

NAI NEWSLETTER

20 April 2005

WITH FOCUS ON TOGO AND ZIMBABWE

TOGO: FAMILY MATTERS

The death of President Gnassingbé Eyadema on 5 February suggested that there might be more than just words to the NEPAD virtues of “good governance” and “democratic practice”. When Eyademas cronies moved to keep the power within the “family”, by installing his son Faure Gnassingbé as interim president, the African Union and ECOWAS reacted swiftly and managed to convince the coup leaders to return to constitutional procedure. On 24 April, Togo will experience the most exiting presidential election in the country’s history.

Richard Cornwell, head of Africa Security Analysis Programme at the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria, South Africa, has analysed the present situation in Togo for the Nordic Africa Institute. He shows in the article attached to this newsletter that the intervention by neighbours, although laudable, has weak prospects for achieving a radical change in the political power balance. Firstly the opposition’s main candidate for president, Gilchrist Olympio, is legally barred to candidate due to his absence from Togo of more than a year. The opposition’s second choice, Emmanuel Akitani-Bob, supported by a coalition of six parties, risks to be victim of a flawed electoral process and finally: would the army, so deeply interwoven with the Eyadema camp, accept a change?

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Richard Cornwell, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, South Africa
E-mail: rjc@iss.org.za

USEFUL WEBSITES:

Elections in Togo:

<http://www.electionworld.org/togo.htm>

Political Party websites:

Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais:

<http://www.rpt-13togo.com/>

Union des Forces de Changement:

<http://www.ufctogo.com/sommaire.php3>

IRIN : Togo:

http://www.irinnews.org/frontpage.asp?SelectRegion=West_Africa&SelectCountry=Togo

all Africa.com: <http://allafrica.com/togo/>

africatime.com: <http://www.africatime.com/togo/>

Jeune Afrique L'Intelligent: <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/>

La lettre du continent: <http://www.africaintelligence.fr/>

World Bank (Togo):

<http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/AFR/afr.nsf/f0439a7f962c30b7852567cf004dc528/b0869f71f02a5143852567d1004cd046?>

Human Rights Watch (Togo)

<http://hrw.org/doc/?t=africa&c=togo>

<http://www.izf.net>

The best site for general economic information about Francophone Africa

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS IN THE NAI LIBRARY:

Samuel Decalo (ed.), *Historical dictionary of Togo*, Scarecrow Press, Lanham MD, 1996.

Samuel Decalo, *Coups and army rule in Africa*, Yale University Press, 1990.

John F Clark and David E Gardinier (eds.) *Political reform in francophone Africa*, Westview, Boulder CO, 1997.

Comi M Toulabor, *Le Togo sous Eyadema*, Karthala, Paris 1986.

USEFUL JOURNALS FOR UPDATES:

Africa Analysis (available at the NAI library)

Africa Confidential (available online at the NAI website)

Africa Research Bulletin (available online at the NAI website)

The Economist Intelligence Unit (available in the NAI library)

THE 2005 ZIMBABWE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS: ONE STEP BACKWARDS?

After the sixth parliamentary elections on March 31, 2005, it would appear that Zimbabwe is back to the events that characterised the 2000–2004 period: Extreme polarisation, talks about inter-party negotiations, and a sprinkling of mediation by regional leaders will probably dominate the political scene in time to come. Unless something drastic happens – like real unconditional negotiations and compromises leading to a new constitution – it appears nothing will break the vicious cycle that has become all too familiar.

Two sharply contrasting views dominated and continue to dominate the election. One, represented by the government and ruling party and echoed by South Africa and many of observer missions, gives a picture of overall satisfaction with the pre-election period and the conduct of the election. Proponents of this view invariably point at the reforms carried by the Government of Zimbabwe in compliance with the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. They also cite the relatively peaceful conditions prevailing immediately before and during the elections, as well as the fact that for the first time since 2000, the opposition was able to

campaign in rural areas with relative ease. All these positive aspects sharply differentiate this election from the violence-ridden polls and by-elections of the period 2000–2004.

Those insisting that the elections were seriously flawed and do not reflect the will of the people argue that the reforms, while a step in the right direction, were not adequate. The opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), civil society and western countries single out the management and structure of the elections, which according to them, did not make for a level playing field and consequently seriously disadvantaged the opposition. They doubt the independence of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC). They point out that nothing had substantially changed compared with the disputed 2000 and 2002 elections as well as the numerous by-elections in the period 2000–2004. The opposition and government critics regard institutions that oversaw the poll as partisan. They accuse the office of the Registrar General (RG), the Electoral Supervisory Commission (ESC), the Delimitation Commission (DC) and the Elections Directorate of having in the past presided over the wholesale rigging of elections in favour of the ruling ZANU-PF. These concerns, the opposition has been consistently claiming, seriously undermined the fairness and legitimacy of the 2005 elections.

Elections

When all the results came out ZANU-PF had won a landslide victory, clinching 78 seats to the opposition party MDC's 41 and one independent. The ruling party had the sought-after two-thirds parliamentary majority. As predicted – and in fact promised by the MDC – the opposition party rejected the results. Save for the irregularities mentioned earlier, the most compelling evidence they claim to have about rigging and manipulation has to do with the as yet unexplained massive discrepancies between the figures released by the ZEC after the end of the poll and the numbers that came out after the official count. The discrepancy has given rise to speculation that when the ruling party discovered they were losing, they started stuffing ballot boxes to inflate figures. The fact that gaps have been discovered in 30 constituencies appears to rule out any isolated and random administrative errors. Reproduced below is the opposition's account of what happened in a constituency that started it all:

Manyame: ZEC announced the total votes cast as being 14 812. The MDC candidate polled 8 312 votes, meaning she had an unassailable lead. However, when results were finally announced the winning Zanu-PF candidate was reported to have received 15 448 votes, with 543 ballots spoilt. The total vote count for the constituency becomes 24 303, with the discrepancy being 9 491 votes.
--

Partly based on these anomalies, and what it claims to be insider sources, the MDC has said it has evidence that it actually won in 94 constituencies.

Post-election

Despite calls for a mass uprising by many frustrated individuals and organisations, among them the National Constitutional Assembly and the outspoken arch-critic of the Zimbabwean government, Bulawayo's Roman Catholic Archbishop Pius Ncube, the MDC did not immediately do so, promising instead to consult its people before taking any course of action. This may have come as a surprise to many as the party had promised that

Zimbabweans would “defend their vote”, obviously a thinly veiled reference to mass action.

The government for its part applauded the election and endorsed the result, insisting it reflected the will of the people. Two days after the elections, President Mugabe warned that any attempt at mass action by the MDC would cause “...conflict, serious conflict”. The police echoed the warning. The deployment of armed police on rooftops in downtown Harare as well as the mounting of roadblocks in all arterial roads showed the determination of government to foil any protest. Reminding the nation that police remained “on high alert,” the police spokesman warned that that police would “not allow any party to mar the post election period by indulging in activities which create alarm and despondency.”

It was widely anticipated that President Mugabe had desired a two-thirds majority to change the constitution to, among other things, make way for his comfortable retirement and to reward his lieutenants by reintroducing the senate. While he confirmed the latter (which he reminded people the MDC also desired), the president dismissed the former. He said that he would rule until he was a century old, a point that was probably said in jest but which his opponents latched onto as evidence of his reluctance to retire in 2008 as promised. He did promise that ZANU-PF would amend the constitution, but he also stated that parliament would not rewrite the constitution. In his opinion, “overhauling the constitution needs going to the people.”

What now?

In the few days after the elections the environment has been one of celebration and finality, buttressed by threats and a show of force on the part of government and ZANU-PF, and indecision, inaction and perhaps indecisiveness on the part of the opposition. Thus, while ZANU-PF is settling down for a comfortable tenure in parliament and government, and the struggle has once again become one of intra-party jostling for positions, there is a spirit of “unfinished business” and a “what-next-ness” on the part of the MDC and its various opposition groups in civil society. There is palpable anger in this camp; in addition there is what one commentator aptly describes as “a deep sense of despair, frustration and sheer disbelief.”

What the MDC and the various groupings agree on is the need for new elections under a new constitution that eliminates the huge advantages enjoyed by the party in government, thus creating a level electoral playing field conducive to what they will judge as free and fair elections. Sentiments have been expressed in various quarters that this camp needs leadership, is waiting for leadership. Some of those who are in favour of immediate mass action to force government to give in to their demands hold these sentiments. However, there appears to be little clarity and agreement on the object of desired mass uprising. The MDC leadership, it would appear, wants the disputed elections to be nullified and new elections held under a new constitution; some, championed by the NCA, want to force government to accept a new constitution;¹ others, represented by the catholic archbishop Pius Ncube, advocate regime change by pushing the present government out; and

¹ They already have a draft.

then there are those who want various versions of reconciliation and a “government of national unity”.

However the determination by government to quell any such action, coupled with the layout of the urban areas of Zimbabwe do not augur well for a conventional mass action as experienced in parts of eastern Europe. The bulk of residential areas are located away from the city centres with relatively few and known roads linking these settlements to the Central Business District. This will make it difficult for protesters to gather in large numbers and march on the cities, thus making it easy for the determined government to descend on protesters.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Amin Kamete, Programme co-ordinator, The Nordic Africa Institute.

E-mail: Amin.Kamete@nai.uu.se

Tel: +46 18 56 22 44

Henning Melber, Research Director, The Nordic Africa Institute.

E-mail: Henning.Melber@nai.uu.se

Tel. +46 18 56 22 20

USEFUL WEBSITES:

www.zimonline.co.za

The best and constantly updated Internet resource

www.kubatana.net

www.newzimbabwe.com

www.zwnews.com

www.daily-news.co.za

Political party websites:

www.zanupfpub.co.zw

www.mdczimbabwe.org

Daily News is available on the Internet radio station between 20.30 and 21.30:

www.swradioafrica.com

The privately owned daily: www.dailymirror.co.zw

The state daily: www.zimbabweherald.com.

EISA: The Electoral Institute of Southern Africa

<http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/zimbabwe.htm>

USEFUL NAI PUBLICATIONS:

Dansereau, Suzanne & Mario Zamponi, *Zimbabwe – The Political Economy of Decline*, March 2005.

Highlights current socio-economic aspects of Zimbabwean society and, by doing so, adds insights into important sectors of society and helps the readers to understand the structural legacy that any future Zimbabwean government will have to deal with.

<http://130.238.24.99/webbshop/epubl/dp/dp027.pdf>

Melber, Henning (Ed.), *Media, Public Discourse and Political Contestation in Zimbabwe*. 2004.

A critical analysis of current developments with particular reference to the media sector in the ongoing battle for hegemonic control over the public sphere.

<http://130.238.24.99/webbshop/epubl/cai/cai027.pdf>

Kamete, Amin Y. "Governing the poor in Harare, Zimbabwe: Shifting perceptions and changing responses". Research Report. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 122, 2002.

Presents and discusses sets of perceptions of poverty and the poor which influence policy development and decision making among urban 'governors'. The study also analyzes patterns of voting among the urban poor in Harare.

<http://130.238.24.99/webbshop/epubl/rr/rr122.pdf>

Melber, Henning (Ed.), *Zimbabwe's Presidential Elections 2002. Evidence, Lessons and Implications*. 2002.

The contributions to this publication offer critical and political comments from scholars mainly in or from the Southern African region, who have been closely involved with regional and Zimbabwean issues.

<http://130.238.24.99/webbshop/epubl/dp/dp014.pdf>

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS IN THE NAI LIBRARY:

Zimbabwe: Another election chance. Crisis Group Africa Report, Pretoria/Brussels N°86, 2004:

http://www.icg.org/library/documents/africa/southern_africa/086_zimbabwe_another_election_chance_web.doc

Kamete, Amin Y. "In defence of national sovereignty? Urban governance and democracy in Zimbabwe". *Journal of contemporary African studies* 21:2, 2003, 193-213.

NEW BOOKS FROM THE NORDIC AFRICA INSTITUTE

<http://www.nai.uu.se/publ/publeng.html>

Øystein Rolandsen, *Guerrilla Government. Political Changes in the Southern Sudan during the 1990s*. April 2005. 201 pp.

Guerrilla Government is of interest to academics, humanitarian workers and diplomats concerned with the Sudan's contemporary history, civil wars and humanitarian operations in a war-zone. The book contributes towards documenting the experience of the southern Sudanese and the pretext for the current peace process, and provides ample case material for students of insurgencies and internal conflicts. Explaining the political and military background to today's complex situation in the South, Guerrilla Government should be studied by everyone who wishes to contribute to the rebuilding of a war-torn Sudan.

Øystein H. Rolandsen is the Horn of Africa adviser at the Norwegian People's Aid and board member of the Norwegian Sudan Support Group.

Reviews

"The internal politics of guerrilla movements, and the means through which they govern the areas under their control, are critical factors not just in assessing the character of the movements themselves, but in presaging the ways in which they will operate if or when they gain control over the state. This important and original study of the SPLAM/M, taking as its principal reference point the National Convention of 1994, does much to clarify these issues in Southern Sudan, and provides a valuable case study of 'guerrilla government', that will be of much wider relevance."

Christopher Clapham, Centre of African Studies, Cambridge University

"One of the greatest challenges that will face any new interim government in South Sudan is how to transform a military government into an effective, representative, and just civil administration. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement appeared to have recognized this challenge when it set out its blueprint for civil administration in its first national convention in 1994. Oystein Rolandsen has compared the SPLM's theory with its practice of government, identifying areas where reality has yet to match the intentions. This is an important study, based on field experience and a careful analysis of documentary sources. It will be of value to anyone interested or involved in the post-war reconstruction of South Sudan".

Douglas H. Johnson, author of The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars

**If you would like to review any of the new books please contact
Helena Olsson Helena.Olsson@nai.uu.se**

COMMENTS ON THE NEWSLETTER ARE WELCOME

Nordiska Afrikainstitutet

Kungsgatan 38, P.O. Box 1703

SE-715 47 Uppsala, Sweden

Tel +46 18 56 22 00, Fax +46 18 56 22 90

nai@nai.uu.se, <http://www.nai.uu.se>

Responsible editor: Lennart Wohlgemuth

Editorial committee: Marie-Louise Fendin, Susanne Linderos, Helena Olsson, Thomas Ridæus and Anne Hege Simonsen.

Contributors to the issue: Richard Cornwell and Amin Kamete.

If you wish to leave the mailing list "NAI-AFRIKAJOUR" please contact
Susanne.Linderos@nai.uu.se

If you wish to send a message to the people on the list please use the list
address: NAI-AFRIKAJOUR@LISTSERV.UU.SE