

operation have not improved. Many thousands are still sleeping under canvas, plastic sheeting, or whatever they can find.

[REDACTED] saw this when they visited the Caledonia Farm "holding camp" on the outskirts of Harare earlier this week. The winter night-time temperature has dropped over the last week. Without access to proper shelter and heat, the very old, very young and ill will have been at risk of exposure.

7. The UNSG's envoy, Anna Tibaijuka, completed her mission at the end of last week (see Harare e-gram [REDACTED]). She is expected to report to Annan in the next week or two. The AU envoy (see Harare e-gram [REDACTED]) left Zimbabwe having seen little more than his hotel room. GoZ insisted that correct procedures had not been followed so they would not allow him to carry out his assessment of the Operation. A delegation from the South African Council of Churches visited earlier this week, and were reportedly shocked by the extent of the devastation and the conditions for those left homeless.

8. More generally, there is still no end to the fuel crisis in sight. This is hitting private and public transport, as well as having a devastating effect on already hard-pressed businesses. For most, fuel is only available on the increasingly risky and extortionate black market. Many are partially or fully suspending operations. Long queues of mostly empty vehicles stretch outside most fuel stations. On the rare occasion that a petrol station does receive a delivery, there is mayhem as motorists (literally) fight for access. Riot police have been called to at least one filling station in Harare in the last week.

9. The next crisis looming is food (maize, the staple for most Zimbabweans). GoZ refusal to be transparent about stocks and availability of forex to import means it is difficult to make accurate assessments. The recent ZimVac (joint GoZ/UN assessment) indicates that by January 2006 2.9 million people will not be able to meet their food requirements. But this is based on the assumptions that: wages keep pace with inflation, supplies are available on the market, and prices remain stable. All these are highly optimistic, and the numbers of people affected are likely to be much higher. The maize deficit is estimated at more than 1.2 million metric tonnes.

COMMENT

10. Although the frenzy of demolitions in the poorest suburbs of cities may be abating, living conditions for those already affected continue to deteriorate. Plunging temperatures, food and other shortages, and spiralling prices add to the misery. The start of the rainy season is September/October. No sign of GoZ assistance for the victims.

11. [REDACTED]