

Viva el General: Political Saviours or Liberal Democracy Undertakers?

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Abstract: *This paper interrogates whether Zimbabwe under the “2nd Republic,” has shaken off the ZANU-PF authoritarian tendencies by becoming more democratic. The paper employs the concept of the law of continued repression. The researcher employed the desktop research, using data gathered from journal articles, the internet, documentaries, and e-books. The research method is suitable for this paper because it allows the gathering of information and insights by examining and synthesizing gathered data. In this paper I argue that democracy remains a pipedream, the coup was in fact a means to an end. It provided the platform for continued primitive accumulation and self-enrichment that had started during Mugabe’s reign. The ‘2nd Republic’ has become an architect of a poor governance and macroeconomic environment which is precipitating a cycle of repression, poor economic performance, incipient instability and corruption evidenced by the Gold Mafia documentary by Aljazeera that unearthed deep rooted gold smuggling. The 2002 ‘Zvinvashe doctrine’ that culminated in the November 2017 coup “triggered a self-perpetuating process that is resistant to change.” The import of the ‘Zvinvashe doctrine’ is that choices or decisions that were made in support of the so called ‘3rd Chimurenga’ (war for economic emancipation), that begun in 2000 embedded in land restitution, set Zimbabwe on a political developmental trajectory that explains the degree of militarization, politicization and authoritarianism that has become a permanent phenomenon in Zimbabwean politics. The ZANU-PF political elites including the president are more interested in not disturbing the mechanics of primitive accumulation by ‘ZANUISTS’ (the security sector leadership, ZANU-PF patrons and their clients) explaining why they have pursued zero-sum politics after the 2023 election. A majority of the Zimbabwean citizenry blame retired General Chiwenga, the chief coup plotter who they had hailed in 2017 for the current state of political and economic affairs Zimbabweans are experiencing. The 2nd Republic under the stewardship of Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, Constantino Chiwenga, Kembo Mohadi and the junta are far from being vehicles of democratic consolidation but are democracy undertakers.*

Key words: Democracy, Authoritarianism, ZANU-PF, Zimbabwe, 2nd Republic, Coup, Democracy undertaker, Political saviours.

1. Introduction

Political intolerance, political violence and government-engineered economic deterioration are a cancer that continues to ravage the Zimbabwean eco-political social fabric and landscape since the late 1990s. This has in-turn robbed Zimbabweans of the much-needed peace that builds an environment conducive for sustainable development and good livelihoods. Most Zimbabwean citizens are now hopeless and mired in poverty to an extent never imagined by nationalist leaders, the ordinary masses and the guerrilla combatants who fought against the Ian Smith regime. In 1980 when the country became independent there was a lot of optimism that Zimbabwe was going to continue a solid developmental path since the country had a significantly viable economy. It is therefore not surprising that given an economy firmly fixed on a sound agriculture and mineral base; the country was indeed a “jewel of Africa.” Julius Nyerere, the then Tanzanian President warned Prime Minister Robert Mugabe not to follow the trajectory of other African presidents who ran down their countries due in the main to bad political and economic governance, “you have inherited a jewel, keep it like that,” Nyerere had cautioned and advised (Mahuku, 2017). Whilst most of the white settler population was pessimistic about Mugabe’s ascendance to be the Prime Minister; the majority of blacks remained optimistic. In a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) News-night clip, Blacks interviewed intimated that Mugabe was going to provide blacks with adequate food, houses, farms, and mines among other things. Others looked forward to better jobs, equal pay, a free and peaceful country and an end to racial

discrimination. One of the interviewees when asked what she thought if Mugabe would fail to fulfil her wishes retorted, “I don’t expect it and I don’t think so, I don’t want to think about it.” This in other words meant that if the Zimbabwean masses and guerrilla expectations were not fulfilled this was tantamount to betrayal. Many held the view that their expectations would be fulfilled, such optimism continued into the early 1990s and citizens thought that Zimbabwe was gliding towards democratisation despite the Gukurahundi dissident disturbances that had resulted in the death of about 20 000 civilians in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands province (CCJP Report, 1997). Fast-forward to 2024, most Zimbabweans are poverty ridden, morale is at its lowest and when those who are in the late fifties and above talk of the ‘good old times,’ they are inadvertently referring to ‘Smithian days’ when Ian Smith was the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe.

From 2000 through to 2023; Zimbabwe’s slide to authoritarianism has continued unabated culminating in the coup that removed the late Zimbabwean strongman President Robert Mugabe from power in November 2017 and the manipulated and shameful ‘ZANU-PF victory in the 2023 harmonised election. The August 2023 elections have been condemned by Observer Missions like the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) and others. Heretofore Emmerson Mnangagwa’s military assisted rise to be president, most Zimbabweans welcomed the ‘so-called’ “coup-not-coup,” that was a coup. Many hoped that Mnangagwa would right all

the wrongs that had been done by Robert Mugabe by being inclusive in government, stabilising the economy, being accountable, fighting corruption and opening the democratic space. Arguably such optimism has been nothing but an illusion. Questions arise whether Zimbabweans were not too quick in embracing and welcoming outright military intrusion in politics? Another important question is that; having dislodged Mugabe and the so-called criminals surrounding him from power; did the coup usher in a democratic era in Zimbabwe as anticipated by citizens and has democracy taken root in Zimbabwe? In this paper I argue that democracy remains a pipedream, the coup was in fact a means to an end. It provided the platform for continued primitive accumulation and self enrichment that had started during Mugabe's reign. It is in this context that the 'ruling' ZANU-PF politicians, a few well connected supporters of the party and the military elites have become political hand-in-glove to maintain the state machinery that enables them to accumulate and safeguard their ill-gotten wealth and therefore continue to impede the democratisation process that citizens had hoped was going to be promoted by the 'Second Republic.'

2. Theoretical Framework

In this paper I employ the concept of the law of continued repression. According to this concept, just like in the Marxist class system, a group or class that views itself as privileged is bound to exploit the source of the privileges it enjoys. It explains social relations under capitalism. It is therefore not surprising that all that motivate that group of people is the instinctive desire to safeguard their source of wealth accumulation. They guard their positions jealously and they protect their class because they feel that by doing so, they guarantee their continued benefits and survival. The group will do anything in its power to protect its privileged position and group identity. According to the law of continued repression, privileges are addictive explaining why they will be viewed as a right by those in the group even though such privileges are enjoyed at the detriment of those being exploited (Ali, 2018). Paradoxically, to continue to uphold such privileges is the same as seeking to continue to suppress and repress others. According to Davenport (2005, 122) state repression are "actions taken by authorities against individuals and/or groups within their territorial jurisdiction that either restrict behaviour and/or beliefs of citizens through the imposition of negative sanctions (e.g., applying curfews, conducting mass arrests, and banning political organisations) or that physical damage or eliminate citizens through the violation of personal integrity (e.g., using torture, disappearances) etc. The law of continued repression shapes and governs ZANU-PF, its patrons and clients *modus operandi*. This study is qualitative.

2.1 Zimbabwe's evolution to authoritarianism

Zimbabwe's unwarranted descent into authoritarianism started in the late 1980s. Zimbabwe's commitment to democracy was tested twice, scenarios all in which it failed. The first was Zimbabwe's fake commitment to multipartyism. Robert Mugabe was an avowed advocate of a one-party system. Notably, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) was 'violently stampeded' out of political relevance after the 1985 elections. Joshua Nkomo was

'forced' to merge with the Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) in 1987 when he signed the unity pact between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU. While some accused Nkomo of selling-out by politically hopping into bed with his erstwhile political rivals, some hailed this as a display of visionary leadership as the accord stopped further bloodshed in Midlands and Matabeleland provinces. However, ZANU-PF's intolerance of any opposition to its rule was also evident in how it treated Edgar Tekere and his Zimbabwe Unity Movement Party (ZUM), Margaret Dongo and her Zimbabwe Union for Democrats Party (ZUD), the former leader of ZANU, Ndabaningi Sithole who was now leader of ZANU-Ndonga; the Forum Party (FP) led by Enoch Dumbutshena and after 2000 the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) led by Morgan Tsvangirai and now Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) that was led by Nelson Chamisa. It cannot be disputed that ZANU-PF has always been bent on maintaining a one-party rule and is always prepared to unleash violence on all who want to impede this.

The other important scenario was the government and party approach to corruption that manifested as the Willogate political scandal of 1988-89. Robert Mugabe the ZANU-PF leader and government and some of his political party stalwarts showed that they tolerated corruption, unbeknown to them that it was going to be a cancer that would ravage the Zimbabwean social, political and economic fabric. The ZANU-PF leadership adopted a 'see no evil, hear no evil and say no evil approach.' Geoffrey Nyarota and Davison Maruziva, journalists who unearthed and publicised the Willogate scandal were astutely stampeded out of their posts through an 'elimination-by-promotion strategy.' Callistus Ndlovu, Dzingai Mtumbuka, Maurice Nyagumbo, Enos Nkala and Fredrick Shava were some of the ministers implicated in the scandals. They bought cars at Willowvale assembly plant and sold them at very huge profits. When University of Zimbabwe students demonstrated, they were tear gassed by riot police. The maverick politician Edgar Tekere verbalised his displeasure and told all and sundry that "democracy in Zimbabwe was in the intensive care unit," (Banana 1989). Zimbabwe as a country never became the same again. When the government embraced the International Monetary Fund and World Bank (IMF/WB) economic stabilising programme: the economic, social and political situation continued to worsen, and when workers demonstrated the government responded with a heavy hand. Democracy was being throttled.

2.2 Zimbabwe's evolution to authoritarianism

In this section I give an overview of how the party-state became authoritarian. Arguably ZANU-PF authoritarianism reared its head shortly after independence. Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's reconciliation rhetoric and call for unity was counterfeit, evident in how he dealt with perceived enemies to his hold on power. ZANU-PF politicians' one-party system conviction was aimed at obliterating Joshua Nkomo, his ZAPU party and ZIPRA forces; some who had been integrated into the Zimbabwean National Army (ZNA) but were slowly being elbowed out through intimidation, victimisation and career blockage. In fact, ZANU-PF senior politicians like Enos Nkala, Edgar Tekere, Morris Nyagumbo and even Prime Minister Robert Mugabe openly provoked

Joshua Nkomo and his supporters, (Kriger, 2005). They realised that if not politically and financially incapacitated ZAPU would remain a 'political thorn in the flesh of ZANU-PF, explaining the state's forceful seizure of ZAPU farms and properties. Meredith (2005) contends that when the ZANU-PF party-state unleashed the North Korean trained battalion on dissidents and ZAPU supporters, it became apparent that post colonial politics in Zimbabwe was all about ZANU-PF gaining total control and not the growth and promotion of democracy. Intentionally or unintentionally the ZANU-PF led government had stalemated democracy as politics just like the war for independence had been undemocratic and militarised.

2.3 Zimbabwean securocrats and political neutrality

On one hand the opposition party, the Citizens' Coalition for Change (CCC) and some civil society organisations like Human Rights Watch, Zimbabwe Peace Project and others posit that democracy in Zimbabwe has been under serious attack and Zimbabwe has been submerged in authoritarianism. On the other hand, the ZANU-PF party and government maintains that it is a democracy despite its use of the security sector, the riot police, and occasionally the military to thwart demonstrations. The party-state has also (in)-directly mobilised and influenced the ZANU-PF party rank and file to harass opposition supporters especially during elections and they have systematically done this since 1980. This explains why the military-democracy nexus in Zimbabwe has continued to be an area of much heated debate not only amongst political analysts and scholars but also civil society organisations. It is generally agreed that military involvement in politics can either lead to democracy or can thwart democracy (Huntington 1968; Finer 1988; Hutchful 1986). This reminds us to be very cautious when analysing civil-military relations (CMR) and growth of democracy in any given state and at any time.

It is a fact that the soldiers are political animals and if they wield too much power, it also means that it will be much easier for them to control the state and directly or indirectly coerce the ruling politicians to pander to their wishes as was the case with the 'Zvinavashe Doctrine.' In 2002 in the company of other securocrats; General Vitalis Zvinavashe issued a televised statement in which he stated that:

We the JOC (joint operation command) wish to make it very clear to all Zimbabwean citizens that... the highest office in the land is a straight jacket whose occupant is expected to observe the objectives of the liberation struggle. We will therefore not accept, let alone salute anyone with a different agenda that threatens the very existence of our sovereignty (Mahuku, 2017).

The military elites' refusal to let Mugabe concede defeat to Morgan Tsvangirai in 2008 and the coup that happened in 2017, all show that the military in Zimbabwe are a tin-pot army. Maringira and Masiya (2017), noted that the military elites in Zimbabwe support the ZANU-PF civilian radical elites in defying political change. It is therefore not surprising that before his retirement and reassignment to being the Zimbabwean Ambassador to Tanzania, Lieutenant General Anselem Sanyatwe did not tolerate any opposition to the ZANU-PF party-state. In 2015, he openly stated that the

military was going to be used to deal with any opposition to ZANU-PF rule and this included the Zimbabwe People First party founded by former vice president Joice Mujuru. To him the military elites are the king makers, apparent in his remarks that "professionalism is over...the animal called ZANU-PF shall rule (until donkeys have horns) forever and that is the reason I am saying forward with ZANU-PF, forward with President Robert Mugabe! Down with Joice Mujuru, (Maringira and Masiya, 2017)." The security sector: the central intelligence organisation (CIO), the police and occasionally the army and war veterans have always used force to support ZANU-PF political hegemony. Sanyatwe was at it again in 2018, he was the commander of the infamous military force that killed six civilians and injured others in the post 2018 election demonstration. After the August 2023 harmonised election Lieutenant General Sanyatwe was brought back from Tanzania and appointed the new ZNA commander. The military involvement in ZANU-PF party and country politics goes against the notion of military professionalism as espoused by Samuel P. Huntington and other scholars. Hutchful and Bathily (1998) contend that the military remain at the core of ever changing "political landscape and to current issues of democratisation in Africa." However, the military elites in Zimbabwe are not apolitical and support the status quo being a willing partner in ZANU-PF party-state power consolidation as they have become an instrument to lethally repress the Zimbabwean citizens.

Vigor (1966) correctly observed that "political power, properly so called, is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing others." It cannot be disputed that the ZANU-PF party and military has become an albatross in Zimbabwe's body politic. When the Zimbabwe military elite led by the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) commander General Constantino Chiwenga carried out a coup that removed Robert Mugabe from power their 'catch-phrase was; "...the military are carrying out "Operation restore legacy" and "...we are targeting criminals surrounding the president." Unknown to Zimbabwean citizens, leaders and supporters of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change party, Joyce Mujuru (who had been stamped out of ZANU-PF and others) was that the promises of reform and good governance captured in Emmerson Mnangagwa's slogan, "the voice of the people is the voice of God," were just a mirage. Dr Simba Makoni in an interview with Trevor Ncube (2022) said that he reached out to Joice Mujuru and Morgan Tsvangirai not to attend Emmerson Mnangagwa's ascension to ZANU-PF party and government leadership in 2017 but his call fell on deaf ears. Makoni did not attend the ceremony because he saw nothing in Chiwenga's earlier speech before the coup and what was said by the coup presenter General Sibusiso Moyo that captured the aspirations and the interests of the people. The Zimbabwean military have become a staple diet on the Zimbabwean political menu.

Professor Jonathan Moyo in an interview with Sophie Mokoena on SABC (December 2017) also posited that the coup that took place in Zimbabwe in 2017 was the culmination of a succession dispute between the Lacoste ZANU-PF faction led by Mnangagwa and the ZANU-PF Generation 40 (G40) that supported Grace Mugabe. Moyo contends that "it was a power grab between ZANU-PF

factions...it had nothing to do with public interest, it had nothing to do with national interest or territorial integrity of Zimbabwe.” Given the hardships being experienced in Zimbabwe since Mnangagwa came to power, it is evident that Zimbabwean citizens were sold a political dummy. Civil servants have always been declaring incapacitation as they are earning below the poverty datum line of United States two dollars a day. Zimbabwe is now being regarded by many as the ‘sick man’ of southern Africa. Citizens continue to voice their displeasure by seeking refuge in other countries in the region and abroad.

How the 2nd Republic have thwarted Zimbabwe’s democratisation process

Zimbabwe’s social, political, and economic situation under the ‘Second Republic’ has worsened. Many had thought that the post 2017 coup period would usher in a new beginning, a golden era of political order and economic stability. According to Noyes (2020) many anticipated that there would be a notable departure from a Mugabe type of rule that would witness more freedoms, political tolerance and economic good governance and growth. Poverty has become ubiquitous as there is an economic downturn embedded in kleptocracy and kakistocracy. It became evident to many that their hopes would be dashed when Patrick Chinamasa and other Zanuists after the November 2017 coup intimated that there was not going to be a unity government as many had anticipated. When Mnangagwa announced his cabinet, Dr Martin Rupiya, a military historian and political scientist in an Interview with SABC News (December 2017) said “this is a lost opportunity. It was a consolidation of power, interest of actors... what we feared has come to pass... we are dealing with the military in politics.” Arguably the so called “new dispensation” has ushered in an ‘extended wail,’ a vortex of unprecedented suffering on civil servants and the ordinary masses.

Just like Mugabe was insync with the war veterans and senior securocrats in 2008 that the ZANU-PF party and government that came to power via the gun cannot be removed from power via the pen; Zanu-PF politicians, Patrick Chinamasa, Chris Mutsvangwa and Victor Matemadanda among others have all at one point or another said that the military-Chiefs in Zimbabwe will not allow the Movement for Democratic Change-Alliance (MDC-A) or Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) to rule the country. In 2023 ZANU-PF politicians and the party rank and file were still reading the same script and entangled in the same rhetoric. Reacting to elections in neighbouring Zambia, George Charamba, Mnangagwa’s spokesperson also wrote on his Twitter handle intimating that the soldiers will not allow Nelson Chamisa to rule even if he wins the election. Pointing to the same election and Hakainde Hichilema’s victory, President Emerson Mnangagwa at a rally in Mutare remarked, “What happened in Zambia will not happen in Zimbabwe.” ####However top ZANU-PF political leaders and some members of the securocratic elites have maintained that ZANU-PF as a party will rule forever. Arguably, this can be interpreted as political bunter or tautology similar to Ian Smith 1975 outburst that there would be no majority rule in Rhodesia in a thousand years. Soldiers continue to intervene in political affairs, stage coups or notoriously support incumbent leaders and have thus become a vital cog in the “strategic calculus of leaders.”In Zimbabwe

Mugabe was removed through a coup in 2017, dubbed by others as “a military led transition” but the economic mismanagement and authoritarianism has continued; a worrying phenomenon that has led to military intervention in politics.

When Emmerson Mnangagwa’s political career was almost defunct it was resurrected by the then Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) commander General Constantine Chiwenga who is now accused by even some sections of the war veterans of enthroning a leader worse than Robert Mugabe. Mnangagwa reiterated that Zimbabwe would witness a “ new unfolding democracy, a new era,”(Burke & Graham Harrison, 2017) He gave hope to many people, hope which has since vanished. No jobs have been created as many graduates from colleges and universities have become economic refugees and do menial tasks in neighbouring countries. Many of those who have remained in the country have become vendors to ensure that they survive and had vowed that come the 23rd of August 2023 they were going to be the hinges that open big doors by voting Mnangagwa and ZANU-PF out of power.

History is replete of politicians who have made a lot of promises that they never fulfilled. Though President Mnangagwa has made efforts to build dams, rehabilitate roads and other things the good that he has done has been outweighed by the rot that has involved members of his family, ZANU-PF ministers and their cohorts. The lives of civil servants, other workers and the general populace never improved. Mnangagwa has thus been regarded as a political chameleon who together with the military elite, were only interested in grabbing and consolidating power. He reneged on his promises whilst his government’s incompetence, corruption and patronage politics has become a glaring reality. Rupiya (2017) in an interview with SABC, lamented that this was a lost opportunity as it turned out to be a power consolidation exercise by Mnangagwa and his handlers (the military). Melanie Robinson, the then British Ambassador to Zimbabwe also opined that the situation in Zimbabwe is worrying as depicted by the military’s brute use of force on the 1st of August 2018 and the January 2019 protests. The reforms that Mnangagwa promised have not been implemented explaining why targeted sanctions have been maintained by the UK, EU and the USA (British Embassy, Harare 2020). Human rights violations have continued unabated. It was pointed out in the House of Lords that freedom and justice in Zimbabwe is under vicious assault. Enquired by Lord Oates and commenting on submissions by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Lord Bellingham said:

My Lords...it is not just Job Sikhala who has been arrested: six students have been arrested for doing nothing more than protesting against politicians...Emmanuel Chitima, Comfort Mpfu, Lionel Madamombe, Benjamin Watadza, Darlington Chingwena and Gamuchirai Chaburumunda may have exotic names but they are not being kept in exotic conditions. They are in prison for protesting, perfectly legally and freely. We must wake up to the fact that Emmerson Mnangagwa is actually more of the same after the evil Mugabe (Lord Bellingham, UK Parliament, 6 July 2023).

The shift of power from Mugabe to Mnangagwa that was facilitated by the military shows that nothing has changed. Only 'the political driver' has changed but the system has remained the same and has become worse (J. Moyo 2018; S.Makoni, 2020; N. Moyo 2022) According to Noyes (2020, 8) an analysis of Mnangagwa's record demonstrates that these reform promises are severely lagging, with very few tangible steps towards reconfiguring Zimbabwe's autocratic system and breaking from Mugabe's corrupt and patronage-based rule." The Cabinet that Mnangagwa came up with after his inauguration in 2017 was also not inspiring because it was not inclusive as had been hoped for by many Zimbabweans.

It is a fact that Zimbabwean civil servants and the masses are now all experiencing the negative effects of the political economy of hyperinflation, a socio-political and economic 'darwinism,' of survival of the fittest. Zimbabwe has been named the most miserable nation state in Professor Steve Hanke's Misery Index (HAMI) ahead of countries being decimated by war like Ukraine (Oluwole, 2023) Zimbabwe thus perfectly fits in the fragile state index. Zimbabwe is experiencing hyperinflation for the second time given the inflation and hyperinflation it experienced from the late 1990s to 2008. Zimbabwe has an abundance of mineral resources and yet the mineral resources are not its salvation as these resources impede rather than stimulate sustainable development (Burgis, 2015). Zimbabwean government failed to account for 15 billion of diamond revenue. Corruption has become endemic in Zimbabwe. Hanke (2023) likens Zimbabwe to a political mafia rather than a conventional party explaining why Zimbabweans have endured socio-political and economic abuse at the hands of the two successive governments since 1980.

The citizens' hopes have been further dampened by Emmerson Mnangagwa and ZANU-PF manipulated win of the August 23-24 harmonised elections. Notably, one may get rid of a so called political and democratic stumbling block, only to realise that one has allowed the coming in of a worse tin-pot dictator. Vigor (op.cit) captured this well when he says, "you kick the polecat out of the kitchen window only to find the skunk crawl in at the door." The military chiefs in November 2017 depicted themselves as responsible and altruistic patriots bent on salvaging the Zimbabwean citizens out of the mucky waters of political authoritarianism, economic deterioration, corruption, non-adherence to the rule of law, and disregard of human rights. However, it is now evident that wealth accumulation and safeguarding of ill-gotten wealth are the causa movens for Emmerson Mnangagwa and 'military-Chiefs intervention' in politics. Just as what happened in 2002, 2008, during the 2013 elections, 2017, and 2018 elections; a coalition of the party-rank-and-file, involvement in the Zimbabwean political landscape; the politicisation and militarisation of Zimbabwean politics has stifled the will, choice and participation of citizens to select a political leader of their own choice. It cannot be disputed that the Zimbabwean securocrats are not apolitical and are the security chefs and some non-commissioned officers are supporters of the party-state. The Zimbabwean securocrats cum politicians have become a staple diet on the Zimbabwean political menu since their 2002 declaration: the 'Zvinavashe Doctrine' that has continued through to date and has invariably thwarted Zimbabwe's

democratisation process. In 2023 President Mnangagwa came up with a group known as Forever Association of Zimbabwe, a CIO led Operation were deployed well before the election to intimidate rural citizens and force them to vote for the ZANU-PF party.

Given the unimaginable kleptocracy and patronage rot being experienced in Zimbabwe many of those who assumed that the Zimbabwean military had executed a Guardian coup to clean up the mess and guide the country to political and economic stability have been betrayed. In hindsight, that hope seem to have been ill-conceived. To Zimbabwean citizens, 'hell hath no fury'. Mnangagwa and his junta government's grip on power and their continued control of Zimbabwean politics has stifled the will, choice and participation of citizens to select a political leader of their choice hence the democracy that Zimbabwe had hoped for, has suffered a huge set back. Whilst the majority of the Zimbabwean citizens are of the view that life was better during Robert Mugabe's rule they are hamstrung not to respond to Mnangagwa's rule through violence because of the killings that happened after the July 2018 elections, on the 1st of August and the January 14, 2019 demonstrations: these are still fresh in people's minds. Many had vowed that they would display their anger in the polling booth by voting the ZANU-PF party out of power. On one hand some of the electorate were of the view that voting Mnangagwa and ZANU-PF out of power would be a reality given his lack of charisma and bad political and economic governance, but the poll result was the most disappointing. On the other hand those benefiting from the ZANU-PF gravy train and kickbacks continue to vote for it. Notably, it is evident that some citizens are suffering from voter fatigue and believe voting is a waste of time because they believe elections in Zimbabwe are never free, fair and credible.

Without peace, there can be no development and without development, there can be no peace. Where there are disagreements that may evolve to violent conflict, there can be neither peace nor sustainable development. Zimbabwe's political and economic crises have been there for some time. Since the beginning of the 21st century Zimbabweans have found themselves between a political rock and an economic hard place. Zimbabwe was ranked the fourth unhappiest country in the world in the world unhappiest report on the 20th of March 2023. Zimbabwe was also amongst the top countries enduring hardships and misery in Professor Hanke's annual misery index (HAMI). The '2nd Republic' have become an architect of a poor governance and macroeconomic environment which is precipitating a cycle of repression, poor economic performance, corruption and incipient instability. Paradoxically, 'Mnangocracy and Chiwengocracy' are terms now being used to describe deep rooted corruption that has become a phenomenon of the Second Republic. The Gold Mafia documentary by Aljazeera unearthed deep rooted gold smuggling that involves people close to the president and yet the military elites have remained tight-lipped. The 2002 'Zvinavashe doctrine' referred to above, to borrow from Kristen Harkness "triggered a self-perpetuating process that is resistant to change."

Conclusively, the import of the 'Zvinavashe doctrine' is that choices or decisions that were made in support of the so called

'3rd Chimurenga' (war for economic emancipation), that begun in 2000 embedded in land restitution, set Zimbabwe on a political developmental trajectory that explains the degree of militarization, politicization and authoritarianism that has become a permanent phenomenon in Zimbabwean politics. Arguably the ZANU-PF political elites including the president are more interested in not disturbing the mechanics of primitive accumulation by the security sector leadership, ZANU-PF patrons and their clients. Whilst this is taking place 'number 1' has been consolidating his hold on power evident in his zero-sum politics after the 2023 election. A majority of the Zimbabwean citizenry blame retired General Chiwenga, the chief coup plotter for the current state of political and economic affairs Zimbabweans are experiencing. The 2nd Republic under the stewardship of Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, Constantino Chiwenga, Kembo Mohadi and the junta are far from being vehicles of democratic consolidation but are democracy undertakers.

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