

Summary:

1. Demolitions continue. Tens of thousands still without adequate shelter. UNSG's Envoy Tibaijuka extends her stay.

Urgency:

From: eGram Gateway
Sent: Wednesday, July 06, 2005 2:59:35 PM
To: eD AD(S)
Subject: ZIMBABWE: OPERATION RESTORE ORDER: UPDATE:Id=0891048
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DETAIL

3. This is the latest in the series of updates on Operation Restore Order, ending with Harare e-gram 7951/05.

4. Despite GoZ assertions to the contrary, [REDACTED] demolitions in poor urban areas have continued over the past week. [REDACTED] Operation has affected 72,000 families (around 360,000 people).

5. Annan's Envoy, Anna Tibaijuka, has extended her stay in Zimbabwe to complete her assessment mission. She has seen some of the worst-affected areas, including the Porta Farm informal settlement outside Harare (her visit was covered by the media - footage shown on BBC), the Caledonia Farm "holding camp", and the cities of Mutare and Bulawayo.

6. [REDACTED] GOZ is reluctant to allow a full-scale humanitarian response for fear of creating new "permanent" settlements. For example, at Caledonia Farm (to where around 4,000 people have been moved) the authorities won't allow aid agencies to put in access to the mains water supply 5km away, or to dig boreholes. So UNICEF have to truck to the camp 15,000 litres of water daily - inadequate, expensive and unnecessary. We have also had reports that the (GoZ-appointed) Governor of Mutare has ordered the Zimbabwean Red Cross to remove tents they had provided to some of those made homeless.

7. [REDACTED]

8. Meanwhile, the fanfare with which GoZ announced the new "reconstruction" stage has been tempered by widespread cynicism that the plans are realistic or adequate. GoZ doesn't have the Z\$3 trillion (approx USD 300 million) announced for construction of new houses (this is unbudgeted expenditure), and Reserve Bank Governor Gono has admitted this to the UN. In any case, this sum would be insufficient to meet post-Operation needs. Although the military have been tasked with urgent construction of houses, they have a maximum of eight army field squadrons of engineers (approx 1600 men) available. We estimate that, even if working to full capacity, this force would only be able to construct around 2,000 houses by their target date of the start of the rainy season (September/October).

9. [REDACTED]

10. [REDACTED]

13. Meanwhile, other negative developments include:

- A recent upsurge in the number of farm invasions, confirmed by the Commercial Farmers' Union - they reckon there are currently around five cases per week.
- The fuel, and therefore transport, crisis is deepening. Most petrol stations have been dry for many weeks. The two or three outlets which sell fuel in bulk for foreign currency (the sole source for this Embassy) now have queues of 4-5 hours, with no guarantee of supply.
- Many basic goods remain unavailable, and when they do appear on the shelves, the price is beyond the reach of the majority.