

Organised Resistance Zimbabwe

Tolerance ° Freedom ° Diversity

Email: organisedresistance@hotmail.com

**Please take a moment to read this critique of the ICC's
Zimbabwe Report of IDI Safety and Security delegation during
November/December 2002**



'Our quarrel is not with the people of Zimbabwe. Indeed, the European Union today committed itself to assisting ordinary Zimbabweans through the country's mounting food crisis. Our quarrel is with the regime that is responsible for Zimbabwe's man-made disaster. The nature of the regime is clear for all to see. At the weekend, the Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Abedinico Ncube made clear that people would not receive food aid if they supported the Opposition. ***It is essential that the Zimbabwe regime understands that the world will not ignore its callous behaviour.***'

Jack Straw, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

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January 2003

Dear Sir/Madam,

An outright condemnation of the ICC's Report of IDI Safety and Security in Zimbabwe

Organised Resistance takes this valued opportunity to present to you a rebuttal of many of the claims that the ICC Delegation made in their vague, inaccurate and self-serving report on the safety and security situation in Zimbabwe.

Aware of your heavy schedule we have listed key issues as raised in the ICC Report and have refuted them based on independent and accurate information.

Organised Resistance is outraged that a professional body such as the ICC has seen fit to publish and promote a report that clearly treats the volatile situation in Zimbabwe with little respect.

We appreciate you taking the time to read this critique of the ICC Report and remind you that agreeing to allow Zimbabwe to host any World Cup Cricket matches will serve to legitimise one of the most brutal dictatorships in the world.

We would like to emphasise that the reason why we ask your cricket team not to come to Zimbabwe is based predominantly on the hostile and precarious situation in Zimbabwe which places international cricket players, officials and Zimbabwean spectators at risk

It's not a game anymore.

Organised Resistance
Harare
Zimbabwe

1. ICC Itinerary in Zimbabwe

The ICC Delegation spent two and a half days in Zimbabwe in their attempt to ascertain the safety and security situation in a country that has been rocked by massive political violence and social unrest for the last three years.

On the first day the ICC set aside only one hour for a meeting with representatives of Mugabe's formal militia, the Police, Army and Air Force

On the second day the ICC Delegation flew to Bulawayo. They spent just one hour meeting with representatives of the Zimbabwe Republic Police force and one hour with the Executive Mayor.

On their third and final day the ICC Delegation spent their time in a number of one hour meetings with representatives of the relevant High Commissions of countries due to play cricket in Zimbabwe. One of these meetings, with the Namibian High Commission, was in fact cancelled. They spent just one hour in a security briefing with the Zimbabwe World Cup Security Directorate, Mr Paul Friendship.

Quote

The Delegation was able to obtain a clear picture of the safety and security environment within Zimbabwe through its discussions with a broad cross section of Government, security and diplomatic contacts.

ICC Report

Reviewing their itinerary, it is disingenuous to suggest that a "broad cross section" of organisations were consulted. Indeed, by selectively meeting with only those people who have a direct and immediate interest in the World Cup taking place in Zimbabwe, the ICC Delegation displayed a gross lack of respect for the safety of cricket players and spectators.

Conclusion

It is patently clear that a two and a half day visit to a volatile country wherein three hours are dedicated to security discussions, and where the ICC has made no attempt to meet with any independent civil society organisations working in violence and victim rehabilitation, is woefully inadequate. It speaks to the fact that the ICC Delegation were in no way committed to securing a true reflection of the security situation in Zimbabwe.

Organised Resistance believes that the ICC Delegation are putting the safety of not only the cricket players, but also cricket spectators at risk by using such an expedient and unprofessional approach in ascertaining the risks involved in staging World Cup Cricket matches in Zimbabwe.

Specific Points

- No inspections of any medical facilities were made. Currently Zimbabwe is experiencing a critical shortage of basic drugs. Nurses and doctors strike regularly.
- No independent human rights organisations were consulted.
- Can the ICC Delegation explain why the Executive Mayor of Harare was not consulted? It is well known that the Executive Mayor is an MDC supporter and therefore highly likely to offer an alternative view of the security situation in Zimbabwe.

2. Internal Safety Environment

a) The ICC Delegation met with representatives of various High Commissions including the British and Australian High Commissions. In the ICC Report, they emphasise the fact that these Diplomatic Missions felt that it was safe to travel to Zimbabwe with "caution". Both the British and Australian Government web sites clearly express an alternative view. We quote for your interest information being offered by the British and Australian governments to tourists intending on visiting Zimbabwe:

Australian

Australians should avoid large gatherings or public demonstrations, especially in Harare, regional cities and towns. They should maintain a high level of personal security awareness and keep themselves informed of developments that might affect their safety.

Official Australian Government web site

British

British nationals travelling to Zimbabwe are advised to keep a low profile, maintain a high level of vigilance, avoid situations where there might be tension and stay in touch with world events. Demonstrations and public events should be avoided. There continues to be considerable political tension in both urban and rural areas of Zimbabwe, which has led to incidents of political violence, which have resulted in serious injury and deaths. Visitors should also be aware that an open hand is the political symbol of one of the main political parties and a friendly wave may therefore be misinterpreted as a provocative gesture. Similarly the carrying of the main independent newspapers (Daily News, the Financial Gazette, the Independent and the Standard) in rural areas and even in some urban areas can provoke a hostile reaction from Zanu (PF) supporters.

Official British Government web site

Whilst the official web site of the **United States of America** offers the following advice:

U.S. citizens residing in or travelling to Zimbabwe should be aware of continuing conditions in the country that could affect their safety. These conditions include the outbreak of sporadic demonstrations driven by deteriorating economic conditions. Demonstrations occur in both urban and rural areas. Clashes between police and demonstrators have sometimes resulted in injuries to demonstrators as well as to innocent bystanders. Political activity in the country can also result in serious violence, and U.S. citizens are urged to avoid political rallies and exercise caution prior to and during elections.

b) Once more the ICC Report inaccurately describes the situation in Zimbabwe when it states quite clearly that no foreign tourist or individual has been killed or harmed in Zimbabwe. The report includes the naïve wording "for political motives". The situation in Zimbabwe is politically charged. Nationals from countries like Britain and England are at particular risk because of the complete breakdown in diplomacy between Zimbabwe and these two countries in particular. Indeed the British web site specifically states:

The leaders of the ruling party regularly single out Britain for fierce criticism, alleging British interference in Zimbabwe's internal affairs. British travellers should therefore be aware that they may be exposed to particular risk and should avoid being drawn into political discussions.

To clearly repudiate the ICC Delegations claims of the safety of foreign nationals in Zimbabwe, we ask you to review the following:

As recently as November 2002 (whilst Pakistan was touring Zimbabwe) Richard Gilman an American citizen was shot and killed at a police roadblock.

http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm_708109.html?menu=

A British UN official was subjected to a terrifying ordeal of violence and robbery while carrying out a food survey in Zimbabwe. http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm_712639.html?menu=

The Presidential Guards patrolling the public streets outside Mugabe's residence have killed at least three, unarmed, innocent people who had inadvertently used these roads during the night curfew. One person was a British tourist, the son of Mr. Rupert Pennant-Rea who headed the Bank of England at the time. These heavily armed guards operate within 200 meters of where the wickets will stand during the Harare-based World Cup Game.

c) Diplomatic Missions are continually quoted in the ICC report as advising their nationals in official travel warnings to avoid large crowds. This is precisely what the World Cup cricket matches will be.

Additionally, it must be noted that Zimbabwean activists seldom have opportunities to exploit world media attention. It is therefore highly likely that political pressure groups will take full advantage of the perceived protection of the press during the World Cup and use this event to highlight the human rights abuses in Zimbabwe.

d) The ICC Report states that the opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) controls both major cities, Harare and Bulawayo and that the deputy Mayor and Town Clerk of Harare supported the hosting of the World Cup Matches in Zimbabwe.

Again the ICC Report is wholly inaccurate. The Movement for Democratic Change has issued a Press Statement criticising the ICC's decision to continue with Zimbabwe as a venue. Indeed, both the President of the MDC, Morgan Tsvangirai has publicly denounced the ICC's decision whilst Paul Themba Nyathi, MDC's Spokesman has also been highly critical.

MDC wants a boycott of the World Cup in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's main opposition party said on Monday that the England cricket team should pull out of a World Cup game in the southern African country to avoid endorsing President Robert Mugabe's regime. "If the English captain is aware of the situation in Zimbabwe, I don't think he would find it appropriate to come to this country in a situation in which everything is collapsing," said Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the Movement for Democratic Change.

http://www.news24.com/News24/Sport/Cricket/0,1231,2-9-839_1302518,00.html

e) It is naïve and dangerously expedient to rely on information from diplomatic sources regarding the intentions of political parties, or political pressure groups operating within Zimbabwe. For the ICC Delegation to use innuendo as substantive evidence that Zimbabwe is a safe place to play cricket is alarming.

The ICC Delegation uses a number of quotations in its report. These quotations are attributed vaguely to "senior city officials" or "consular officials". These so-called officials were consulted by (presumably) a respected and reputable organisation being the ICC. And indeed, the officials were being asked their advice on the situation in Zimbabwe in their official capacity. It is extremely disturbing that none of these quotations which the ICC have craftily used to lend credibility to their report, are named. This anonymity is an indictment of the ICC Report and an indication of the fear that has permeated every corner of Zimbabwe making silence one's best defence.

f) One of the unattributed quotations that the ICC Delegation uses in their report speaks of the Police and Military in Zimbabwe being able to "contain" any disturbances should they arise.

The incompetence of the Zimbabwe Republic Police and the Zimbabwe National Army is well known. Their ability to professionally handle mass demonstrations in a manner where civilians are "contained" through the use of extreme force is legendary. The ZRP and the ZNA rely on tear gas, sjamboks (leather whips), dogs and batons to control crowds.

Please review the following incident which left Zimbabweans hurt or killed under similar circumstances to the forthcoming World Cup Cricket and which flies in the face in the following unattributed quotation in the ICC Report:

"Zimbabwe has the expertise, infrastructure and capability to deliver a safe and secure event."

**Senior Consular Official
ICC Report**

Example

30/01/01 Football Violence

Just a few months ago, more than a dozen people were killed during violence at a football game between Zimbabwe and South Africa in Harare.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/fasttrack/>

3. External Safety Environment

The ICC Report states that a terrorist attack from outside of Zimbabwe, rather than from internal elements is the more likely destabilising scenario in holding the World Cup in Zimbabwe and that Zimbabwe does not pose any greater risk than other countries.

Organised Resistance is not in a position, and would not be as presumptuous as the ICC in determining the likelihood of this. What we can discuss is the fact that Zimbabweans are more angry, and hungry than they have ever been.

We reiterate that the ICC Delegation's inadequate fact finding mission to Zimbabwe makes their report almost defamatory, lacking in credibility and that it should be dismissed as self-serving at best, and dangerous at worst.

Security and safety in Zimbabwe is precarious. People are starving. People get beaten and harassed by the very organisations (Zimbabwe Republic Police and the Zimbabwe National Army) that the ICC chose to meet with and accept assurances from.

Whilst there haven't been any recent external terrorist attacks in Zimbabwe - the ICC Report again fails to recount terrorist attacks in Zimbabwe emanating from South Africa just after Independence - there have been a series of internal acts of terrorism.

The total destruction, by use of anti-tank mines and other explosives, of the printing presses and printing house of the Daily News, an independent newspaper.

16th February 2001

<http://www.ifex.org/alerts/view.html?id=8218>

The bombing of the Daily News offices in Bulawayo city centre.

10th February 2002

http://www.rsf.fr/article.php3?id_article=129

The bombing of the offices of the Movement of Democratic Change in Bulawayo city centre.

September 2000

www.mdczimbabwe.com

The bombing of the offices of the Voice of the People (VOP) less than 3 kms from the world cup cricket venue in Harare.

29th August 2002

<http://www.theindependent.co.zw/news/2002/August/Friday30/508.html>

To the best of our knowledge no arrests have been made and as a consequence these terrorists continue to roam the streets and no doubt, the hotels of Zimbabwe. Yet the ICC Report states:

" the security forces themselves believed that they were entirely capable of dealing with this issue".

Further the report makes no mention of the persistent "hate speeches" made by Mugabe and Jonathan Moyo, Zanu PF Minister for Information against the British and Australian governments.

Zimbabwe has banned Tony Blair and many UK ministers from entering the country, and imposed visa requirements on British tourists. The list includes Mr Blair, about 90 government ministers and officials, some members of the European Parliament and leaders of external pro-democracy pressure groups.

Recently, in December 2002 the head of the Commonwealth, Rob McKinnon, was banned by the Mugabe regime from entering Zimbabwe. He intended to visit Zimbabwe on a humanitarian fact finding mission.

Yet England, Australia and other countries are prepared to send their cricket teams to Zimbabwe.

The ICC report goes on to discuss the danger of civil uprising and dismisses the threat to safety based on the fact that such action would be remote and dealt with by security forces.

"Equally, it is likely that any violence, should it occur, would be well away from the players and officials. This type of outbreak is likely to occur in the suburbs of Harare and Bulawayo while the teams and officials will be located in the centre of the city.

It was also highlighted to the Delegation that in the event of any violence of this type, the internal security forces were very well equipped to quickly isolate, contain and address the problem."

ICC Report

The ICC Report fails to mention the NCA march for peace in April 2001, which took place in the centre of Harare, within a "stones throw" of the Meikles Hotel. The security forces being the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) stood by while a large group of thugs, organised by the Mugabe regime, clubbed and beat peaceful marchers of all ages and sexes with iron bars, wooden sticks, barbed wire flails and bricks. Once these thugs had dispersed most of the crowd the security forces moved in and arrested the few protestors who had withstood the assault. To this day none of the perpetrators of this violence have been brought before the courts.

4. Zimbabwe - Player and Officials Security

a) The ICC Report uses the Pakistan ODI as an example of how safe and secure players and spectators are at cricket matches in Zimbabwe.

Activists in Zimbabwe, many from Organised Resistance's ranks, managed to achieve material breaches of the security arrangements during this particular game. These breaches were achieved in spite of the full strength of security (commercial & plain clothed) and substantial police presence during the ICC's one day "model security" arrangement in preparation for the World Cup. We will not divulge the full nature of these breaches at this stage as this would compromise our initiatives should the games not be moved from Zimbabwe. We must stress that our initiatives would take the form of non-violent civil disobedience within the ambit of the country's constitution.

However we cannot speak on behalf of the more radical groups in Zimbabwe particularly those heading the present campaign being perpetrated by the State and its more militant instruments under the slogan – Chave Chimurenga – ***(It is now war)***.

Organised Resistance would like to share with you the treatment meted out on demonstrators arrested at the Pakistan ODI by the Zimbabwe Republic Police Force.

These activists were involved in non-violent activity being the raising of banners and the blowing of whistles.

Whilst it might be understandable for activists to be ejected from the venue, it is both abhorrent and deplorable that they are then tortured. The ICC must, we believe, take full responsibility for the human rights abuses that will go hand in hand with staging the World Cup in Zimbabwe.

Tortured because of the Pakistan ODI

EDDISON Mukwasi, the MDC youth chairman for Harare province, was on Saturday arrested by the police together with five other people while watching a cricket match on allegations of distributing offensive material to incite violence. Mukwasi said after they were arrested they were taken to the police station where they were tortured and interrogated. He said they were brutally assaulted by officers named only as Jena and Sergeant Chikande.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200212030227.html>

b) Organised Resistance is appalled at the faith that the ICC Delegation has put in the medical facilities in Zimbabwe should trouble break out during the World Cup in Zimbabwe.

It is well known that Zimbabwe is experiencing an unprecedented exodus of medical staff, that hospitals and trauma centres are understaffed and that drugs and medication are often inaccessible.

Of course, we are aware that the ICC has the ability to evacuate players and their families from Zimbabwe for medical treatment should this be required. However, the average Zimbabwean caught up in the anticipated violence surrounding the World Cup, will have very little access to adequate medical assistance and facilities.

Harare, Zimbabwe's capital city is currently serviced by a small fleet of ambulances which are constantly on call. Organised Resistance notes that the ICC intends to have 2 ambulances on permanent stand-by for the World Cup.

We hope, with respect to ordinary Zimbabweans, that the ICC will import these vehicles rather than overburden an already pressurised medical rescue system.

5. Insurance

In the section on Insurance in the ICC report, concern and forewarning is only directed at players, players families and visiting spectators.

It is clear that the ICC Delegation engaged in scant research regarding the situation for Zimbabweans and Zimbabwean businesses likely to be affected by violence associated with the World Cup. The fallout and the damage to both person and property in Zimbabwe particularly through spontaneous riots has become so ubiquitous that Zimbabwean insurance companies do not offer cover to their clients for damage of a "political nature".

There is mounting local and international consensus regarding the fact that internal rioting will take place during the World Cup. In this event it is highly likely that cars, buildings and people will be adversely affected or injured.

Zimbabweans will not be compensated by insurance companies.

6. The ICC Conclusions as stated in their report

- The ICC Delegation state that they met with "a sufficient number of people in a diversity of positions in Zimbabwe" to determine the state of safety and security in Zimbabwe.

This assertion has been roundly refuted.

- That the ICC Delegation is satisfied that there is widespread support within Zimbabwe for the World Cup to take place.

This assertion flies in the face of the massive support for the call to boycott the Pakistan matches by local pressure groups in preparation for a World Cup boycott. Never before has attendance been so low at an international cricket event.

In addition, please read these latest poll reports on whether the World Cup should proceed in Zimbabwe:

From ZWNEWS, 2 January Cricket poll result

On 31 December, we asked readers to have their say on the planned World Cup Cricket matches in Zimbabwe. We asked: Do you think World Cup Cricket matches should be played in Zimbabwe? YES or NO. The voting has been brisk. The NO vote was 94.8%. The YES vote was 4.4%. 0.8% were undecided. A total of 4687 votes were cast. Voters were restricted to a single vote per email address. The ZWNEWS poll result is in line with other recent polls on the same subject. On 19 December, Channel 4 News, a UK TV News programme, asked their viewers: Do you believe England should send cricketers to Zimbabwe? Of a total of 7128 votes cast, 93% voted that the England team should stay away. A recent online poll by mweb.co.za, a South African internet service provider, asked: Do you agree with the International Cricket Council's decision to stage six of the World Cup matches in Zimbabwe? Of 2989 votes cast, 9.6% agreed with the ICC's decision. 18.6% disagreed, on the grounds that the safety of players and spectators could not be guaranteed, while 71.8% said that sporting sanctions should be imposed on Zimbabwe, regardless of the safety of players and spectators. An ongoing online poll by the UK Guardian newspaper asks: Should England's cricket team boycott their upcoming World Cup fixtures in Zimbabwe? Of 1370 votes currently cast, 87% said Yes.

- That, in its flying visit the ICC Delegation identified that many more groups than not would benefit from Zimbabwe hosting the World Cup.

Organised Resistance would like to point out that the only beneficiaries will be:

- a) The ICC
- b) Robert Mugabe's illegitimate Government
- c) The Zimbabwe Cricket Union
- d) A handful of associated businesses

The most deserving group, namely young potential cricketers are unlikely to benefit from this event because of persistent political violence, intimidation of school teachers, poverty and hunger.

Outside of the Cricket Academy and a handful of private and prestigious urban government schools the desperate atmosphere is hardly conducive to learning, let alone playing cricket.

Several schools in the rural areas have been closed as they have been targeted by the Mugabe regime as being staffed by opposition supporters.

Quote:

The period under study saw the reported closure of 30 schools throughout the country. Most of the reported closures were due to teachers fleeing violence perpetrated against them and their subsequent refusal to go back until their safety was guaranteed. Apart from school closures, teachers were also chased away from their places of employment by either "war veterans" or Zanu

PF supporters. The perpetrators would either go to the school where the individual taught and then physically remove them from their places of employment, or just order the transfer of teachers that they suspected to be MDC supporters. Teachers were also threatened with either job loss or personal injury if it was established that they supported MDC.

Source: Zimbabwe Human Rights Forum www.hrforumzim.com

In schools that are still open, teachers have been fired for being non-sympathetic to the regime. As we write this letter these vacant teaching positions are being filled by the youth militia wing of the ruling party. The vast majority of children will spend any spare time they have being subjected to indoctrination and undergoing propaganda lessons at the total expense of sport, including cricket.

Following a national food shortage, which has now reached famine proportions, many communities are being denied food aid by the government as part of a thinly disguised program of genocide through starvation. These practices have been well documented by local and international food aid organisations operating in Zimbabwe.

Quote:

A report by the Danish Human Rights Group - Physicians for Human Rights/ Denmark (entitled **Voting ZANU PF For Food: Rural District and Insiza Elections**) based on extensive interviews in Zimbabwe over the last three months, alleges that President Robert Mugabe has cut off food supplies to opponents who have challenged the power of his ruling party. It is the group's opinion that "if it is not possible to increase non-partisan food supplies into the country, starvation and eventually death, will occur along party political lines in Zimbabwe."

Source: Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum www.hrforumzim.com

Our children are suffering terribly in all parts of the country. The fact that journalists who attend the World Cup games in Zimbabwe have been told that they cannot move outside the cities is a *powerful indicator of things sinister*.

Quote:

We would be better off with only six million people, with our own people who support the liberation struggle. We don't want all these extra people."

- **Didymus Mutasa, ZANU (PF)** Organising Secretary, August 2002, on the plight of starving Zimbabweans who don't support the ruling party

It is estimated that up to 6 million people will face serious food deprivation, if not starvation, this year. This equates to over 4 million children who will soon be too hungry to lift a bat or bowl a ball should it be their desire. It is pertinent to note that the food problems of Zimbabwe lie squarely at the feet of Mugabe following a bloody and chaotic land grab.

In summary the future for children of Zimbabwe under the current fascist regime is bleak and our prediction is that Zimbabwe will, within the next decade, fall out of the test playing cricket arena unless we can encourage an adherence to the rule of law, respect for human rights and democratic change in Zimbabwe.

Conclusion

It is Organised Resistance's belief that it will not be safe, or secure for players, officials, their families or spectators should the World Cup take place in Zimbabwe.

The spiralling economy and its associated humanitarian disasters, namely starvation, unemployment, violence and desperation will have worsened considerably by February.

We advise with respect, and with the safety and security of Zimbabweans foremost in our concerns, that the World Cup matches be rescheduled with immediate effect.

Organised Resistance

Harare, Zimbabwe, January 3rd 2003