

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights

6th Floor, Beverley Court
100 Nelson Mandela Avenue
P O Box CY 1393, Causeway
Harare, Zimbabwe

Telephone (04) 251468, 708118, 705370
Fax: (04) 723789
Cell Phone: 091 257 247
Email: zlhr@icon.co.zw

Our ref: IP/mn

8 September 2006

Senior Legal and Policy Advisor
UNDP
8th Floor, Takura House
Kwame Nkrumah Avenue
HARARE

Attention: Mr Nana Busia

Dear Sirs

CONSULTATION MEETING OF CSOs AND GoZ ON ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND RELATED ISSUES

We write in relation to the matter above, more specifically the Consultative Meeting held at your offices on Thursday 7 September 2006.

We note that in the aforementioned meeting, you advised that a new date for the Consultation Meeting between CSOs and the Government of Zimbabwe has been set for 22-23 September 2006.

We placed on record that these dates were not suitable for most of the law-based organizations, including the Law Society of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, due to the fact that the Law Society Councillors, as well as the senior management and Board of Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights will be out of the country attending the Annual International Bar Association Conference, which is a critical event for the global legal profession, as well as several other important engagements.

We also placed on record that we believe that the programme requires further attention, which you advised could be done urgently.

Further, we noted our concerns, which we believe will not be taken into account, about the *bona fides* of this initiative on the part of the Government of Zimbabwe. We have not received any guarantees from the representatives of the Government of Zimbabwe that this Consultation will be held in good faith, and that the event will not be used in a manner which seeks to draw CSOs unwillingly into any form of agreement on the establishment of a National Human Rights Commission and/or other broad areas of concerns without extensive consultation and input from all the major stakeholders from the civil society sector, who we believe will not be adequately represented. Attention was drawn to the example of recent Church initiatives. We further note that the dangers become more real when considering that all the media resources are in the hands of the state and have been used negatively in the past.

Secretariat: Arnold Tsunga B.L. Hons, LLB (UZ) (Director); Irene Petras BA LLB (Cape), LLM (London) (Programmes Coordinator); Otto Saki LLBS (UZ) (Projects Lawyer); Wozani P Moyo LLBS (UZ) (Projects Lawyer); Rangu Nyamurundira LLBS(UZ) (Project Lawyer); Tafadzwa R Mugabe LLBS(UZ) (Projects Lawyer)

Board: Josephat Tshuma LLB (UZ) (Chairperson); Nokuthula Moyo LLB (UZ); Jacob Mafume LLB (UZ); Charles Kamba LLB (UZ); Sheila Jarvis LLB; Sarudzayi Njerere BA, LLB (Cape); Kucaca Phulu LLB (UZ); Trust Maanda LLB (UZ); Andrew Makoni LLB (UZ); Beatrice Mtetwa LLB (UBS); Mildred Mubaiwa (law student); Arnold Tsunga B.L.Hons, LLB (UZ)(Executive)

fostering a culture of human rights in Zimbabwe

It is regrettable that, by refusing to shift the dates to accommodate what we believe to be a critical voice in the legislative process, the UNDP is engaging in an unfortunate move, especially as we are committed to engaging in broad consultations with all stakeholders to address areas of serious concern in the democratic landscape of our country.

However, as you have shown determination to proceed, we have no alternative but to advise that Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights shall not be participating in the forthcoming Consultative Meeting.

We advise accordingly, and ask that you kindly stamp the attached copy letter and return with our Clerk to signify receipt of this correspondence.

Yours faithfully,

Irene Petras
Acting Executive Director
Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights

cc. Law Society of Zimbabwe
NANGO
Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum
Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition