

eGram



9770/05

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Military Action Imm
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Military Info Imm
Military Info Rtn
Subject FW: ZIMBABWE - FOLLOW-UP TO UNSG SPECIAL ENVOY REPORT:Id=1050047

Summary

1. Assessment of Tibaijuka report on Zimbabwe. Follow up for Security Council and African posts.

From: eGram Gateway
Sent: Tuesday, July 26, 2005 10:46:03 AM
Cc: eD EU DIRECTORATE
Subject: ZIMBABWE - FOLLOW-UP TO UNSG SPECIAL ENVOY REPORT:Id=1050047
Importance: Low
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ASSESSMENT OF THE REPORT

2. We welcome the report: an impressive, perceptive and detailed account of the recent crackdown: its genesis, its impacts, and the responsibility of the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) for the needless

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suffering of the population. It makes clear that the GoZ has 'precipitated a humanitarian crisis of immense proportions', is 'indifferent to its humanitarian consequences', has violated a number of domestic and international laws, and is 'collectively responsible' for the consequences. It estimates over 2.4 million Zimbabweans have been indirectly affected, 700,000 directly.

3. Most of Tibaijuka's recommendations are directed at the GoZ, particularly the need for an 'immediate halt to any further demolitions of homes and informal businesses', to create conditions for 'sustainable relief and reconstruction', and to 'hold to account those responsible'. Tibaijuka also calls for macro-economic and governance reforms, and internal dialogue. She recommends 'dialogue with the international community' 'with a view to working out the modalities for returning Zimbabwe to the international fold', and highlights the need for international humanitarian assistance.

NEXT STEPS

4. The Foreign Secretary issued the following statement on publication of the report: "The report of the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy has crystallised the concerns of the international community about recent events in Zimbabwe: "a disastrous venture" which has precipitated "a humanitarian crisis of immense proportions". It is vivid testimony to the needless humanitarian suffering caused, especially to the poor. The report says more than 700,000 people have been made homeless or jobless, and another 2.4 million people have been affected. We will be speaking to our international partners, in Africa, in the European Union, and at the United Nations, to ensure that the international community responds swiftly, appropriately and constructively. The United Nations Security Council should take these findings very seriously. I applaud the efforts of Kofi Annan, Anna Tibaijuka and all of those involved in this important undertaking. Our efforts to respond to this crisis will continue, focused both on support to the international relief effort, and on urging an end to policies which have caused so much misery."

5. On humanitarian assistance, HMG has already contributed nearly US\$2m in response to Operation Murambatsvina and is contributing nearly US\$20m for other relief programmes this year. The UN humanitarian coordinator will shortly be launching a US\$50m appeal.

6. [REDACTED]

7. [REDACTED]

To:
From: eGram Gateway
Subject: ZIMBABWE: OPERATION RESTORE ORDER: UPDATE:Id=0846178
Sent: 30 June 2005 12:56:49 GMT

DETAIL

3. This is an update on the Operation Restore Order, reported in the series of e-grams ending with Harare e-gram [REDACTED]

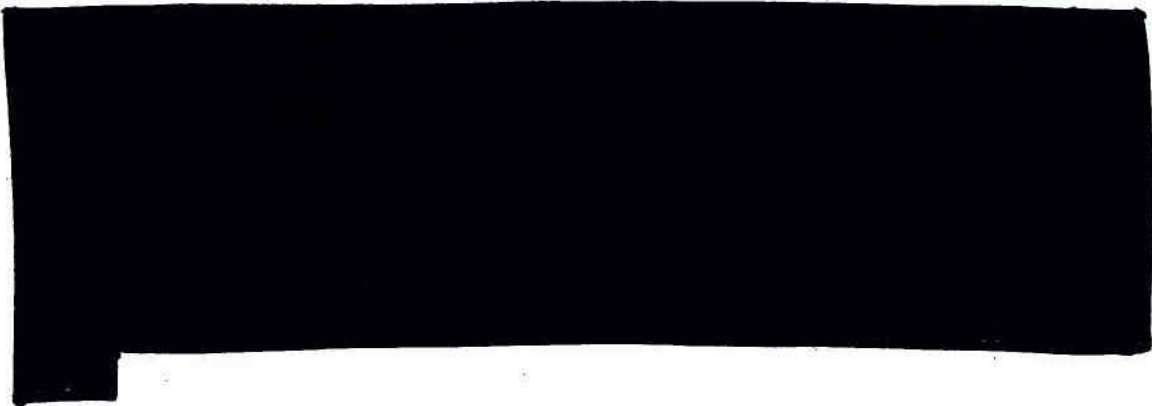
4. In the last week the GoZ propaganda machine has been scrambling to emphasise not only their rationale for the action, but also that the initial phase of "clearance" was now moving into a "reconstruction" phase. To underline this, the Ministry Defence has been put in charge of a nine-Ministry coordination operation, and the Ministry of Finance and the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe have been asked to find Z\$ 3 trillion (approx USD 300 million) for construction of new houses for those whose homes have been destroyed.

[REDACTED] the state coffers simply don't have the money for this unbudgeted expenditure, and the announced construction programme is scheduled to last several years. Meanwhile, many of those affected by the Operation are without adequate shelter. Many are being told to "return" to their rural areas, but transport is still a major problem due to severe fuel shortages (and GoZ have announced an overnight increase of 300% in the price of fuel, which will push up the cost of the little available transport).

5. Also, despite the GoZ claim, the Operation has continued on a large scale in urban areas. On the outskirts of Harare, the (very poor) Porta Farm informal settlement has been completely razed in the last couple of days. DHM and 2 Sec Political witnessed this in action on 29 June - a scene of almost total devastation. No home seemed to have been spared by the bulldozers. Residents were sitting despondently with their possessions amid the rubble. They were being told that they were being moved to one of the "holding camps", but some were apparently refusing to leave. There was a heavy police presence at the settlement and on the road between there and Harare. Latest reports are that police have been beating remaining residents, and that there have been four deaths as a result of various incidents, including falling from open trucks being used to move residents. The UN estimate that 13,000 people have been affected by this operation alone. Other suburbs of Harare have also been hit in the last week.

6. Other strands of the Operation have included the closing of unlicensed businesses operating from office blocks in the centre of Harare, a weapons amnesty and, somewhat bizarrely, stricter enforcement of parking regulations and bicycle and dog licences.

7. [REDACTED]



8. One aspect perhaps not well understood in the UK is that there are a significant number of better-off Zimbabweans (black and white) who openly approve of the Operation. Living in the economically-segregated smarter urban suburbs, they will not have seen for themselves the scale of the human misery which has resulted (although they will know individuals, eg their domestic staff, who have been affected). But there is a strand of public opinion which believes that action to "clean up" the cities was long overdue.

9. 

COMMENT

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