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Zimbabwe National Unity Council



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Memorandum of Demands

Restoration of the Right to Peaceful Assembly in Zimbabwe

Addressed to:

- His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe
- The Minister of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage
- The Commissioner-General of the Zimbabwe Republic Police
- The Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs
- The Speaker of Parliament

Introduction

We, the citizens of Zimbabwe, acting in accordance with Sections 58, 59, 61 and 67 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, peacefully present this Memorandum of Demands.

We believe Zimbabwe's greatest challenge is not simply unemployment, inflation, corruption, or constitutional decline. It is the gradual breakdown of communication between the governed and those who govern. It is that we have gradually lost one of the most important tools for solving problems before they become crises: the ability of ordinary citizens to speak, organize, assemble, and peacefully protest without fear.

When citizens no longer feel they can speak honestly, organize freely, assemble peacefully, and express disagreement without fear, government begins governing with incomplete information.

Peaceful protest need not be understood as an act of rebellion. It can instead be understood as an act of truth-telling. Every government, regardless of political persuasion, benefits from peaceful protest because it provides something no cabinet meeting, intelligence report, or policy paper can fully capture: the lived experience of ordinary people.

It is a way for communities to express grievances openly rather than allowing resentment to fester into hatred or violence.

For Zimbabwe, allowing peaceful protest is therefore more than a constitutional obligation. It is an act of reconciliation between leaders and citizens.



Our Primary Demand

We call upon the Government of Zimbabwe to restore, protect and actively facilitate the constitutional right to peaceful assembly and peaceful protest.

This includes ensuring that every Zimbabwean can peacefully organise, assemble, march and petition public authorities without fear of violence, harassment, intimidation or unlawful interference.

Specific Demands

1. Public Commitment to Constitutional Rights

Within 14 days, the Government must publicly reaffirm its commitment to protecting the constitutional rights contained in Sections 58, 59, 61 and 67 of the Constitution.

2. End the Criminalisation of Peaceful Protest

Peaceful protest must no longer be treated as a threat to national security.

Government institutions and law enforcement agencies must distinguish between peaceful assemblies and criminal conduct.

Violence and destruction of property remain unlawful.

Peaceful assembly does not.

3. Professional Policing of Public Assemblies

The Zimbabwe Republic Police should adopt policing practices that facilitate peaceful assemblies rather than prevent them.

Officers deployed at demonstrations should prioritise dialogue, de-escalation and the protection of both participants and the wider public.

Force should only be used where strictly necessary and in accordance with the law.

4. Transparent Procedures for Public Gatherings

Any administrative procedures relating to public assemblies should be applied consistently, transparently and without political discrimination.

Citizens should receive clear written reasons whenever authorities believe a gathering cannot proceed, together with an opportunity to challenge that decision through lawful processes.

5. Independent Monitoring

Government should permit independent observation of peaceful demonstrations by recognised civil society organisations, legal observers, journalists and other appropriate independent monitors.

Transparency builds public confidence.



6. Monthly Civic Engagement

Within 60 days, Government should establish regular public engagement forums through which citizens can peacefully present concerns, proposals and community priorities to relevant ministries.

Protest should never be the only avenue available to citizens wishing to be heard.

Citizen Partnership for National Renewal

We recognise that rebuilding Zimbabwe requires cooperation.

Accordingly, civil society, churches, labour organisations, students, professionals and community groups commit themselves to contributing constructively to national development.

Over the coming months, we intend to compile independent community reports identifying practical challenges affecting schools, hospitals, roads, water infrastructure and other public services.

We call upon Government to engage openly with these reports, publish responses and work collaboratively with communities to address the most urgent needs.

Accountability Framework

We request that Government publish, within 30 days of receiving this Memorandum:

- its formal written response to these demands;
- the responsible ministry for each commitment;
- implementation timelines; and
- a schedule for quarterly public progress reports.

Our Commitment

We reaffirm our commitment to peaceful civic participation.

We reject violence, destruction of property and hatred.

We believe Zimbabwe's future will be secured not through fear, but through dialogue, accountability, constitutionalism and active citizenship.

Our Constitution guarantees every Zimbabwean the right to be heard.

Today, we ask only that those guarantees be honoured.

Signed

The Citizens of Zimbabwe

31 July 2026