideon Gono, the former head of the Reserve Bank whom the MDC see as responsible for many of the country's current economic problems.



The fact that the MDC's demands fall on deaf ears says a great deal about where power still lies. ZANU PF retain control of the police, the army and the ministry of justice and no successful prosecutions have been brought against ZANU PF for the acts of violence perpetrated against the MDC. Conversely, MDC members, including many of its MPs, have found themselves the subject of a series of court cases for crimes as serious as high treason.

The explanations for this crisis are equally polarised.

The MDC says it is the result of 30 years of bad governance and kleptocracy. ZANU PF says it is the responsibility of the international community which has, it claims, isolated Zimbabwe economically in response to ZANU PF's policy of land reform.

Both ZANU PF and the MDC appear to be in a state of denial about the true condition of Zimbabwe at 30, and this cannot be the best way for the country to start its fourth decade as a nation.

The Rageh Omaar Report: Zimbabwe - State of Denial can be seen from Wednesday, April 14, 2010 at the following times GMT: Wednesday: 1900; Thursday: 0300, 1400; Friday: 0600; Saturday: 1900; Sunday: 0300; Saturday: 0300; Sunday: 1900; Monday: 1400; Saturday: 0300; Sunday: 1900; Monday: 1400.

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