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**COSATU Demands Democracy in Zimbabwe  
A Statement by the Congress of South African Trade Unions  
BlackCommentator.com Guest Commentators**

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The Congress of South African Trade Unions fully sympathises with the decision of the Movement for Democratic Change to withdraw from what was clearly going to be a totally unfree and unfair election on 27 June 2008. The federation is appalled at the levels of violence and intimidation being inflicted on the people of Zimbabwe by the illegitimate Mugabe regime, and endorses the view of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), that:

- Political violence in the country has reached alarming if not catastrophic proportions;
- The 27 June Presidential election is not an election, but a declaration of war against the people of Zimbabwe by the ruling party;
- Dozens of people have been murdered due to political motivated violence;
- Thousands of people have been threatened with death, beaten, tortured and harassed for expressing or supporting the opposition political party;
- People are being forced to attend political rallies, failing which they are being

beaten up;

- There has been deployment and sprouting of several bases led by the ruling party militia that are harassing and perpetrating violence;
- The usual polling officers, i.e. teachers and civil servants, have been sidelined in the running of elections in favour of ruling party supporters;
- Thousands of people have been displaced through political violence and are thereby unable to vote;
- The State President has made it clear that he will not accept defeat even if he loses the elections;
- Very few local observers have been accredited to oversee the conduct of the elections;
- There has been continuous harassment of workers on their way to and from work by youths militia who have been deployed in suburbs;
- Opposition party agents have been harassed, some killed and therefore unable to monitor what may happen in some wards on the day of the election;
- The opposition has not been granted permission to campaign;
- There is a complete black out of the opposition in the public media and in case where it is mentioned, has always been in negative light;
- Potential voters are being threatened that their names would be recorded if they voted for the opposition;
- COSATU therefore supported the decision of the ZCTU not to accept an outcome of any flawed election, and demands that the leaders of the SADC and AU governments, whose observers are now in the country, make a clear public statement that the elections cannot possibly be free and fair, and to withdraw their recognition of a 'government' that has no mandate to rule following their defeat on 29 March 2008, but is clinging to power by brute force.

Now that MDC President Morgan Tsvangirai has pulled out of the Presidential run off in protest over the conditions articulated by the ZCTU (above), the COSATU NOBs, in their normal Monday meeting, decided as follows:

1. To work with the COSATU Limpopo Province to start mobilising for a blockade to protest against the violence Mugabe has unleashed against his own people. This will also serve as a reminder to the now illegal and illegitimate government that Zimbabwe is not an island and that they do need the cooperation of neighbours like South Africa to survive.
2. To call on all COSATU's other Provinces, together with civil society organisations, including those armchair critics of COSATU's commitment to human rights, to organise rallies during June and July, and to call on the ANC and SACP to take similar action in solidarity with the people of Zimbabwe.
3. To call on the workers in South Africa, SADC, Africa and the world over, as well as all progressive citizens of the world, to work towards a total isolation of Mugabe and his government. We call on all our unions and those everywhere else in the


world to make sure that they never ever serve Mugabe anywhere, including at airports, restaurants, shops, etc. Further we call on all workers and citizens of the world never to allow Mugabe to set foot in their countries.


4. To call on the South African government, SADC governments, African governments and all other governments not to recognise Mugabe's illegal government all over the world, and to refuse to have any dealings with Mugabe other than ensuring that he work towards a new elections strictly under the conditions of total observance of the SADC election protocols.
5. To endorse the statement by the SADC chairman Benjamin Mwanawasa that there were no prospects for a free and fair lection in Zimbabwe.
6. To call on all the governments and employers to support the application that has been submitted by labour under Article 26 of the ILO Constitution against the Zimbabwe government for non-observance of the ILO's Convention 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise) and Convention 98 (Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining) respectively.

These **BlackCommentator.com** Guest Commentators are from COSATU, the Congress of South African Trade Unions. Click [here](#) for more information about COSATU.

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