

Free and Fair: an ambition for Press Reporting

(A report to the Commonwealth Press Union
On Press Practices and Ethics in Zimbabwe)

The media, both print and electronic, should facilitate national dialogue, tolerance, peace and unity. Media must serve society as a whole not the narrow interests of a particular party or of the business sector. Unfortunately some sections of the media have polarised the people by reporting in a biased and unbalanced manner. We appeal to the media to help curb violence by reporting events with objectivity.

Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference
2002 Lenten Pastoral Letter

Zimbabwe !

We are talking about a country where its Speaker of Parliament, the protector of the minority in the House, has been publicly involved at the hustings to promote the Executive President's re-election.

We are talking about of a country where the State-owned media reports about its Attorney General's declared intention to prosecute opponents. And we are writing this report from the stand-point of Commonwealth newspaper editors privileged to live in so-called "New Nations" where the Attorney General is only legal adviser to the Government and where the decision to prosecute or not is left to the discretion of an independent Director of Public Prosecutions granted security of tenure by the Constitution.

We are talking about a country where a pretended completion of national independence has provided ideological and nationalistic justifications to xenophobia, incitation to racial hatred, violence, abuse of the parliamentary process, legislative gerrymandering,

disenfranchisement by decree, untimely politically motivated modifications of rules and regulations, violations of fundamental rights and Constitutional distortions.

We are talking about a country where, precisely at the moment when international attention is focused on its electoral process, its Executive feels free to largely disregard a High Court ruling, providing ample evidence for outright contempt of court, if not contempt shown by one Estate for another within the State's very own institutional dispensation, with the risk of favouring disaffection for the judiciary.

We are talking about a country whose State-owned media viciously reminds its readers that a resigning Supreme Court Judge joined the country's judicial service under Rhodesian rule and served as State Prosecutor when its president and glorified war veterans were fighting the liberation war, another case in favouring disaffection for the administration of justice.

We are talking about a country where, before judgement, citizens arrested by the police are termed culprits by the State-owned Press, with little concern for basic presumption of innocence.

We are also talking about a country where a leading editor, from a privately owned paper claiming to be independent, attends a media-people lunch with foreign journalists, one week before a national poll, sporting a political party's T-Shirt.

We are talking about a country where political opinions voiced in any newspaper are challenged in another paper editorially affiliated to the other side, in a Zimbabwean context, the adverse bloc.

We are talking about a country whose newspapers' leading headlines and front page stories are often carried with no more credentials than flimsy, if not fictitious, anonymous sources or unverifiable alleged reports.

We are talking about a country whose newspapers, across the whole spectrum of political affiliations and loyalties, unhesitatingly refer to people's alleged and unproven criminal practices, to people's health and mental ability, even to people's looks or expected natural death.

We are talking about a country where the media are devoid of any definable policy standards for screening inflammatory political advertorials during a delicate election period.

We are talking about a country where the media, in their misguided enthusiasm to trumpet the political ideals of their adopted election torch-bearers, have elevated news

reporting to blatant editorialising, thereby breaching the cardinal journalistic principle of separating news from comment.

We are also talking about a country where a vibrant and inspiring civil society admits that political and societal polarisation is such that neutrality appears to be an unaffordable luxury.

We are also talking about a country where those most unacceptable journalistic practices this report intends to comment upon are also attributable to editors and journalists who courageously, and with inspiring resilience, faced the harshest repression and the most unwarranted denial of fundamental rights experienced in a Commonwealth country since the adoption of the Harare Declaration in 1991.

Our mission's format

This four-editor mission to Zimbabwe was conducted from February 26th, 2002, to March 15th, 2002. It largely relied on the support provided locally by Mr Wilf Mbanga, former Chairman of the Zimbabwe CPU Chapter and a member of the CPU Press Monitoring Mission in Sri Lanka.

In a context largely different from that in Sri Lanka, where the first such CPU-sponsored mission was conducted, overtly and officially, prior to that country's 2000 Parliamentary Elections, the only way for our team members to be allowed in Zimbabwe, and to gain access to the various stakeholders, was to apply for foreign journalists' accreditations to cover the Presidential Election.

This second CPU pre-electoral mission's Team Leader, Gilbert Ahnee, Editor-in-Chief of *Le Mauricien*, Republic of Mauritius, reached Zimbabwe on 26th February and flew back to Mauritius on the 15th March.

Team members Harold Hoyte, President and Editor-in-Chief of Nation News Group, Barbados, and Johnson Mbwambo, Director and Deputy Managing Editor with Habari Newspapers Group, Tanzania, reached Zimbabwe on 27th February and left, respectively, on 14th and 13th March. Team member Wangethi Mwangi, Editorial Director of the Nation Media Group, Kenya, reached Zimbabwe on the 4th March and left on the 13th.

On his arrival in Zimbabwe, this mission's Team Leader had a preliminary working session with the local coordinator. Wilf Mbanga's invaluable knowledge of Zimbabwean society facilitated a prior identification of NGO's the mission could find beneficial to meet.

After Harold Hoyte's and Johnson Mwambo's arrival, our team outlined a few procedures to try meet our mission's mandate, *viz* assessing journalistic norms and practices in Zimbabwe during the last weeks of the run-up to the 9th/10th March presidential election.

With our team members accredited as reporters, we unanimously felt that, to preserve our mission's integrity, we had an obligation to effectively file reports to our respective papers, as if, primarily, we were special envoys sent to Zimbabwe by our newsrooms. With the hindsight provided by a two-week stay in this country at such a time of crisis, we feel that we have no reasons to regret the format we adopted.

The reporting status imposed on us by the political situation and administrative paranoia in Zimbabwe also carried its advantages. Out of a web of conflicting reports, we were required to unravel something that might be nearer to the truth. This in view of reporting in line with our own standards to our papers also helped us to better assess our corpus; our demarche having entailed grass roots reporting, interviews with stakeholders and personal presence in certain hot spots. What was just a solution and a compromise finally turned out to be an equally challenging approach.

The context of urgency in which this report is being submitted does not allow for inclusion herewith of the various stories we filed for publication in our respective newspapers. If ever this report were to be published in a booklet for wider CPU diffusion, annexing these articles to the booklet may be advisable.

We did not need long discussions to reach a first consensus on the principal line along which our report would be articulated. Indeed, the State-owned media's beyond the pale partisan propaganda was spontaneously felt to be as obnoxious. Nevertheless, any journalist having some concern for balanced reporting could not fail to be appalled by the manifestly one-sided stories carried in the Zimbabwean privately owned newspapers. And we felt that this report's relevance, if ever it were to claim some, inevitably called upon a reflection on the *sine qua non* conditions for any newspaper to be legitimately considered independent.

Our corpus

Our mission brief was:

- 1) to closely monitor Zimbabwean newspapers during our stay in Zimbabwe and
- 2) submit a report to the CPU on our observations, with some suggestions liable to help favour a more healthy press environment.

With the exception of the State-owned *Chronicle*, published in Bulawayo, the main newspapers in Zimbabwe are all published from Harare. In the Zimbabwean capital, the

two main players are the State-owned *The Herald* and privately owned *The Daily News*. Most of our observations and remarks have been inspired by the practices and standards of these two highly politicised dailies. During our stay, we met both papers' Editors-in-Chief, respectively Mr Pikitaki Deketeke and Mr Geoffrey Nyarota. To be perfectly frank, we must record that we met Mr Deketeke during a formal meeting in his office, while we met Mr Nyarota, whom we had already met at CPU meetings, at an informal social occasion.

Besides *The Herald* and *The Daily News*, we also devoted some attention to the following weeklies:

Wednesday published *The Zimbabwe Mirror*

Thursday published *The Financial Gazette*

Saturday published *Zimbabwe Independent*

Sunday published *The Standard*

Sunday published *The Sunday Mail*

These papers' ownership, description and newsroom who's who shall be detailed in Appendix C to this report.

Our locus standi

We really wish to stress that this report is not concerned with criticism, nor meant to mark anyone's copy and still less to cast aspersions on admirable colleagues' personal integrity. We did not travel to Zimbabwe to collect evidence in view of a prosecution, not even to gather information for an academic dissertation.

We fully understand circumstances where colleagues can never be sure of coming back home when they go to work. They may legitimately resent being criticised by foreign journalists who never face similar threats and harassment in their line of duty. We are sure that they will appreciate the sincerity of our motivation. We consider that they could do justice to their mission of vigilance towards public interest in a much less confrontational manner, provided some simple rules are agreed upon by all stakeholders.

With the input provided by our experience at home in our endeavours towards honest independence and fair reporting, our sole ambition is to try to help our profession in Zimbabwe and, possibly, elsewhere in the Commonwealth, to better reconcile the absolute need for critical vigilance and continuous positive societal dialogue.

In the case of Zimbabwe, we prudently suggest that colleagues in this country may be well inspired to ponder whether their practices contributed to maintaining national unity

beyond the political divide and if, in certain cases, their practices did not aggravate polarisation rather than averting it.

To help favour this reflection, we are annexing (Appendix A) to this report some clearly identified cases of biased reporting, denial of basic human rights, disgraceful or inflammatory stories, irresponsibly published unedited letters to the editor, disturbingly unrestrained editorials or leaders.

The attention the political process in Zimbabwe obtained from foreign national and international media outlets is vocal enough to plead in favour of these issues being topmost in Zimbabwe's own papers news hierarchy. Nevertheless, if contemporary democratic aspirations also entail cutting down party politicking to its appropriate measured size within the national debate, we cannot but regret the intensive focus in Zimbabwean newspapers, an exclusive focus in certain cases, on electioneering and vote-catching stories.

Surprisingly, we noted that, far more than the independent/opposition favouring papers, the State-owned media did carry serious analyses on Zimbabwe's bleak economic situation and personality-centred reports or human stories on cases of social distress. It may be argued that these pieces in the State-owned papers were intended to whip up resentment against those – MDC-supporting affluent Black urbanites and White commercial farmers - who are supposed, according to ZANU-PF rhetoric, to derail Zimbabwe's socio-economic redress and progress. But, at simple face value, besides providing for quality journalism, these pieces also provided some breathing space to a reader saturated with abundant politically oriented articles.

Drawing perspective and inspiration from our own experience of multi-partyism, parliamentary coverage, politicians' extreme sensitivity to criticism as well as from our own practices as regards independent coverage of an electoral campaign, we shall take the liberty, further on in this report, to suggest various ways and means that can help a newspaper to conquer readers' esteem, trust and continued commercial support across a large spectrum of contrasted, and even conflicting, political loyalties.

Our methodology

Due to the official status of their mission, our colleagues in Sri Lanka were each attached to a specific paper, where they were given access to archives and could also socially interact with working journalists.

Considering the administrative constraints under which we were allowed into Zimbabwe, such arrangements were obviously impossible. When we first met in Harare, we had to devise our own format. Irrespective of the fact that it was not possible to

attach each one of us to a specific newspaper, we felt that to better comprehend the situation each one of us needed to critically confront the reports published in the various titles.

During the first ten days of our mission, our days began as if we were editors of a daily afternoon newspaper, with a scrupulous survey of the morning papers. It was followed by a 90-minute meeting during which we shared our impressions, progressively developing a better understanding of what was expected of us. In Appendix B, some of our candid first impressions will be noted.

Our afternoons were usually devoted to meetings with civil society organisations, media persons and other well informed observers of Zimbabwean society. In Appendix D to this report, we list the various persons and organisations met during our stay in Zimbabwe.

Towards the last days before the presidential poll, we decided to focus our attention on our journalistic reporting to our respective papers but each one of us was assigned the draft of a specific write-up on those apparent shortcomings of the Zimbabwean press that had particularly shocked him.

A post-Cold War deceit

The end of the Cold War was followed by the pluralistic democratic entitlements that took hold of many African countries in the early 90's. With the disappearance of single-party political dispensations and of their media corollaries, monopolistic State-owned newspapers, privately owned papers were created in their numbers. Quite often, the nature of their ownership has been the sole justification for their claim to independence. From the viewpoint conferred by older traditions of journalistic independence within long standing solvent newspaper markets, it may be felt that, in some cases, new papers claiming independence, but having overt affiliations, may be at risk of paving the way to their respective countries next tyrant.

The apparition of an organised opposition to Robert Mugabe's iron-fisted reign in Zimbabwe has been so largely different from more conventional surging bids for power that it may well have been perceived, precisely, as one of the first credible post-Cold War political formats.

A large spectrum of societal forces, often with theoretically conflicting interests, rallied around Morgan Tsvangirai in view of constituting the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Even an emotionally uninvolved foreign observer might have been led to hope that this breakaway from classical political groupings was heralding a novel conception of democracy.

One may feel that the MDC provided significant breathing space in a country choked in an unequivocally outdated atmosphere of hero-worship and arbitrary personal power. It also promised a non-racial Zimbabwe, respect of human rights and openness to contemporary democratic aspirations. In these conditions, the MDC surfed on the wave that carries along civil society's claims for an innovative new democratic culture and a new generation of democratic rights.

Both in hope, on the one hand, of doing away with a brutal failed regime and, on the other, favouring a world-wide unheard of radically novel exercise of power, it can easily be understood how Zimbabwe's independent Press has been led to surrender its impartiality and adopt partisan editorial lines.

During our stay in Zimbabwe, we all strongly felt that buying a newspaper was a clear political statement. With due respect for the courage, determination and resilience with which our Zimbabwean colleagues vindicated their fellow citizens right to information, our modest ambition is to suggest some simple ideas that may avert the risk of newspaper editing being turned into a political activity.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

We shall now come to those simple suggestions which we consider could help the Zimbabwean press to better avert polarisation in times of political contest. They range from basic journalistic principles that should be the rule of the game everywhere to recommendations based on experience gained in the permanently delicate and difficult context set by a potentially fragmented multi-ethnic society.

1) Treatment of News

- a) News should be balanced; both in terms of reporting, both sides use of appropriate and non threatening language, with more facts and numbers and avoiding editorialising comments.
- b) Resist the temptation to carry one side of the story when the immediate other side is not readily available.
- c) Examine the distribution of photographs to ensure that adequate representation is evident, since pictures have such great impact.
- d) Wherever rebuttals are submitted, the newspaper has the responsibility to carry them.

2) Features

- a) Editors should deliberately assign staff to write features which reflect society's development and happenings, regardless of political implications.
- b) With bona fide quotes from ordinary citizens, well documented reports on people's life conditions, accompanied by expressive photographs, provide readers with a picture of society that is more complete than their own restricted personal perspective. Since democracy remains a view of the mind if the various groups which constitute society are not able to appreciate from where views and political aspirations originate, helping in the process of societal communication and transparency should be a permanent journalistic preoccupation.

In times of electoral contest, it also provides material to better quiz candidates on their ideas and programs to address the socio-economic, educational or infra-structural problems identified by the aggrieved citizens themselves. There also, to show balance, newspapers should avoid depicting exclusively negative life conditions. To avert polarisation between rich and poor, between alleged political protagonists and supposed opposition supporting outcasts, indeed a very simplistic vision of societal dynamism, these stories should also report cases of inspiring self-reliance, positive neighbourhood solidarity or commendable NGOs' initiatives.

3) Columns and interviews

- a) Editors should encourage professional comments and responses that do not have known political affiliations. Where such persons use their professional capacity to give a political spin to an issue, the paper should seek out and print an alternative view.
- b) Editors should institute columns from people of all political shades and, at the end of each column, mention that person's background and affiliation. Similarly, to help sustain national consensus, or favour national reconciliation, interviews with citizens from all walks of life, and all political affiliations, should be considered as a good yardstick to assess the papers independence and openness to reasonable arguments from all sides and all political affiliations.
- c) In countries with stronger democratic traditions and long standing press independence, it may be enough to show a global over-the-weeks balance as regards interviews with politicians. In the Zimbabwean context, where suspicion and mutual exclusion run high, it may help in the process of national reconciliation to develop a

fixed format for mutually contradictory interviews published in the same issue of any paper.

d) Experience shows that readers usually appreciate the kind of balanced exercise which provides for the same questions of public interest asked to two opposed politicians, their answers carried simultaneously. As a matter of fact, there is no need to wait for an electoral campaign to engage in this exercise. All through a parliamentary or presidential mandate, such an exercise contributes to avert the practical disenfranchisement that goes along giving free rein to members of parliament as from the moment they have been returned. One of the most important functions of independent newspapers is to keep on pressing for across the board accountability from elected members paid with tax payers' money.

e) Interviews can be perceived as an imposed format, with the journalist having the advantage of knowing the questions, if not of slanting them so as to obtain what fits his paper's agenda. In the context of Zimbabwe, where there is an urgent need to grant franchise to all towards a really inter-active societal dialogue, the column format can be even more effective. A paper really appears free and fair when it is capable of giving space to any sensible person, leaving that person free to express whatever he or she may feel relevant.

f) Experience from our countries and from our own journalistic practice allows us to note that, often, the person invited to contribute a column does not have the time, or the taste, or the technical ability to write out his or her thoughts. Asking them to talk to a tape-recorder and, later on, assigning to an experienced sub the translation of that person's oral expression into literary form has proved effective elsewhere. Getting the piece within deadlines is not the least advantage of this approach. If the most basic ethical standard commands that the person's thought should not be deliberately distorted, genuine misunderstanding may sometimes lead to undesired distortions. In these conditions, allowing the person to proof-read the copy and require any correction he or she deems fit should be a willingly accepted practice.

g) In the context of polarisation experienced in Zimbabwe, the phrase "civil society" has come to have a partisan or, at least, a committedly militant connotation. In the statement made, on the 14th March 2002, the Commonwealth Observer Group to the Presidential Election in Zimbabwe has expressed the belief that "*the Commonwealth should assist in the process of reconciliation*" in this country. We cannot but hope that this much desired reconciliation will bring about a civil society better protected from the risk of being perceived as partisan, and the more so accused of so being. Civil society's vigilance should not be exclusively focused on the government's shortcomings but also on the national opposition's possible demagoguery, its obviously vain promises or its practical style of governance in the local administrations it holds. When such a civil society exists

- independent and seen to be independent - free and fair newspapers should help promote those NGO's committed to public interest rather than to disguised politicking. In times of election contest, such NGO's members could be solicited for interviews on the on-going political process.

h) Experience in one of our team member's country shows that readers have highly rated an exercise which consisted, all through the run-up to general elections, to carry everyday an interview with independent members of civil society, with the same questions of public interest set to the whole range of interviewees.

4) *Visual clarity and fairness*

a) Newspapers should, in arranging their layout, clearly separate news from commentary.

b) During the run up to an election, coverage of rallies and other public political activities require some set rules. Journalists are also citizens, exercising their franchise in the polling booth, thus having opinions and legitimate preferences. Since one's right as a citizen should not conflict with one's duty as a professional, precautionary measures and strictly followed predetermined norms help avert the risk of being swayed by one's legitimate personal political opinion.

c) It falls under common sense that the fairness-to-all editorial guideline that should delineate our day-to-day journalistic track calls for enhanced vigilance at times when intensified political agendas provoke strong divisions within society. Run up to polls never fail to confront editors with the need to design well-thought-out formats to avoid being perceived as partisan. Right from their news conference, editors could be well advised to predetermine the space, pictorial policy and complementary boxes for both party's daily activities. When, as advisable, coverage is given to both parties, fairness commands that the pictures going along with the stories be framed in a comparable manner.

d) It is totally unfair to show Mr Stone with his party members in the background while showing Mr Rock, taken from behind, with a cheering crowd in the background. If ever, objectively, the two opposing rallies gathered crowds significantly different in numbers, showing the contrasted crowds may also be unfair if, say, one of the parties was holding its rally in one of its strongholds and the other on difficult terrain. There are no hard fixed rules as regards these conditions but it is also to better assure fairness that editors and subs are empowered and entrusted with responsibilities towards their readers.

6) Vigilance towards abusive language

a) While electioneering, politicians often use abusive, sexist or racist language; hitting their opponents below the belt and sometimes libellous. Newspapers whose editorial practices shun away from such language cannot be content with saying that “facts are facts” while giving wide publicity to such abuse coming from politicians. During our stay in Zimbabwe, one of the abuses that shocked us the most was President Mugabe’s statement, as reported in March the 6th issue of *The Herald*, that “*He (Morgan Tsvangirai) is not only ugly facially but also within*”. Reporters should know that such abuse cannot be published. In case reporters have been briefed to report everything and to leave ethical judgment to the desk, sub and editors should be on the look out to avoid such degrading language, degrading in fact much more for the utterer than for the victim.

b) In view of a healthier political debate and a more decent political culture, it might be an idea to carry special columns - weekly, or on two or three regular days, or even daily - tracking any unacceptable statements, or attitudes, and commenting upon it, the premium laid on decency and respect for the opponent as well as for voters judgment. In Appendix A, we shall mention some blatant cases of indecent language thoughtlessly reported in Zimbabwean newspapers.

c) Letters to the editor can provide a lively reflection of the variety of views prevailing within a given society. From experience we know that an Editor can consider that his Forum pages have achieved their fundamental aim as regards democratic deliberation when ordinary citizens engage in a debate within our pages. Besides illustrating the fact that our papers cut across various opinion groups, readers’ reactivity to readers’ views encourage other citizens to write. This because such reactivity proves beyond reasonable measure that the Forum page does reach its target and is not only a dumping ground compensating for occasional lack of copy from the newsroom.

d) In spite of the harassment sometimes endured from readers whose contributions are not carried, it goes without saying that Readers Forum editors should unhesitatingly reject letters that are only laudatory praises of some politicians or from-the-guts vilification of others. In that perspective, before the section considering that issue in Appendix A, we feel that we should, in the very body of this report, mention that some letters carried in the Zimbabwean press were utterly appalling. Among various intolerable statements, we choose to quote from the letter headlined *Homework for Tsvangirai*, published in the March the 5th issue of the Daily News: “*We will continue to support you till they bomb The Herald offices in disappointment.*” Any comment would be superfluous.

7) Reporting violence in a civic manner

- a) Newspapers commitment to public interest entails an unconditional condemnation of violence, whoever be its perpetrators and victims. The kind of selective coverage of violence we came across in Zimbabwean papers put these papers and their readers at risk of adopting double standards in matters pertaining to political violence. In these conditions, inflamed partisans can be led to engage in a vendetta spiral, with their respective papers counting the points.
- b) We asked *The Herald's* editor whether, in his view, continuously reporting on such cases could not end up trivialising violence. In these conditions, were the reports contributing to diminish or to increase violence, we asked Mr Deketeke. He had no clear or thought out answer to that question.
- c) Rather than capitalising on cases of violence imputed to the other side, even outright partisan newspapers may design formats to treat violence as a social ill rather than an electoral argument. The more so, papers claiming independence should treat such questions with extreme prudence.
- d) When a society is objectively plagued by uncontrolled violence, it may be equally irresponsible to behave as if it did not exist. However, documented reports on the real causes of this violence – unemployment, drug addiction, broken families, degraded habitat or any other cause, carrying interviews with independent minded psychologists, social scientists, concerned community leaders may better help finding sustainable solutions than simply treating these disruptions as providential electoral arguments. Even when it is exploited and exacerbated by unscrupulous politicians, a society's propensity for violence requires rigorous analyses rather than opportunist relativism.
- c) If it appears to an independent newspaper that violence has reached disturbing levels and that public opinion's attention should be drawn to this problem, besides the documented articles mentioned above, *Violence Watch* columns, with clinical reports and daily computed statistics would better serve the purpose of curbing violence than partial reports always imputing that violence to the other party, with the risk of trivialising the violence inflicted upon the other party's supports, to the extent that it ranks lower in news hierarchy and does not seem to deserve the same principled condemnation.

8) Rather than demonising/ canonising politicians

- a) Rather than demonising some politicians and canonising others, independent newspapers should, rather, seek to identify, among others, in neighbourhoods, among youth movements, self-help association, cultural militancy groups, human rights advocacy groups or parents-teachers associations, those commitments to public interest and a better life for the community that need to be encouraged and publicised. This

largely helps to avoid allowing party politics to occupy the totality of the social field. A society needs to be given role-models and examples, it needs to feel that hoping for a better future is not vain and that fellow citizens are sincerely committed to human and social development.

b) In the hope that Zimbabwean civil society may rapidly recover its *sine qua non* independence from political parties, a truly independent press would honour its mission towards public interest if it were to provide preferential coverage to NGO's whose credentials in terms of independence and fairness are unquestionable. Elsewhere, during election contest, church organisations, neighbourhood associations, non politically affiliated trade unions often organise, chair and moderate public debates between politicians from opposite sides, often between candidates running for the same constituency seat. Would such a commendable practice appear in a future reconciled Zimbabwe, the independent press should not fail to avail itself of this further opportunity for fair and balanced reporting of political views and projects.

Out of our Remit?

Though assessing Zimbabwean civil society does not fall within our mission's remit, we feel that its role in the recent political campaign was much too marked to avoid noting down some relevant considerations, the more so since some NGO's are closely associated to freedom of speech militancy and press monitoring.

Right from the outset, one needs to say that many advanced democracies would largely benefit if they were to comprise as vibrant a civil society as Zimbabwe's. Nevertheless, despite the excuses based on this country's highly polarised situation, as a matter of fact, excuses conceptually similar to those advocated by the private owned press, it may be dangerous, for the very future of a more empowered civil society, to complacently allow NGO's to transform themselves into disguised social arms of a political party.

Considering the large array of decent, principled and committed Zimbabwean citizens who strongly involved themselves with various politically vigilant NGO's, most of them led to be critical of the Mugabe/ZANU-PF regime, civil society has been dangerously associated with the MDC. Besides the legitimate reaction of non partisan citizens aggrieved, if not harassed, by a government overtly flouting the rule of law, this NGO/MDC objective alliance may also have fallen in line with the historical impression, previously evoked, that the new party largely corresponded to this still dreamt of wide value-based citizen-oriented federations expected to challenge traditional fossilised political parties.

Besides the generational values it supported, the very structure of the MDC, the Holy Alliance it begot between industrial trade unionists, landed entrepreneurs, middle class

professionals and highly articulate intellectuals, all that provided for an appeal to which sincere and committed NGO members were sensitive. In this regard, one example is particularly relevant to our mission: Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe's failure to more resolutely call upon the privately owned press to show some more restraint and decency. This Norwegian funded NGO, having close links with MISA, the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission and Article XIX, may very well have failed to preserve its independence. Its declared purpose and practical activity are highly commendable, to be emulated in more advanced democracies, but we noted that it showed some complacency towards the pro-MDC papers, even when one of these paper's (See Appendix A) blatant concoction of an anti-Mugabe Swiss bank account story had been exposed.

Since we have taken the liberty of commenting on a domain not explicitly within our remit, we are tempted to mention another field of concern that should be addressed.

In its Preliminary Report, released on March 14th 2002, the Commonwealth Observer Group to the Presidential Election in Zimbabwe notes: *"The ruling party used its incumbency to exploit state resources for the benefit of its electoral campaign. This was compounded by the Government's near monopoly of the broadcast media - a factor which was not offset by the bias of most of the privately-owned print media in favour of the opposition MDC"*.

As General Abdulsalami Abubakar's team rightly points out, there is an inescapable relation between electronic media's abuse of position and private papers attempts to offset such abuse. In these conditions, at least as a catalyst, the public broadcaster also provoked some of the unwarranted press practices this report comments upon. In view of this perverse inflationary relationship, we suggest that any such future Media Monitoring Mission also comprise a member from the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association, preferably someone whose own media outlet is not marred by a long tradition of partisan patronage.

Hopeful window of opportunity

One cannot predict how the winners of the March 2002 presidential election in Zimbabwe will behave towards political opponents and voices of dissent within Zimbabwean society, *inter alia* towards the privately owned press. However, one does not need to be a rocket scientist to imagine that the classical arrogance of hard fought for regained power will be tempted to further crush an increasingly confrontational press.

Resolutely convinced that a vigilant and, when need be, critical press is an essential component of any authentic democracy, we shall not encourage our fellow editors in Zimbabwe to curb their heads and patiently wait for better days. Nevertheless, we

strongly feel that the present *rapport de forces* in Zimbabwe provides an opportune moment to engage a committed reengineering of editorial attitudes and commercial strategies.

It may be extremely naive to expect much spontaneous change from the Zimpapers' Governmental titles. In contrast, on the daily market, *The Daily News* may perhaps see a blessing in disguise in the present situation.

During our meeting with Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe, its coordinator, Andrew Moyle supported the view that the private newspapers had been progressively led to their unilateral style of reporting to react and counterbalance the State-owned papers abuses. We note that the Catholic Bishop Conference of Zimbabwe made an "*appeal to the media to help curb violence by reporting events with objectivity.*" Someone, somewhere must begin. And the first newspaper choosing balance and fairness may be honoured with the privilege of solving the long-standing chicken and egg dilemma.

The question is not who started to be excessively unilateral and biased. It is rather: who will stop this dangerous game.



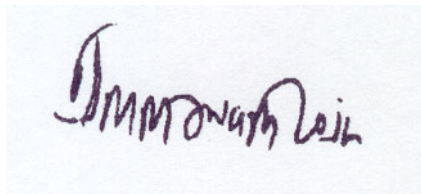
Gilbert Ahnee
(Republic of Mauritius)



Harold Hoyte
(Barbados)



Wangethi Mwangi
(Kenya)



Johnson Mbwambo
(Tanzania)

Appendix A

The ten sets of remarks carried in this Appendix have been drafted individually by our Team Members, following a brief inviting them to identify, in their own deliberate judgment, areas of concern or satisfactory practices which, according to them, needed the most to be negatively commented upon or encouraged.

1) An analysis of the readers forum in the Zimbabwe Press

Accuracy, balance, objectivity and fairness are the universally accepted defining principles of good journalistic practice. They inform, or at least ought to, and provide the rigorous process of news and general content selection that shapes the individual character of news publications.

In selecting content, newspapers strive to maintain a distinct division between hard news and comment or opinion, hence the configuration of publications broadly into sections for news, opinion, comment and analyses.

The opinion and comment sections give newspapers a wide latitude to accommodate the plurality of views in society. Entrenched in these sections is the editorial forum, which trumpets the newspapers editorial standpoint on a given issue. For the reader, it serves as the barometer for gauging the newspapers ideology, political or otherwise, in the context of any given issue it elects to editorialise on. It is the soul of the newspaper and, because of the enormous leeway it gives the editor, it is effectively used to shape public opinion, for better or worse.

Public opinion is itself ventilated largely in the mailbox, readers forum or letters to the editor section. And given the diversity of thought in any society, it ideally ought to mirror the broad spectrum of readers opinions.

However, it is not uncommon for newspapers to jettison professionalism and deliberately skew the tenor of readers opinions to buttress their own editorial standpoints. To that extent, they will deliberately publish only those letters that express views that are in sync with their adopted agenda. The result is a one-sided and skewed menu of opinions that unrealistically misrepresent society as homogeneous in thought.

It is a professional failing that can contribute to polarisation of society, particularly at time as delicate as during a presidential election when the fragility of a nation is pointedly manifest.

The Zimbabwe Press stands accused in this respect, as is evident from a sampling of views in its “letters to the editor” pages during the period preceding the presidential election of March 9, 10 and 11.

A common thread in the papers sampled, the government-owned *The Herald* and the privately-run *Daily News*, is a daily menu of inflammatory, unbalanced and unedited views that clearly seem deliberately selected to foster or engender support for the partisan positions of the particular newspaper or denigrate the candidacy of the other party.

Given the nature of its ownership, *The Herald* is, understandably, pro-government and the ruling party, ZANU-PF’s leader, President Robert Mugabe.

The Daily News, a privately owned newspaper, on the other hand, espouses an independent ideology. However, it has clearly identified itself as the opposition’s torch-bearer, identifying itself specifically with the leader of the Movement for Democratic Change, Mr Morgan Tsvangirai.

The biased selection of published readers letters confirm this.

Read in The Herald

The Herald, a broadsheet, dedicates relatively less space to readers views than its main competitor, *The Daily News*, publishing at most three letters, a longish one and two much shorter. In selected issues between March 1st and March 9th, it significantly played the race and land reform cards as if taking its cue from two of the president’s common campaign themes. Some typical headlines:

March 1: *Mr Tsvangirai must realise poverty is pain*
British foreign policy questionable

March 5: *Errant comments a cause for disbelief*

March 6: *Tsvangirai unclear on his land policy*
Sovereignty is not questionable

March 9: *Anti-President hate campaign full of lies*

A criticism of the presidential candidates land reform alternative to Mr Mugabe’s policy of forceful acquisitions.

The Daily News, a tabloid paper, offers a full page of readers views, with occasional intrusion by an advertisement. Over the same period, it allowed its readers to ventilate their discontentment with the Mugabe regime. Some typical headlines:

March 1: *This is the time to bury this evil regime*

March 5: *Violence ZANU-PF's undoing*

March 7: *Does attacking whites give one the right to rule?*

March 9: *The cockerel is now too old and should be slaughtered for the pot*
(a rather strident and cruel reference to the 78-year-old President Mugabe)

An analysis of the total content of the two papers' letters pages points at two fundamental flaws as discussed earlier:

- There is a conspicuous absence of any attempt to balance the views in a forum that ideally ought to reflect Zimbabwe's diversity of thought.
- In a number of instances, the views are decidedly inflammatory, bringing into question the editors appreciation of his social responsibility. A little editing could have salvaged such letters.

The way forward

While the Press is within its right to adopt a partisan standpoint, the extremist expressions witnessed in the Zimbabwe publications can only result in serious damage to its credibility and a dilution of the respectability it craves from its readers.

It will isolate as sizeable a body of its potential constituency as it will attract, unwittingly playing into the hands of politicians, the real artful masters of divide-and-rule tactics.

If it is to maintain even a modicum of respectability engendered by a measure of objectivity, it must begin by acknowledging that its readers have a certain measure of intelligence. That they do not always view issues in black and white; that every issue has at least two sides.

As a starting point, the newspapers might be well advised to consider formulating policies, if these do not already exist, for selecting and editing readers letters, with balance, or diversity, and tenor as the key defining characteristics. This will necessarily

reposition the pages as rich debating forums and add to strengthen the newspapers' flavour.

2) Reporting Violence

There is no doubt that during the presidential election campaign, there has been violence, intimidation and coercion, in many points of the country. However, what was not clear was the level of violence, intimidation and coercion. And, of course, who were the true perpetrators.

This is because reporting of violence by the main dailies, specially the tit-for-tat Harare duellists, *The Herald* and *The Daily News*, toed party political lines. *The Herald* apportioned shame to the opposition MDC supporters, likewise *The Daily News* to the ruling ZANU-PF party supporters.

It is not clear how many people were killed as a result of political violence since campaigns started. *The Herald* always quoted the police figure, which is 14, while *The Daily News* quoted NGO's figure, which is 30.

There was a very disagreeable tendency by the two Harare papers of putting a party label to most of the crime stories they carried during the campaign period. So a normal thug would go with the label "a MDC thug" or "a ZANU-PF thug", depending in which paper the story was carried.

Besides, *The Herald* and *The Daily News* seemed to think that it was possible to write anything about perpetrators of political violence, as long as it was prefaced by the word "alleged".

Respect for basic rules of proximity and reliance on official sources also seemed to depend on the papers' political affiliations. For example, on March 1st, *The Herald* carried a story with the following headline: *Defacing buildings lands 38 in trouble*. The story originated from a police press conference in Harare during which the police briefed that they had arrested 38 MDC supporters and recovered scores of paint aerosols that were suspected to have been used to deface Harare buildings.

In its 1st March issue, *The Daily News* did not carry this Harare story. Instead, it published a story from Chirumanzu where rowdy ZANU-PF supporters, according to the paper, beat up schoolteachers. Why did the *Daily News* ignore the Harare story, bearing on a case of un-civic behaviour? Certainly because perpetrators were MDC youth. Likewise *The Herald* ignored the Chirumanzu story because the "rowdy youth" were ZANU-PF supporters.

Most of the political violence stories carried by the two papers during the campaign period had mysterious or partisan sources. A good example is the story headlined *Police raid MDC Mutare offices, seize property*, in the March 4th issue of The Daily News. The paper went on to report that property seized included 210 kilo bags of maize-meal meant to feed 8,000 people displaced by political violence.

The source of the story was an MDC official in the area. No other independent sources were quoted in the story, no eyewitness, not even an indication that police were contacted to confirm or deny the report.

The Herald in its February 13th issue wrote: “*The Opposition MDC has been linked to several crimes recently, particularly politically motivated violence*”. There was no evidence to support this assertion. The State-owned media quoted only the police. And yet it is such a damaging report for the MDC.

There was also a disturbing tendency displayed by the two papers not to publish follow-ups on the political violence stories they wrote. The policy seemed to be: a big political violence story today, but tomorrow, the whole and next week, not a single paragraph as way of follow-up, not even to say if the allegedly beaten or tortured person has recovered.

3) Reporting on Election Observers

Media reporting on foreign election observer missions were skewed along party political lines.

This trend started long before our mission’s arrival in Zimbabwe, increasing after government’s refusal to accredit Pierre Schori, the head of the European Union election observers team.

Referring to Schori’s expulsion saga, *The Herald’s* editorial, in its February 13th issue, accused the EU of being a big bully. In its February 15th issue, *The Herald* went on to quote foreign organisations sympathetic to the ZANU-PF position and came up with stories headlined *ACP slams European Union stance* and *Hands off Zim*.

Obviously, these organisations were carefully selected; preference given, in *The Herald*, to those sympathetic to ZANU-PF. An impartial newspaper, even one having endorsed a candidate, would have balanced the story by also publishing different viewpoints, from other foreign organisations.

The Daily News was no better. Capitalising on the Schori saga to help MDC gain more support, it reported in its February 13th issue: “*The contribution of foreign observers to making the election free and fair is likely to be marginal at best*”.

Again the two papers could ill-afford to erode their credibility at such critical time, by misrepresenting foreign observers' comments made during the campaign period. Here are a few examples:

The Herald, in its February 13th issue, reported that South Africa was “*happy with the progress Zimbabwe has made so far in preparations for the forthcoming presidential elections*”. It quoted the named South African government officials who had come specifically to assess the Zimbabwean government's preparations.

However, the next day, *The Daily News* claimed that the head of the South African election observer team had denied *The Herald's* story. His quote, however, would suggest that *The Daily News* had misled him over who had made the comments. “*We couldn't have said that. We haven't said anything in that regard. Whatever the information is in that story, it is a distortion*”.

Another example is that of Kaire Mbuende, head of the Namibian Observers Mission. On February 28th, *The Herald* quoted Mbuende saying that “*the level of violence was being exaggerated by the Independent Press*” and that “*conditions prevailed for a peaceful election*”.

Although Mbuende spoke in a Press Conference, *The Daily News* ignored the story as it was out of line with what MDC propagated, but in their next issue, on March 1st, they came up with a Front Page lead story headlined: *Terror Spread*. In that story, they quoted MDC dismissing Mbuende remarks as “*most unfortunate and uncalled for*”.

From that day, *The Daily News* began publishing a series of stories, articles, letters and, even, an Editorial, attacking Mbuende. The last was a news story published on the second day of polling, on March 10th, with an opinionated headline reading *Kaire Mbuende delivers another election shocker*. That was after Mbuende had told journalists that polling on the first day had gone smoothly as far as violence was concerned.

Another foreign observer who fell victim to Zimbabwe's heavily polarised media is Abdulsalami Abubakar, head of the Commonwealth Observer Group. In its March 13th issue, *The Herald* picked a Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) story quoting Abubakar as having said that “*conditions prevailed for a free and fair election*”. *The Daily News* did not pick the item but, in their next issue, on March 4th, carried an editorial attacking Abubakar for the statement. Besides favouring disaffection for the Commonwealth and casting aspersions on its relevance in Zimbabwe (“*Is the Commonwealth, as it stands today, of any real value to the ordinary people if it so readily accommodates such excess of human rights abuse by those in power*”), this editorial suggested corrupt practices, providing grounds for being accused of libel (“*Zimbabwe has opened its cheque-book in seeking the assistance of lobbyist and consultancy firms among them Cohen and Woods from the United States of America, and Dickens and*

Madson from Canada. The conduct of some of the election observers would seem to suggest Zimbabwe has more lobbyist than it has publicly declared”). This editorial was headlined: “Abubakar has become an accomplice in violence”.

Although Abubakar, on March 5th, issued a statement saying he was misquoted by ZBC, neither *The Herald* nor *The Daily News* carried the clarification. The *Zimbabwe Independent*, which didn't publish the item, was the only paper which carried Abubakar's correction.

In view of the fact that Foreign Observers Missions in Zimbabwe were to report on whether the election was free and fair, the behaviour of the press towards comments made by them was unprofessional and undesirable.

4) Being consistent with one's declared values

In many countries, State-owned media, or so-called privately owned media relying solely on Governmental advertising, have often gone beyond the pale as regards character assassination, distortion of facts or even fictitious stories. Even when they still count on their sales to sustain their operations, they are not really accountable to buyers/readers; Government funding A or siphoning off large chunks of State publicity budget B accounting for a large part on the revenue side in their balance sheet. To the extent that they are not, primarily, business concerns lobbying instruments, privately owned media also rely on their sales to break even, the more so to cash in profit and resources for reinvestment and quality enhancement. These papers are strongly accountable to their readers, along the terms of a service contract to provide readers with verifiable facts, fair comments on matters of public interest and just on time free after-sales service if the commodity delivered proves to be defective. We mean i) checked and counter-checked information; ii) op-ed pieces whose submissions need not be infallible views but whose intent cannot fail to try convince rather than demonise and iii) an unreserved right of reply to any bona fide aggrieved party. This is not even an idealistic and ethical definition of independent journalism, it is merely its sound commercial grounding. We regret to say that we failed to note this customer-oriented corporate culture in various titles of the so-called Independent Zimbabwean press. Of course, the same objectives could also be justified on ethical grounds.

However, even if ethics were to be placed on the back burner in view of a political agenda superseding, as a matter of life or death, every other consideration, one may be tempted to say that the messenger should not vitiate the message. MDC stood for a so called “*victory of good on evil*”, it denounced violations of human rights and the use of violence, it claimed that it wanted the world to know the whole truth about Zimbabwe. While foregoing its independence and impartiality in view of defending such lofty declared political ideals, the private press in Zimbabwe might well have failed to honour these same ideals in its daily practice. The two examples below may be enough to illustrate what we mean.

Intrusion in privacy or harassment in pain

Following street rumours that the vice-President of Zimbabwe had passed away, The Daily News carried, on 1st March, a short Front Page item headlined: *Muzenda suffers stroke*, with the unidentifiable by-line *Staff Reporter* and relying on anonymous sources.

The article read as follows:

Vice-President Simon Muzenda, 79, has apparently suffered a stroke which has damaged his brain. Sources said Muzenda is confined to his rural home in Zvavahera, Gutu, where he is being attended to round-the-clock by a team of physiotherapists.

‘He is always being shuttled between his two homes and the President has reportedly given an instruction that he is to be taken wherever he wants’, one source said. Because of the partial damage to his brain, the doctors had given strict instructions for him not to speak to the public, the sources said.

It could not be established last night when Muzenda suffered the stroke, but he has rarely appeared in the public in the last month.

At simple face value, this article calls for some comments.

a) Indeed public figures, paid by tax-payers money, cannot get away with questionable behaviour on the exclusive assumption that it pertains to their private life. True also that, in a democracy, a public figure is accountable to voters, *inter alia* as regards ability to execute one’s function. Nevertheless, when sources appear so flimsy, one wonders if such an article is really warranted by public interest.

b) We shall refrain from being too severe on that sub’s absent-mindedness that allowed, in the same article, “*confined to his rural home*” and “*shuttled between his two homes - taken wherever he wants*”.

c) Two mentions of “*brain damage*”, with all the degradation it connotes, appears a violation of human rights.

d) The fact that Mr Muzenda “*rarely appeared in public in the last month*” seems to be the only verifiable element in this story.

The next day, *The Herald* carried a Front Page picture showing Mr Muzenda, by President Mugabe’s side, the caption saying the picture was taken the previous day, at a public rally.

e) If *The Daily News* information was unfounded, the picture in *The Herald* was a resounding slap in the face for the MDC supporting daily.

f) If *The Daily News* information was founded, its story imposed on a sick man a cruel and demanding spin doctoring session.

e) To be fair to all parties, we need to say that we were not in a position to check with a reliable eye-witness whether Mr Muzenda was effectively present on this platform or whether *The Herald* published an older photograph.

Abusive concoction based on out of context statement

On 3rd March, the Sunday weekly *The Standard*, carried a Front Page leading story headlined: *Swiss to hold chiefs \$23b*

Carrying Trevor Muhonde's by-line, that article's intro and first paragraph read as follows:

President Mugabe and his top lieutenants stand to lose over £, 55 million (\$ 4,56 billion or \$ 22,8 billion at the parallel market rate), stashed in Swiss bank accounts if Zanu PF cheats its way to victory in next weeks presidential election.

A senior Swiss government official told The Standard on Friday that his country had decided to join the 14-Member (Sic) European Union and the United States in taking decisive action against the Mugabe regime for crimes against humanity.

The article goes on to quote a Swiss official, unidentified but well placed enough to be apprised of Cabinet's discussions, that source reported to have said that the Swiss Cabinet had "agreed it would be appropriate to impose sanctions after the polls as a way of dealing with Mugabe and Zanu PF who are sure to rig the elections and cling on to power." The source also said that "the meeting resolved that the outcome of the elections will determine their decision on Zimbabwe."

Further in the article, Trevor Muhonde quotes a named identified Swiss Foreign ministry spokesperson, Daniela Stoffel-Fatzer, the latter reported to have said that her government was, in *The Standard's* own words, *poised to swoop on accounts held by Mugabe and his officials, and that last week's decision would have to be ratified by Parliament.*

Further on, *The Standard* quotes, in italic and between inverted commas, a non-committal verbatim Trevor Muhonde attributes to Ms Stoffel-Fatzer: "The decision on whether to block

bank accounts, impose trade restrictions and ban travel by Zimbabweans officials would have to be taken by the federal cabinet”.

Editorialising in a news story, the journalist finally concludes his article as follows:

Revelations of the billions that Zanu PF leaders have stored in Switzerland come at a time when the country is facing an acute food shortage, with the government barely able to import enough grain to feed the nation. It also comes against an acute shortage of foreign currency which has seen national reserves run dry.

At face value, this article, calls for some comments:

a) If it were intentionally meant to be propaganda, the author showed real mastery in the art of masquerading fictions to grant them a fake certificate of origin: i) the more propagandist part of the story is attributed to an unidentified Swiss official source but ii) an identified and traceable Swiss official source is called upon to stand by its unidentified hypothetic colleague even if iii) the verbatim attributed to Ms Stoffel-Fatzer may well have been a bona fide reply to an innocuously posed question such as “Does the Swiss administration consider taking measures comparable to those taken by the European Union ?” If journalists can recognise such tricks of the trade, supposing our assumption is sustainable, lay readers rarely make out how and when they are taken for a ride.

b) We have not been able to ascertain whether there had been previous documented evidence about Mugabe’s alleged accounts in Swiss banks and, more significant yet, Mr Mugabe’s standing balance on these accounts. If these informations had never been established, we would deem Trevor Muhende’s conclusive remarks absolutely unwarranted, the journalist breaking the story himself commenting on his own undocumented testimony, if not unfounded assertions.

The next day, *The Herald* tendered a reply and a denial to *The Standard’s* story. The governmental paper simply published an Agence France Presse (AFP) report, filed in Bern, that read as follows:

The Swiss authorities have denied a report in the Sunday Standard newspaper, which said Bern was prepared to block US \$ 82,5 million in deposits allegedly belonging to President Mugabe and his aides after Zimbabwe’s presidential election.

Ruedi Christen, a spokesman for the Swiss foreign ministry said: “That’s completely wrong”. He said the Federal Council (cabinet) would decide after the presidential election if, when and how it wants to take a stand on sanctions.

“We will think about it, evaluate the situation and then the cabinet will decide,” Christen said.

The Sunday Standard newspaper has quoted another Swiss foreign ministry official saying Switzerland had decided to block US \$ 82,5 million deposited in Swiss banks allegedly belonging to President Mugabe and his aides.

President Mugabe has repeatedly said that he does not have any money or asset in foreign countries.

A mere phone call to one of our newsrooms allowed us to confirm that the piece published in *The Standard* was a bona fide AFP report, dated Sunday 4th March, 12 GMT, ref: 120 DAB 120 4 18297 CHE AFP UR 46.

In its Sunday 11th March issue, the next after its story had been proved wrong, *The Standard* carried no apology to its readers for having misled them. Neither did it stand by its previous week story, in what could have been expected as an urgently required self-defence bid to uphold *The Standard's* and Trevor Muhonde's credibility and professional integrity.

In its Sunday 11th March issue, one week after it unapologized for concoction, *The Standard* wrote, in its editorial, that voting for Robert Mugabe meant choosing “*corruption, - lawlessness, a government which refuses to be accountable in any way*”. On the other hand, according to this leader, voting for Morgan Tsvangirai, which the paper called upon his readers to do, meant voting for “*the rule of law [and] being a respected member of the world community*”.

We only wish that *The Standard* may shun away from the degraded standards it pins upon Mugabe and emulate the high standards it attributes to Tsvangirai.

5) The race issue

Reference to the race of origin or colour of persons should be avoided in the media, except in special circumstances where such reference is necessary for providing clarity or relevant information.

The press in Zimbabwe veered from this principle from time to time. Given the historical racial sensitivities in this country, the press showed disregard for the dangerous potential such reports can have in creating disharmony.

The Sunday Mail was particularly guilty of this type of indiscretion. It carried several items like: *White farmers caught using radio transmitters* and *Mutare white man buys all Herald copies in town*.

The Herald carried again: *South African whites infiltrate country* and *White opposition supporters embark on door to door exercise*.

More than that, The Herald's editorial of March 12th is headlined *Whites actions despicable*. The opening paragraph of that editorial reads: "*White people in Zimbabwe went for broke during the presidential election as they pushed for an unlikely MDC victory.*"

By singling out *whites* as attempting to bribe voters with food, money and transportation, the paper may have been suggesting that this was an exclusively ethnic pursuit on election day; or that *whites* should not have the right to exercise their choice as freely as any other Zimbabwean citizen.

6) Inflammatory language in headlines

The use of inflammatory language both in headlines and in texts should be avoided at all times but particularly in a political season.

This principle was followed more in the breach than in the observance during the days leading up to the Zimbabwe March 2002 elections. The daily papers' front pages screamed works like *Assassination Plot* or *Military offensive* or *Poll fraud* or *Bid to rig elections* or *Treason*.

Predictably, the headlines about the alleged assassination plot and the alleged high treason and the alleged military offensive were to be found in *The Herald* and *The Chronicle*, supporting Zanu PF political rhetoric; while the headlines about *Fraudulent polls* and *Rigged elections* emanated from the pro-MDC *Daily News*.

Headlines by themselves, if justified by supporting facts in the text of a story, can be strong or sensational or alarming, once they are fair. But, for the most part, the headlines referred to did not contain the substratum of facts needed to justify the size or type of headline or, indeed, front page placement.

Two examples:

In Chronicle, March 7th:

Headline carried: *Major military offensive*

This page 1 lead story is based on reports from "*highly placed sources in London and Washington*" and is constructed on a suggestion that these governments are "*allegedly setting the stage for a major military offensive*" against the Zimbabwe government. If ever it should be carried, an allegation as flimsy as this should not be carried under a screaming headline like the one used.

In any situation, such an article would be condemnable. It was still more disturbing since it played on supposed Matebeland secessionist tendencies, a question carrying much emotion since the trouble of the 80's.

In the Daily News, March 5th

Headline carried: *Bid to rig election*

This was another page 1 lead story, and the headline derived its strong assertion from the fact that several members of the Zimbabwe Republic Force and the Zimbabwe National Army cast their votes several days ahead of the March 9th and 10th poll. The newspaper came to a wrong conclusion based on ignorance, since it did not understand that it is an internationally accepted practice for the disciplined force to cast postal ballots.

7) Contradictory stories

Newspapers do the reputation of journalism no good when they go out of their way to give political embellishment to simple facts. More so in an election than at any time, a newspaper should strive to abide by the truth, at all times. One simple example should be enough to illustrate how two warring Zimbabwean newspapers can confuse readers, their mutual contradiction leading to a loss of credibility for both. It relates to a cancelled political rally by the MDC.

The Herald reported the day after the MDC had cancelled a rally that “*poor attendance forced the MDC to cancel a rally in Marondera, yesterday where opposition party leader Morgan Tsvangirai was supposed to be the main speaker. Mr Tsvangirai was greeted by less than 200 people, most of whom had travelled from Harare*”

For a paper that failed to cover speeches at MDC rallies throughout the campaign, this article was equivalent to a deliberate misuse of the profession to cast a slur on a political opponent.

The same day, *The Daily News* tried to excuse the cancelled meeting by saying “*the MDC yesterday called off a presidential campaign rally in Marondera after reports that ZANU-PF supporters planned to ambush Morgan Tsvangirai convoy. There was also widespread intimidation of supporters of the opposition party*”

The positive aspect of *The Daily News* coverage was that it obtained a statement from MDC national chairman, Isaac Matongo.

8) Political cartoons

One feature of a good newspaper is its political cartoons. Zimbabwe newspapers have a very high standards of political cartooning.

Unfortunately the gist of every cartoon in Zimbabwe follows a predictable editorial line, but the quality of the drawings and the cleverness of the themes are of international standards.

Had the papers been able to feature cartoons that captured the essence of political developments, without regard for partisan fall-outs, they would have reached an even higher level of independent and impartial recognition.

9) Political advertising

The two major parties which contested the election resorted, almost exclusively, to print advertising to sell their messages. It would surprise no one that *The Daily News*, *The Standard* and *Zimbabwe Independent* obtained the almost exclusive benefit of MDC spend; while *The Herald* and *Chronicle* benefited similarly from ZANU-PF.

Only one paper, *Zimbabwe Mirror* weekly, carried advertorials from the two sides. Though owned and edited by an overt supporter of ZANU-PF, this weekly had a readers' corner which showed balance, with letters from both parties' supporters. This needs to be commended.

We were surprised by the persistence and the lower level of negative advertising of ZANU-PF that indulged in character assassination, racism and vilification of adversaries, even non-political persons such as Bishop Ncube which they considered opposed to their schemes.

On the other hand, MDC's advertorials were almost always decent, very creative and focused on solutions rather than denigration.

10) Editorials

a) An editorial's main objective is to convince readers about the validity of a point. The ideas supported and the writer's conclusion may not be agreeable to readers but the exercise's integrity holds to i) its manifest intention to promote public interest and ii) its rigorous conceptual deployment.

b) Very often honest editorials follow a single line of thought, trying to drive home their basic assumption, point after point. When an editorial addresses complex issues, it obtains better recognition when it is also capable, while remaining focused on its

intellectual objective, to consider conflicting opinions. When the focus is political, independent newspapers cannot afford to appear overtly partisan.

c) During our mission in Zimbabwe, we were rarely given the opportunity to read an editorial that confronted the two sides of any issue before opting for the side privileged by the writer. In various countries, while placing fairness high on their agenda, some quality newspapers do not try to hide their political preference. It has been a long tradition, now, in the UK, for highly respectable newspapers to favour one political party. In the US, some newspapers sometimes choose to endorse a candidate running for office. However, even when a paper declares its political colour, it is at risk of losing its intellectual prestige if its editorials are content with being partisan pamphlets. Quite unfortunately, most editorial carried in the Zimbabwean press during the run up to the presidential elections were almost exclusively vote-catching devices, under the cloak of an intellectual exercise.

d) It may shame a press that claims to be independent (from whom?) to note that one of the best editorials we came across during the last days of the recent electoral campaign was carried in the State-owned Herald, a paper that has very little latitude to depart from ZANU-PF rhetoric.

e) In its March 5th issue, The Herald carried an editorial headlined City residents set a fine example. Commenting on the fact that, the previous Sunday, the two main contending parties had held rallies at locations very near from one another, but yet with no violence reported, the writer goes on to conclude: “Thousands of people, who all feel very strongly indeed about the righteousness of their causes, and who all reject vehemently the policies of their opponents, managed to co-exist and campaign peacefully”. Coming right after this quoted paragraph, the editorial’s punch line is extremely encouraging: *“They did more. They set us all an example”*.

f) Our team met The Herald’s Editor-in-Chief, Pikirayi Deketeke, that same day. We commended the editorial we had just read. Mr Deketeke had the following reply: “Yesterday, during our news conference, we felt that we had reached the time to begin the process of healing”. That could be an ideal to be shared by all Zimbabwean editors. Unfortunately, however, in the next days, *The Herald* resorted again to the process of hurting and wounding what will now need to be healed.

Appendix B

In this Appendix, we simply put on record some excerpts from our daily reports on our morning sessions' discussions. This will provide some further indication on unacceptable practices which have not been extensively commented in our report. Besides, the candid character of our first remarks will indicate how we first perceived our material, before reaching the more reflexive conclusion laid down in the body of our report.

To preserve the conditions of confidentiality that favoured such a friendly rapport between our four Team Members, based on trust and mutual esteem, we have chosen to identify each of the contributors by a letter, rather than by name.

Saturday 2nd March session

Team Member X: *I noticed that both papers reported international stories and twisted them to their own agenda. In The Herald, it was the Commonwealth and, in The Daily News, the Washington story about the US government denouncing the oppressive campaign of the government of Zimbabwe. No by-line.*

All the politically tainted stories are by-lined "Herald Reporter", which means nothing.

Team Member W: *This brings me to the letters to the editor forum, they don't appear with the full name.*

Team Member X: *Both papers carry reports of violence, The Daily News carries a Front Page picture of a MDC supporter who was beaten up but makes no reports to the 16 Zanu supporters reported by The Herald of having been beaten up. Nothing in The Daily News about the incident reported in The Herald, which seems to be true. Selective use of violent incidents is very dangerous, it serves to further inflame the partisan feelings.*

Team Member W: *I'm still on the letters to the editor page. Most papers carry six letters. In The Daily News, there's one story which is not about the election. The others talk about the elections, being pro MDC. While The Herald, carries six letters but with only one political.*

We all note that the absence of articles on societal issues is quite disquieting.

Team Member Z: *I've devoted most of my reading time today to the Zimbabwe Mirror weekly and I must say that I found their approach extremely encouraging. This is the only paper that carries commercials for both Mugabe and Tsvangirai. Their readers corner, too, carries letters from supporters on both sides. This willingness to show the two sides of the story is also displayed in their leading news*

items. With some better subbing, especially for headlines, right from the Front Page, the balance could be clearly apparent.

Their leading story, today, can be considered as a three-in-one compounded story: Third Force; illegal Zanu PF uniforms; Tsvangirai list of Zanu PF torture camps.

One is surprised by the fact that the headline reads: Third force implicated in election violence while, in the article, the police spokes-person explicitly says: “I cannot exactly say that there is a third force “. It may also have helped to defuse polarisation, tension and distrust in disciplined forces (or feeling that they can be taken for granted) if they had chosen to highlight the following police statement: “There is a group of people not associated with the MDC or Zanu PF causing mayhem in the country”.

One can regret the wording “Anglo-Saxon dominions” to designate Australia, New-Zealand and Canada. In the present context in Zimbabwe, this once more puts the premium on considerations of race.

Articles like Where are the other Presidential candidates? page 6, and A backdrop to the presidential contest, page 8, honour Op-Ed writing.

Monday 4th March session (Sunday and Monday Papers)

We thought the *Sunday Mail's* lead story was otherwise a good story; however it was flawed by editorialising in the middle of it. We also thought that the second story on the front page, the grain story, was clearly concocted: no sources, clearly sensational, about the 19,000 tonnes of wheat.

We thought that, overall, the Front Page represented propaganda, in view of the Elections. With four stories: one giving Zimbabwe diplomatic acclaim, international credit to what Zimbabwe was doing. Next story addressed without any foundation. Third story speculated on the break up of the MDC. We also noticed that there were four pictures of Mugabe in the news pages and only one of Tsvangirai, and that in a story where he admits failure.

About *The Standard*: We did not think it was a credible story, because he quoted a figure but could not say where the figure came from. And the person who was quoted in the story was just being used in a clever way to verify her authenticity but never confirmed anything about money.

Monday 4th March session

About *The Herald*: The lead story was a fair presentation of the Zanu meeting we attended but it followed the political directorate's desire to harp on the UK and Tsvangirai, whereas the speech content about farming, food was secondary, while we think they were relevant for the people of Zimbabwe. We thought that this story was far too long and it concentrated exclusively on the president's speech. Nothing about the crowd, the entertainment, etc.

Also on page 1: a story about Indigenous Business and it quoted the fact that 5,000 had endorsed government's land programme. There were not 5,000 people at a meeting held indoors, in an hotel's conference room.

There was no item at all referring to the previous day's MDC rally.

About *Daily News*: Lead story was based on a fabricated foundation created by another newspaper, some other elements based a third newspaper, the UK *Telegraph*, while never saying what was the *Telegraph's* source.

The news also revealed its nakedness in that story when it said, in paragraph 12, that *The Telegraph* investigation benefited from help by the MDC.

Newspapers are also meant to avert rumour-mongering. Here, it seems, that newspapers feed on rumours, more fuel the rumour industry.

On page 2, they carried a report of the MDC meeting, inadequately covered in our view, but with overstated numbers (doubled according to our assessment after attending that same rally).

We give them credit however for carrying a report on the Zanu PF rally, but there were too glaring pieces of evidence shown by it. They referred to the Zanu rallies as low key and they suggested that there were 200 cops at the rally in Chitungwisa (which we attended). Which, here again, seems to have been doubled.

We have strong reservations *vis-a-vis* a practice, common in papers from both sides, suggesting that political opponents are expected to leave politics or, worse, flee the country. This denotes a bad perception of the need for dissent within a democracy. And, in the case of the MDC papers, this does not even fall in line with Mr Tsvangirai statements about a Justice/Truth/Reconciliation commission.

Tuesday 5th March session

Team Member Z: *The last Front Page story in The Herald is largely based on the ZBC so called investigative document broadcast on the 3rd March.*

We can note that, according to The Herald's submission, MDC legislator Job Sikhala said he would "rush to the Daily News to defend himself ". We're more familiar with eventually harassed parties advising a reporter to contact their solicitor.

The Herald goes on to score an own-goal when it casts aspersions on the Central Intelligence Office's procedures when it mentions "forged CIO letters illegally obtained to tarnish the image of another MDC legislator ". The paper also admits that a Zanu PF supporter bought air-tickets for the two MDC legislators. This said in such a casual, matter of fact way, we can wonder whether The Herald condones horse-trading.

Building on another media outlet's assumptions, The Herald notes that "the conversation was audio-taped and played on ZBC", as if we could also support kiss-and-tell sources. The allegation about the two MDC legislators being prepared to unlawfully appropriate themselves of 2 million Zim Dollar each, needs to be substantiated, lest it provides clear evidence for libel.

Willingly or unwillingly some stories carried in The Herald bear testimony to the abnormality of the present day situation in Zimbabwe. We read that a police spokesman makes political statements : "The MDC masquerades itself as the rule of law and maintenance of law and order"; we also read that diplomats in this country go much beyond the expected reserve, the Spanish Ambassador being reported to have said: " It's totally ridiculous that foreign diplomats can't meet with political leaders of a country". In a second article mentioning Job Shikala, we learn that he has been released before plea, after he "had been on remand since last year". We still need to know since when he was on remand but, the way it is written, the article allows us to think that he had been in police custody since at least 63 days. What is the maximum duration of remand according to law ? Was there any previous attempt to bail him out ? If yes, why was bail denied ?

The Daily News leading story, about disciplined forces pre-polling day vote could have been excellent if 1) they had mentioned the provisions of the law regarding disciplined forces votes; 2) the Electoral Supervisory commission had been quizzed about this practice and 3) asked what precautionary measures are being taken.

The Daily News editorial column may provoke disaffection for the Commonwealth and its observers on the ground over here. Besides, encouraging people to think that they're alone, without foreign support, may inflame certain passions.

Team Member X: *About The Herald, I felt that today's issue showed a little more balance than most recent editions. The report from CHOGM, except for the fifth paragraph, on the front page, was balanced. The assertion in the fifth paragraph that Tony Blair intended to enthrone his surrogate by the back door was unfortunate, in an otherwise good story. I also liked the tenor of the lead story: Land core of crisis, which addresses the most poignant, in my view, election issue.*

The story at the bottom of the page concerning the assassination plot continues to concern me, since nothing gives credence to such. I think the paper is feeding on emotion, even though the story is based on a television report.

Some of the other stories impress me: on page 2, the Church organisation calling for peaceful elections.

I have a difficulty with their continued attempt to play up cancelled MDC meeting, in spite of the fact that there is clear intimidation of the MDC. The use of the word "plot" in the headline makes it appear strange. Their political bias continues in paragraph 5, "the rally cancelled after the MDC realised it would not drum up enough members". Then the constant mention of "white commercial farmers".

The top story on page 4 is a good story, a very encouraging one, about Code of Conduct. But the bias of The Herald (fifth paragraph again) is shown by NAGG coming before MDC in the list. Speaks volumes.

Team Member W: *Job Shikala story: contradictory story. Legislators planning to defect from MDC while, in the same story, we are told that they are plotting something against Mugabe. Page 2 in The Herald: Diplomats story should have reached front page.*

Team Member X: *I would like to commend The Herald's editorial, balanced, breaking new ground in Zimbabwe's journalism.*

Wednesday 6th March session

Team Member X: *Lead story in The Herald is very weak. In page 2, feel secured : cholera under control, new ambulances. Adding all those together, the message is : look here guys in Harare, you're being well cared for. Clever journalism but partisan demarche transparent.*

Team Member Y: *still mentioning the so called MDC Plot as if it was a de facto reality. People are also called all sorts of names.*

In The Daily News: mention of tribal consideration, concerning Air Marshall Shiri.

Friday 8th March - Final session on Campaign

Team Member Y: *I found a media environment that is split in half, both not making apologies about the individual stand taken. There's no middle ground at all. Very little evidence of principles of basic journalism. Verification, identification of sources. Easy to manipulate. Confusing the readers rather than informing.*

Team Member X: *For these people, both in journalism and in civil society, their lives, their livelihoods, their families and their freedom are at stake. If I were running this newspaper, how would I*

behave. Cannot say. Considering that Mugabe will be there for the next six years, this takes you beyond the brink.

Team Member Y: *How do you appreciate the concept of objectivity when you've gone that far.*

Team Member X: *if I want to set up an independent newspaper in Harare, what are the options for me. If I'm independent, will the anti-Mugabe or pro-Mugabe advertisers support me ? It's extremely complex.*

The Daily News, nevertheless is in a good position, to build something new.

Appendix C

The present Appendix intends to provide some summary information on the press in Zimbabwe and, more specially, on the papers we monitored during our mission.
Newspaper History in Zimbabwe

Historical reminder

The historical data here below is borrowed from *Dancing out of Tune, a history of the media in Zimbabwe*, by Richard Saunders, © Richard Saunders, 1999.

In 1891, Cecil Rhodes' British South Africa Company offered a monopoly to print newspapers to the Argus Printing and Publishing Company of South Africa to print newspapers in the newly founded colony that would ultimately become Zimbabwe. That the year after the Pioneer Column had arrived in what is today Harare, in September 1890.

The Rhodesia Herald was launched in 1892, soon joined by *The Bulawayo Chronicle* and other publications.

In 1926, Argus set up the Rhodesian Printing and Publishing Company (RPP) as their local subsidiary.

When some other competitors tried to tap a share of the market, due to its South African connections, RPP benefited from various advantages to consolidate its position, *inter alia* easy direct telegraphic connections with Europe. This exclusive access to world news was a tremendous asset for papers targeting essentially the ethnic-European community, with little concern for issues relevant to the colonized African population.

In the 1930s, a small number of magazines and newspapers were launched to address local African interests. In 1931, RPP created *The Native Mirror* in Bulawayo, later renamed *Bantu Mirror*. Even if *The Native Mirror* targeted educated Africans, it was owned and run Europeans, especially as regards senior editors and management. The news hierarchy, perspective and content went along the lines of the colonial establishment.

After the Second World War, Rhodesia experiencing an accelerated economic growth, social relationships were modified and an African elite began to voice out its various claims.

The African Daily News was created in 1956, owned by the European African Newspapers Company but providing an important space for the reporting, discussion and debate of issues related to African nationalism in the late 1950s. Another important publication was *African Parade* which claimed to be “*the only newspaper in Southern Africa edited and printed by Africans for Africans*”.

As from the mid-50s, some young nationalist leader took on to journalism, men like Willie Musarurwa and Nathan Shumuyarira going on to reach editorial positions in publications like *African Parade*, Shumuyarira destined to become independent Zimbabwe first Minister of Information.

In 1960, a Law and Order (Maintenance) Act (LOMA) was passed. It allowed government to ban publications or other media for printing or otherwise communicating information likely to cause “fear, alarm or despondency” concerning the government of the country. Under LOMA, several local publications were permanently banned and journalists were arrested, detained or deported.

Government pressure on freedom of the press took a turn for the worse in December 1962 when the Rhodesian Front (RF) was elected to power. This government defended its severe control on the media by arguing it was necessary to maintain “*Western Christian civilization*” and defeat “*communist terrorism and white liberals*”.

In 1964, the RF used LOMA to ban *The African Daily News*. The excuse was that the paper had reported on political disturbances and police brutality in the townships of Harare, and had brought the government and the police into disrepute. In the succeeding years quite a few other nationalist newspapers.

After Ian Smith’s Rhodesia’s November 1965 unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) from Britain, a Emergency Powers (Censorship of Publications) Order was decreed, allowing government agents to read and approve copies of newspapers before publication.

By 1968, the UDI government was sufficiently confident of the loyalty of the RPP papers to lift formal state censorship. The only dissenting voice was that of *Moto*, the catholic supported newspaper. It regularly published reports and comments critical of the government and the escalating liberation war. After a series of warnings and temporary bannings, including the deportation of its editor, Fr Michael Traber, in 1970, *Moto* was permanently banned in November 1974.

As from 1976, foreign journalists were made to apply for residence and work permits to work in Rhodesia. This allowed for easy control and deportation of undesirable reporters.

After independence in 1980, the RPP chain was renamed Zimbabwe Newspapers Limited Ñ Zimpapers. However, in this new country ruled by African nationalists, the leading newspapers were still owned by a South African company, associated to the business community in the country of apartheid. Thanks to a six million US dollar grant from the government of Nigeria, Argus Company’s interests in Zimpapers were purchased and placed in the hands of the newly created Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust (MMT).

Created in 1981, the MMT was meant to be managed by a board of trustees who were the sole persons empowered to co-opt new members. This was supposed to protect the media from unwarranted governmental pressures. This highly commendable intention, however, would not take long to be defeated by political pressures.

In 1985, veteran nationalist Willie Musarurwa was dismissed as editor of *The Sunday Mail*, for his determination to report objectively on national issues.

In 1989, Geoffrey Nyarota, the then editor of *Bulawayo’s Chronicle*, was removed from his post on the order of the Minister of Information after breaking a car corruption scandal, later confirmed by a commission of inquiry.

Commenting on the “new media order” the Zimbabwean government wished to establish in 1980, Richard Saunders writes, in *Dancing out of tune*, that “it increasingly began to resemble the old one operating under colonialism”.

Today, Zimpapers still controls the two governmental dailies, *The Herald* and *Chronicle*, as well as the Sunday weekly *The Sunday Mail*.

Newspapers we reviewed

Pro-ZANU-PF papers

The Herald

Established in 1891, as *The Rhodesia Herald*, first publication of the land, at that time the colonial establishment’s newspaper.

The Herald is basically a 24-page broadsheet, the number pages susceptible to vary depending on volume of commercials. It is delivered, on Thursdays, with a business supplement whose pagination also varies depending on advertising. A leisure/culture supplement is produced on Saturdays. The paper carries 3 pages of foreign news, mainly regional, a solid classified section, and three pages of sports, foreign and local.

It is owned by Zimpapers, and edited by Pikirayi Deketeke

The Chronicle

Created in 1894, same format as *The Herald*.

Daily published from Bulawayo

Owned by Zimpapers, edited by Stephen Ndlovu.

The Sunday Mail

Created in 1935, same format as *The Herald*, the latter Sunday perpetuator, though the two papers have distinct editorial staffs.

Owned by Zimpapers, edited by William Chikoto

Pro-ZANU-PF with nuance

Zimbabwe Mirror

Tabloid format Weekly, published on Thursdays

Edited and published by Ibbo Mandaza

Executive Editor Wilson Johwa

Pro-MDC papers

The Daily News

Created in 1999

Tabloid format 40-page daily, published from Harare

Owned by Associate Newspapers of Zimbabwe (PVT) Ltd

Edited by Geoffrey Nyarota

The Financial Gazette

Created in 1969

Tabloid format pink paper Business weekly, published on Thursdays

Owned by Modus Publications, a group of local businessmen CEO : Elias Rusike.

Edited by Francis Mdlongwa

Zimbabwe Independent

Tabloid format Business Weekly published on Fridays

Owned by Independent Media Group

CEO : Trevor Ncube

Edited by Iden Wetherel

The Standard

Tabloid format Weekly published on Sundays

Owned by Independent Media Group
CEO : Trevor Ncube
Edited by Mark Chavunduka

Appendix D

Persons we met during our mission in Zimbabwe

Lawrence CHIBWE, Legal practitioner

Sarah CHIUMBU, Director Media Institute of Southern Africa

Pikirayi DEKETEKE, Editor-in-Chief, *The Herald*

Shari EPPER, Amani Trust

Kumbirai HODZI, vice-Chairman Transparency International

Tawara HONDORA, Chairperson Lawyers for Human Rights

Father Nigel JOHNSON SJ, coordinator Bulawayo Dialogue and promoter of the Radio Dialogue FM Project

Mavis MOYO, first African Zimbabwean broadcast journalist

Andrew MOYSE, Coordinator Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe

Bishop Pius NCUBE, Bulawayo Archbishop

Trevor NCUBE, CEO Independent Media Group

Geoffrey NYAROTA, Editor-in-Chief, *The Daily News*

Pr Hassu PATEL, Zimbabwe Mass Media Trustee

Elias RUSIKE, CEO Modus Publications