



# **Organised Violence & Torture Report**

**01 October – 31 October 2016**

**By the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum**

**November 2016**

## ACRONYMS

OVT	Organized Violence and Torture
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republic Police
CIO	Central Intelligence Organisation
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
ZNA	Zimbabwe National Army
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai
NCA	National Constitutional Assembly
RTUZ	Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe
WOZA	Women of Zimbabwe Arise
ZINASU	Zimbabwe National Students Union
BEAM	Basic Education Assisted Module
CBD	Central Business District
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
TNZ	Transform Zimbabwe Party
PDP	People’s Democratic Party
ZAA	Zimbabwe Activist Alliance
ZimPF	Zimbabwe People First
UMYF	Unemployed Mobile Youth Foundation
OAUS	Occupy Africa Unity Square

## SUMMARY

This report presents an update of Organised Violence and Torture in Zimbabwe for the month of October 2016. A total of 28 cases were recorded, from victims that received medical treatment for injuries sustained in incidences of politically-motivated violence across the country. The victims include demonstrators of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) organized demonstration on 7 October 2016 in central Harare, where anti-riot police violently dispersed the demonstrators; supporters of the independent candidate for the Norton by-election Themba Mliswa during the campaign period on 22 October 2016 and for various other incidents that were reported from Chitungwiza, Epworth, Goromonzi and Harare. Violence perpetrators were the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA), Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) and ZANU-PF supporters. Violations for the month of October involved torture; assaults; attempted murder and abduction.

**Table 1: Violations for October**

<b>Nature of violation</b>	<b>No of victims</b>	<b>Victim affiliation</b>	<b>Perpetrator category</b>
Assault	19	MDC-T; Temba Mliswa supporters; Zimbabwe People First; PDP; Unknown	ZNA; ZRP; ZANU PF; CIO;
Torture	9	MDC-T; PDP; Unknown	ZNA; ZRP; CIO;
Abduction	1	MDC-T	CIO
Attempted murder	2	MDC-T	ZANU PF

The violations are as shown in the narratives in Table 2. The narratives provide continuing evidence of impunity for offenders, the military's involvement in politics and state-sponsored violence. There were three incidences involving the military's involvement in politics; 9 cases of torture and 2 cases of the attempted murder of infants. There was a disturbing resurgence of the 2008 trend of harassing the spouses of political activists.

While no death was recorded during the month, the physiological and psychological effects of the violence were endured for some of the victims.

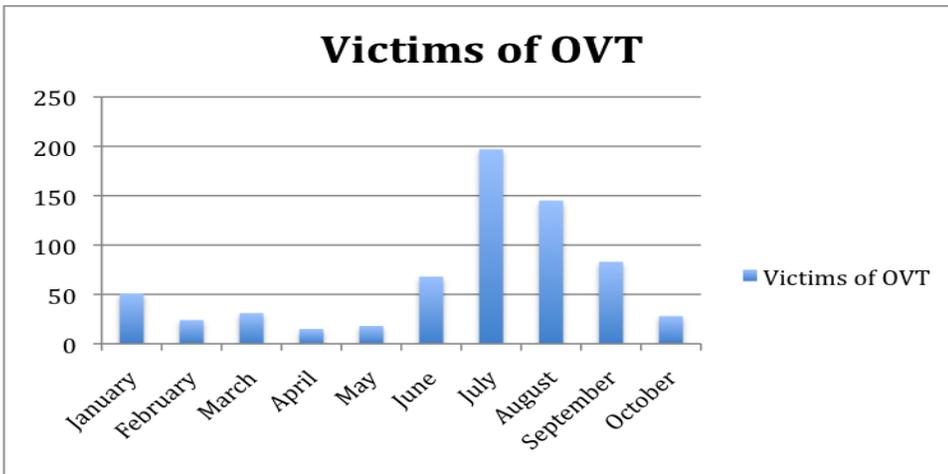
**Table 2: Narratives of the violations**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Violation</b>	<b>Number of victims</b>	<b>Violation Narration</b>	<b>Perpetrator</b>
19 Oct	Assault	2	In Highfield, Harare, an MDC-T activist and his wife was assaulted by ZANU-PF supporters after being accused of mocking Mugabe in a song at a funeral he had attended in the area.	ZANU-PF Supporters
18 Oct	Assault	1	In Norton ZANU-PF supporters who were chasing after Temba Mliswa's supporters assaulted a member of the public.	ZANU-PF Supporters
15 Oct	Assault	10	In Norton ZANU-PF supporters assaulted 10 people who were intending to attend a rally to be addressed by Temba Mliswa with stones. All the victims presented with head and facial injuries and one had a stab wound in the leg.	ZANU-PF Supporters
16 Oct	Assault	1	At a vendors' market in central Harare ZANU-PF supporters assaulted a member of the Zimbabwe People First Party for allegedly recruiting people to join his party.	ZANU-PF Supporters
8 Oct	Assault	1	In Norton ZANU-PF supporters forcibly took an 18 year-old girl from her home to a local stadium. They threatened her with death because her mother was campaigning for Temba Mliswa an independent candidate in the Norton parliamentary by-election. She sustained soft tissue injuries secondary to being shoved into a concrete slab.	ZANU-PF Supporters
7 Oct	Assault	2	In Norton ZANU-PF supporters assaulted a man and his wife for expressing support for Temba Mliswa at a local bar.	ZANU-PF Supporters
7 Oct	Torture 1	1	A PDP supporter sustained injuries after the anti- riot police violently dispersed a PDP organised demonstration against the introduction of bond notes.	ZRP
7 Oct	Torture	2	In Harare South 2 members of the ZRP assaulted staff and passengers in a commuter omnibus that had refused to give them a lift.	ZRP
5 Oct	Abduction/Torture	1	In Chitungwiza 4 men and a woman who were travelling in an Isuzu double cab abducted a member of the MDC-T party. They assaulted him throughout the day before dumping him in Highfield Harare.	CIO
4 Oct	Torture	1	In Goromonzi members of the CID assaulted the elderly father of a man they were looking for.	ZRP
2 Oct	Torture	1	In Hopley a group of soldiers assaulted an MDC-T supporter while forcing him to disclose the whereabouts of the local MDC-T chairman.	ZNA
2 Oct	Assault and attempted murder	2	In Epworth ZANU-PF supporters assaulted a woman whose husband, an MDC-T official, they were looking for. They threw her 18 month-old child into a six meter deep well at the homestead in attempted murder.	ZANU-PF supporters
2 Oct	Torture and attempted murder	2	In Hopley Settlement, Harare South, a group of soldiers assaulted the wife of a local MDC-T ward official. They roughed up a six week old baby who fell the bed to the floor.	ZNA
2 Oct	Torture	1	A middle-aged man who is a resident of Hopley Settlement was assaulted by a group of soldiers. The victim heard the noise of someone being assaulted so he went out to investigate. He was confronted by 8 soldiers in uniform and was assaulted too.	ZNA

### Cumulative violations January – October 2016

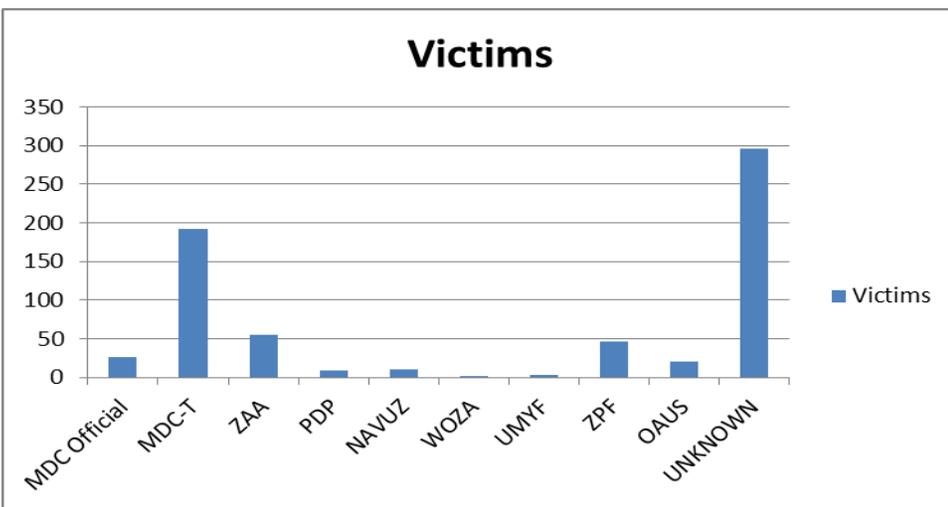
The organised violence and torture observed in October is a build-up of on-going violence from January 2016 and should be reviewed in that context. A total of 660 victims had been injured as a result of organised violence and torture between January and October 2016. The violence, prevalent since the beginning of the year, had a low of 15 violations in the month of April and a peak of 197 violations in the month of July as shown in Figure 1 below.

**Fig 1: Cumulative distribution of political violence cases by month**



The violence surge observed between June to September was associated with demonstrations against deteriorating socio-economic and political conditions in the country, resulting in state-sponsored riot police attacks on peaceful demonstrations.

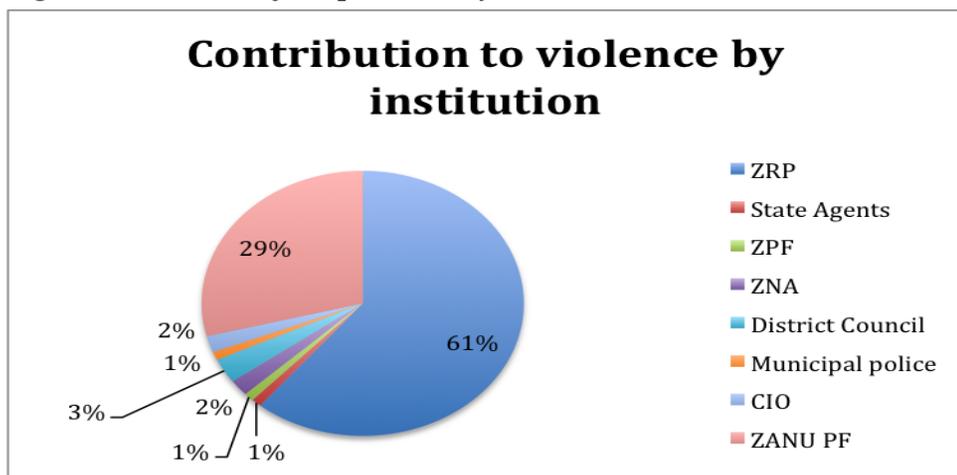
**Fig 3: Cumulative Distribution of victims by cause/political affiliation**



Those with unknown cause or political affiliation bore the brunt of political violence with 296 victims in comparison with Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) and Unemployed Mobile Youth Foundation (UMYF)

that for the entire period had a recorded 2 and 3 victims respectively. Among political parties ZANU PF had no recorded victims while MDC-T (192) had the highest number of victims from its membership, followed by Zimbabwe People First (46); MDC-T officials (26). Among social movements Zimbabwe Activist Alliance (ZAA) had the highest number of victims at 55 followed by Occupy Africa Unity Square (20) and National Vendors' Union of Zimbabwe (NAVUZ) (11).

**Fig 4: Distribution of Perpetrators by Violator Institution**



Zimbabwe Republic Police have been reported responsible for 61 % of the violations. ZANU-PF supporters were named as perpetrators in 29 % of the cases of OVT reported since the beginning of the year.

## Conclusion

The decline in political violence in October was a positive development that, however, cannot be regarded as a harbinger of what is to come. Public discontent with deteriorating social and economic conditions is not declining. Plans for more public protests are in the making. The government historically has used heavy-handed tactics in addressing public discontent. On a progressive note, the government has just been reviewed at the Universal Periodic Review meeting in Geneva, where it presented its report on how it has fulfilled human rights in the previous four years. Shadow reports from civic society organisations present offered an alternative human rights situation analysis and the government was given recommendations from United Nations member countries present. It remains to be seen to what extent the government will abide by recommendations made and accepted in the fulfillment of Civil and Political Rights that are the main subject of this report. Cash-flow challenges caused by reduced liquidity in the economy and government intentions to introduce bond notes may be issues that determine the cause and levels of political violence in November and December.

# Annex 1: Political Violence Map for 1 January to 31 October 2016

