



Commit to Protecting All Human Rights

Heal Zimbabwe Trust, joins the rest of the world in commemorating the International Human Rights Day. This year's theme is “...20 years: *working for your rights...*” which is in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Universal Declaration and Programme of Action. This theme clearly indicates that deliberate and collective efforts need to be taken in order to create a peaceful environment where all human rights are fully respected and observed. Furthermore, the theme also reinforces the need to identify challenges that lie ahead as a way of becoming proactive instead of reacting to issues that may affect the upholding of human rights.

For the past 3 decades, Zimbabwe has not been spared by the plague of gross human rights violations. Individual families and communities have witnessed acts of human rights abuses perpetrated by those who include state security agents such as the police and army. These are the very same institutions mandated to uphold human rights yet at the same time have been at the forefront of violating them. Acts of both overt and covert Human rights violations often intensified in the run-up to elections as witnessed by cases of intimidation, harassment, torture, rape, assault, arson and murder recorded by various human rights activists from 2000 to date. HZT therefore calls for all Zimbabweans to commit to creating an environment where civil, political, economic, social, cultural and political rights are upheld regardless of political party affiliation.

Therefore, HZT urges the Government, Civil society, and private institutions to buttress their efforts for establishing a just and tolerant society by ensuring respect for human rights and dignity. This commitment can also be strengthened by fully operationalizing Independent Commissions (Chapter 12 of the Zimbabwean Constitution) whose mandate is to promote and protect all human rights. In addition, more efforts need to be undertaken to protect vulnerable sections of the society and to provide them with legislative, institutional and infrastructural support as a way of protecting

rights. Sustainable peace in Zimbabwe can only be achieved when human rights are fully observed. HZT accolade to all human rights defenders and those who have suffered both directly and indirectly in the struggle for respect for human rights.

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Mission: To rebuild national cohesion through national tolerance and peaceful coexistence in local communities