

# The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum

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Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum  
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## **STATEMENT BY THE ZIMBABWE HUMAN RIGHTS NGO FORUM ON THE BANNING OF THE DAILY NEWS**

The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum joins its peers in Civil Society in condemning, unreservedly, the banning of the Daily News following a Supreme Court ruling on 11 September 2003 that the paper was operating illegally and in defiance of the draconian Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA).

This diabolical piece of legislation was clearly promulgated to constrain freedom of expression, a right protected, if only on paper, under Section 20 of the Constitution.

The Daily News had declined to register with the Media and Information Commission alleging that the legislation, under which this requirement existed, was in itself unconstitutional. The Supreme Court ruled otherwise.

The Daily News is the only independent daily newspaper in the country and as such has provided differing viewpoints from these of state- owned newspapers. In perceived reprisal, it has been subjected to three bombings, none of which has been resolved, arrests of editors and staff and destruction of newspapers by ruling party militias, none of whom were arrested.

Despite lip service being given to the possible repeal of this draconian and repressive press law by the President himself to the Commonwealth Troika, it remains in place in defiance of domestic and international law and continues to contribute to the undemocratic environment in Zimbabwe.