



## **NEPAD: Exorcising the Zimbabwe ‘Colonial and post-colonial Ghost?’**

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### **Abstract**

*Zimbabwe is a country failing to recover from a multi-layered crisis that has haunted and bedevilled it since the beginning of the 21st century. Its economy was [and still remains] the fastest shrinking economy outside a war zone. In the years 2007 to 2008 its inflationary rate was one of the highest in the world and even after the fall of Robert Mugabe from power in the November 2017 military coup, it is still experiencing an inflationary trajectory. The soaring unemployment rate coupled with misery and human rights abuses is startling. In this paper we argue that the eco-political crisis is a result of disastrous economic and political policies pursued by the Zimbabwe ZANU-PF led government. Interestingly the Emmerson Mnangagwa led Second Republic has voluntarily joined NEPAD. Questions arise whether this will translate to good governance practices or it's simply a smokescreen? It is argued in this paper that given the NEPAD and Peer Review Mechanism's existence; if the Mnangagwa led government comply to the NEPAD Peer Review and adhere to good governance principles as espoused in the NEPAD PRM document; it will be a step in the right direction that may influence how Zimbabwe will move out of the 'crisis that engulf it.'*

**Keywords:** NEPAD, Peer Review Mechanism, Civil Society, Movement for Democratic Change, ZANU-PF, Government of National Unity, Kleptocracy

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### **Introduction**

Zimbabwe is still being considered a classic example of a failing state. Paradoxically, its man-made economic crisis has gone hand in glove with a profound political crisis resulting in capital flight, brain drain and poverty inter-alia. It must be pointed from the outset that whilst the Ian Smith Rhodesian government had ‘a well-developed stable economy,’ violence and racist laws were the hallmark of his response to political challenges and demonstrations by the Blacks in the then Southern Rhodesia. Zimbabwe has continued to be a semi authoritarian country especially from the beginning of the 21st century. Arguably power is concentrated in the executive with the Judiciary and the legislature rubber-stamping decisions made by the executive. The Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) led governments by Robert Mugabe and now Emmerson Mnangagwa, has continued to dispense violence on citizens who have criticized them for bad economic and political governance. It is in this context that the ZANU-PF led governments have until recently maintained oppressive laws like Public Order and Security Act (POSA) and Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) as a way of thwarting challenges to its rule. It cannot be disputed that Zimbabwe religiously and regularly holds flawed elections, with the playing field skewed in favour of the incumbent ZANU-PF party (Noyes, 2020).

As a point of departure, it must be pointed out that since the coming of Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front party into power and even now; oppressive laws and violence have been used against all perceived enemies of the ruling governments. While other countries in the Southern African region like Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, and Mozambique among others have made strides towards democratization this has not been the case with Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has remained a ‘democratization paper and rhetoric tiger.’ Nationalists like Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, Joshua Nkomo, Hebert Chitepo and Robert Mugabe among others; all participated in politics and the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe so that they would entrench democratic norms and governance in the new sovereign state. Edgar Tekere before being expelled from the ZANU-PF party had maintained that “democracy in Zimbabwe was in the “intensive care unit,” (Banana, 1989). Questions arise on what really happened in Zimbabwe

for it to be a classic example of a dictadura state; “an elected government with low levels of political and civil liberties (Breytenbach, 2002). Multitudes of people stampeded out of the country because of the fear of political persecution. The region and the international community at large has become a home of political refugees and asylum seekers. Zimbabwe’s past continues to haunt it, political activists and some members of opposition political parties are still being arrested, abducted and killed, which is a great cause for concern in a so called “new dispensation”.

Noyes (2020) submits that Zimbabwe has an inextricable, symbiotic “party-military alliance—bound together by a shared liberation ideology, extensive corruption, and patronage networks—and a long history of political violence at the hands of the state.” The Rhodesian colonial ghost of responding to political challenges through assassinations, abductions, disappearances and the use of violence being dispensed by the state has continued unabated. State sponsored violent authoritarianism was a hallmark of Mugabe’s ruler-ship after having led a violent guerrilla war that dislodged Ian Smith from power. Paradoxically, Robert Mugabe whether by design or default stepped into ‘Ian Smith’s political shoes.’ Mugabe’s violent nature that can be traced from the days he became the leader of ZANU in the late 1970s became very glaring with his response to the Midlands and Matabeleland disturbances in the early 1980s and opposition parties like Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) and the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) in 1990. After its formation in the last half of 1999, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 2000 made history by defeating ZANU-PF in a constitutional referendum aimed at giving Mugabe more powers and to compulsorily take land from white commercial farmers without compensation. According to Noyes (2020), “faced with his first real political threat since independence, Mugabe and his party-military alliance reacted with an iron fist. They cracked down on dissent, orchestrated a series of violent elections, violently expropriated land from white farmers without compensation, engaged in large-scale corruption, and printed money...and distribute patronage to other key bases of support. These actions precipitated a political and economic crisis and earned Zimbabwe pariah status on the international stage.”

The economic situation continued to worsen that the then Zimbabwean Reserve Bank Governor Gideon Gono referred to it as a “casino economy”(Gono, 2008). In 2007, the Zimbabwean government introduced price controls that proved disastrous as supermarkets became virtually empty. Mahuku (2017) noted that as bad political and economic governance continued unabated; authoritarianism became seriously entrenched. There was a suffocation of democracy and a securitisation and militarization of the political and economic space. Zimbabwe’s hyperinflation in 2008 was the highest in the world (Besada and Moyo, 2008). The economic corrosion that was unrelenting was momentarily halted by the formation of the Government of national unity (GNU) in 2009. Even after winning the 2013 harmonised elections, Mugabe, a politically non-reformist, and his ZANU-PF party maintained that they were fighting another Chimurenga (now an economic war) against neo-imperialism.

Notwithstanding the so called economic warfare against the Empire, the economic and socio-political haemorrhage continued resulting in catastrophic factional wars within ZANU-PF. Intra-ZANU-PF party factionalism later forced Robert Mugabe to unceremoniously exit the political stage. The majority of Zimbabweans welcomed ‘military intervention’ in politics and celebrated Mugabe’s fall from power. Emmerson Mnangagwa came back from a week’s self-imposed exile and was quickly pronounced the new ZANU-PF party first secretary and party leader. Amidst fanfare that was attended by opposition party leaders, Morgan Tsvangirai, Joice Mujuru, Welshman Ncube, Tendai Biti and others, Emmerson Mnangagwa was inaugurated President of what has been known since then as the “Second Republic.” There was hope amongst Zimbabweans, regional and the international community that Mnangagwa would lead the Zimbabwe Second Republic towards the path of good political and economic governance.

However, since the coming in of the new dispensation led by Emmerson Mnangagwa, once again inflation has reared its ugly head and economic deterioration embedded in kleptocracy, kakistocracy and human rights abuses have become a predatory force on a rampage. The Mnangagwa led political executives (cabinet) have maintained that Zimbabweans must continue to tighten their belts, endure the ‘harsh socio-economic and political weather’ in Zimbabwe’s endeavour to become a middle income economy by 2030. However it stands to be seen whether the ZANU-PF led government policies under Mnangagwa’s leadership will alleviate the lives of the majority of the Zimbabwean populace. What will be the purpose of NEPAD in all this?

The New Economic Partnership for Africa’s development (NEPAD) is designed to place African countries both individually and collectively on a path to sustainable development and simultaneously assist them in participating meaningfully on a globalising world (Kanbur, 2001). NEPAD has been supported by the G8 countries because they view in it a break with the past. It has a ‘unique vision’ for Africa’s future that is assumed will promote economic and political development strengthening good governance in the continent’s 55 countries. This paper attempts to investigate and give an insight into whether NEPAD will have a bearing on Zimbabwe’s development.

Zimbabwe has experienced a ‘human tsunami’ as Zimbabweans trekked and still continue to trek in all directions in a bid to find anything to sustain themselves and their families. The United States of America (USA) and European Union (EU) sanctions are still continuing to ravage the Zimbabwean general populace especially after the expiration of the Government of National Unity (GNU) tenure in 2013. The question that needs to be

addressed is how Zimbabwe may move out of its present quandary. The GNU arguably lived its lifespan and was more of a liability than a panacea to the Zimbabwean problems. It is now beyond dispute that the GNU was an elite caucus that served the interests of the political elites and their close allies. Those who constituted the GNU, namely ZANU-PF, MDC-T, MDC-M/N did not have common interests or a common agenda other than perpetuating the self-enrichment bandwagon. This is the quandary that Zimbabwe is in. ZANU-PF and the MDC formations have continued to jostle for power at the detriment of the Zimbabwean general populace. Patience is eluding both the ordinary people and some members of the political elite who are dubbed to be calling for “Operation restores economy.” If the economic free-fall is not addressed this might have disastrous consequences on the country as a whole.

The Movement for Democratic Change has continued to advance the argument that democracy and good governance deficits have continued to subvert peace and justice in Zimbabwe (Good, 2002). Zimbabwe gives a fertile ground to test the hypothesis that had Zimbabwe signed into the NEPAD Peer Review Mechanism earlier on, this might have influenced how Zimbabwe would have moved out of the multi-layered crises that engulf it. It is evident that some forces in the country consider NEPAD as a good tool towards good governance; the ZANU-PF led Mugabe government did not. It is argued in this paper that NEPAD obviously would have played a role to influence ‘good governance’ if the government of the day had signed into the NEPAD-PRM. Below we give an overview of the origins of NEPAD, its aims and the purpose of the PRM.

## NEPAD

NEPAD originates from the Millennium Africa Recovery Plan (MAP) proposed by President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and the OMEGA plan proposed by President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal. The two plans were merged and became the New Africa Initiative (NAI) on the 23rd of October 2001. The plebiscite was chaired by President Olusegun Obasanjo in the presence of President Bouteflika of Algeria. The leaders adopted this new plan to ‘solve Africa’s problems (Kanbur, 2001), after having observed that in the past decades Africa had subjected itself to plans and declarations of intent. Nonetheless, there lacked commendable progress on gender mainstreaming, poverty eradication, equitable distribution of resources and food self-sufficiency.

Most of the plans that had been proposed by the African leaders in the past fell short and had failed to make any significant developments; this was the case with the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action (LPA). It did not get support from the international financial institutions; the IMF and WB. The NEPAD initiative received tremendous support from the G8 countries at a summit that was held in Canada in July 2002. Most notable was the convergence of new progressive forces that were frustrated with Africa’s minimal progress; so was their revulsion of power-centric leaders with selfish ends and did not care about eradicating poverty in their own countries. Presidents of South Africa, Algeria, Nigeria and Senegal championed the call for poverty eradication through growth and public services; advocated for accountable, uncorrupted governments and demanded a viable future for the unemployed and the young in Africa.

It was apparent that NEPAD’s noble vision on its own accord would not propel Africa towards sustainable development. To complement NEPAD, the PRM was established to assist in the implementation and monitoring of the NEPAD vision on the continent. The PRM’s aim is to use peer pressure as leverage to ensure that African leaders adhere to specific good governance political and economic principles. However it must be noted that participation is voluntary and by July 2003 only 15 countries had signed up for review. Cilliers (2001) suggests that the APRM is “generally the most innovative aspect of NEPAD.” It represents an “ambitious attempt by key African countries to lever themselves out of the cycle of poverty and instability to which the continent has been condemned, by taking responsibility for the maintenance of appropriate standards of conduct,” (Cilliers, 2001). This self-monitoring aspect of NEPAD called “peer learning” takes its cue from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Europe. However, NEPAD relies on mutual trust and understanding between the countries being reviewed. It promises incremental change by participating countries, with each moving from different positions at its own speed (Cilliers, 2001). It was agreed at the October 2001 Abuja meeting, that African leaders should set up parameters of good governance which will in turn guide their activities at both political and economic levels.

The Heads of State Implementation Committee in the Rome 2002 June meeting also submitted that “the APRM as an instrument voluntarily acceded to by African members of the AU for the purpose of self-monitoring will foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that will lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated regional integration of the African continent.” The assumption is that the APRM would be “independent, effective, professional and credible” (Cilliers and Struman 2002). The process itself would be a consultative (peer learning) and not a punitive process.

It is reasonable at this juncture to give a basic overview of the basic tenets of democracy which are supported by NEPAD. First and foremost it cannot be disputed that there is a symbiotic relationship between democracy, peace and development. Democracy must be entrenched in democratising countries. Country constitutions must therefore be respected and adhered to all the time. The ruling governments must also not

hoodwink or control the judiciary. Political pluralism must be permitted and civil organisations must be given space to participate in governance issues. Every citizen must be allowed to exercise his or her right to choose a leader of their choice and choose representatives in tandem with the requirements of the law. Free and fair elections must be held at regular intervals. Freedom of expression and press freedom must be guaranteed. All political parties must have access to the media. There must be constitutional recognition of fundamental rights and freedoms in conformity with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the Charter of Human and People's Rights of 1981 and other human rights instruments (Cilliers and Struman, 2002). The NEPAD PRM Implementation committee would see to it that these clear standards of good governance, accountability, transparency and participatory government apply at national and sub-national level. Political leaders would have to give special attention to the establishment of a system of government based on permanent social dialogue and the search for political consensus.

According to Lansberg (2003), both the AU and NEPAD, view the peer review process as part of democracy promotion. The mandate of the APRM is to ensure that the policies and practices of participating states conform to the agreed political and democratic governance declarations, values, codes and standards. Efforts will therefore be made to rectify the democratic shortcomings in African states, including reminding the international community of their responsibilities towards Africa's development (Lansberg, 2003). Zimbabwe is faced with a task of finding a way forward. Arguably the inclusive government (the GNU) failed to implement the reforms that they had envisaged in the Global Political Agreement (GPA). The GPA was a template of what the political parties would do after the formation of the GNU. The MDC formations were enthusiastic to have joined the political bandwagon hence it is not surprising that when the SADC advised the GNU not to hold the 2013 elections before agreed political reforms were undertaken, they gave a deaf ear. The MDC-T only started raising the 'reform rhetoric' when they lost the election. This therefore explains why Zimbabwe cannot find a way out of the current political and economic morass that engulfs it. Below we give an overview of ZANU-PF views on NEPAD and the PRM under the Mugabe and Mnangagwa led governments.

### **Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF**

According to Tendi (2011) "Robert Mugabe is often portrayed in the international media as the epitome of the popular leader gone awry" This view is also shared by David (2004), who also noted that Robert Mugabe was regarded as both a hero and a villain. Tendi notes that Mugabe the liberation war hero, who at one point was considered progressive, became toxic as he was intoxicated with power thus he became increasingly dictatorial. To justify his actions Mugabe maintained that Zimbabwe is a sovereign state that will never be a colony again. Mugabe "casts sovereignty as the reverse of colonialism and an important means of rhetorical and political self-defence against criticism, as well as threatened intrusions by external actors" (Tendi, 2011). This therefore explains why President Mugabe and his hangers-on had no appreciation of NEPAD and the economic paradigm on which it is anchored. Notably, this has changed when Mnangagwa appended his signature joining the Nepadists in February 2020. The late President Robert Mugabe and his ZANU-PF stalwarts (Interestingly this included Joyce Mujuru and Emmerson Mnangagwa among others) saw NEPAD and its APRM as a western imposition of neo-colonialism on Africa.

Scholars like Stephen Chan (2003) contend that the Zimbabwean government through a combination of patronage, looting and bad economic and political policies precipitated Zimbabwe's degeneration into a socio-political and economic deterioration that they unsuccessfully tried to eclipse from the regional and international community. Ruling party supporters, 'Zanuists' who were strong adherents of what Ndlovu (2015) regard as "Mugabeism" argue that Zimbabwe has had a prolonged struggle against neo-colonialism, firstly through the neo-liberal SAPs (Structural Adjustment Programs) championed by the IMF and WB. They contend that SAPs were anti-developmental as they were against the land redistribution exercise. In October 2001, President Mugabe decided to do away with economic reform programmes that are sponsored and directed by the IMF and WB. At a ZANU-PF rally Mugabe stressed that Zimbabwe was going back to socialism and embark on 'home grown economic reform programmes.' He said, "Enough is enough, ESAP is no more, the termination of ESAP brings to an end the era of control over our economy by the IMF and the World Bank, this monstrous creature is now out of our way," (Elick, 2002). Mugabe argued that the neo-liberal approach to African development did not work, for it always cements the rider and horse relationship. Mugabe posited that the Bretton Woods institutions and foreign aid are instruments through which the West continues to dictate-often to the detriment of the African people policy and governance issues on Africa.

Like SAPs, NEPAD does not prioritise human development and instead places undue emphasis on performance indicators that do not reflect the human element of development. The Mugabe led government also argued that 75% of Zimbabwean households are poorer than they were in 1991 when the country embarked on the economic structural adjustment programme (ESAP), which was being sponsored by the IMF and the World Bank. This view was also supported by scholars like John Manyanya who is of the opinion that NEPAD is bound to fail because it is premised on the same conditions as the failed ESAP. It is alleged that the neo-liberal approach to

development would only benefit the western countries. Jonathan Moyo argued that the western imposed neo-liberal path of development being done under the so-called “partnership” would entail that Africans remain subservient in their own countries. He contends that NEPAD is not aimed at empowering the masses because it is against land redistribution programmes just like what happened during IMF/WB economic reform programmes. President Mugabe at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg said,

For us in Zimbabwe, the agenda of sustainable development has to be reasserted, with a vigorous, democratic and progressive interventionist state and public sector capable of playing a full and responsible developmental role. We are ready to defend the agenda of the poor and we are clear that we can only do that if we do not pander to foreign interests or answer to false imperatives that are not clearly alien and inimical to the interests of the poor who have given us the mandate to govern them but are also hostile to the agenda for sustainable development. In Zimbabwe we understand only too well that sustainable development is not possible without agrarian reforms that acknowledges, in our case, that land comes first before all else, and that all else grows from and of it. This one asset that not only defines the Zimbabwean personality and demarcates sovereignty but also that has got a direct bearing on the fortunes of the poor and prospects of their immediate empowerment and sustainable development. Inequitable access to land is at the heart of poverty, food insecurity and lack of development in Zimbabwe. Consequently, the question of agrarian reforms has, in many developing countries, to be high on the agenda of sustainable development if we are to meet the targets that are before us for adoption at this summit.

Robert Mugabe was thus going against the NEPAD dictates of respecting property rights and adhering to good economic governance principles, all being done to reconstitute land to Zimbabweans. According to Tendi (2011) Western double standards strengthened Mugabe’s argument to bury his head in the sovereignty argument that in turn was supported by other African leaders. Mugabe thus sanctioned fast track land acquisitions where white-owned commercial farms were violently seized. Human rights were flagrantly violated as ‘Zanuists’ did not respect the rule of law. Tendi (2011) concludes that to argue that “these developments are the consequence of bad leadership cannot be disputed.”

President Mugabe argued that the NEPAD plan and its APRM is a “super structural adjustment program” for Africa because it does not depart fundamentally from previous programs designed by the IMF and the WB. Nepadists quickly embraced the ‘NEPAD project’ and deliberately did not make an attempt to analyse why SAPs failed in Africa. The plan ‘erroneously’ aims at integrating Africa further into an asymmetric system that is dominated by a few powerful countries. The Mugabeists or ZANU-PF elites argued that government must take stock of events of the past; this would therefore determine the terms of Africa’s re-engagement with its former colonisers. Kamete (2003) noted that Mugabe’s argument had found resonance in Africa and the developing world, because some of his critique of globalisation is correct. Some of the statements from the British government and the European Union on Zimbabwe lack the tone and understanding that is necessary for a more realistic engagement with former colonial countries.

The Mugabe led ZANU-PF government was also very critical about the APRM. They questioned the rationale of adhering to western models of democracy. President Mugabe went on to propose that the APRM must recognise that countries in Africa are independent and as such their sovereignty must be respected. Arguably it seems that a peer review mechanism that follows the western model of democracy in Africa will not work since African regional leaders shared the same views with Mugabe of not interfering with the day to day running of their neighbouring countries. The former Mozambican president, Joachim Chissano at one point remarked, “there has been a tendency by some big powers to put a blanket over the history of the freedom struggle by portraying heroes of the freedom struggle as anti-democratic and even dictators, we cannot in SADC condone these views, we are democrats and we want democracy to work according to the will of the people in each of our countries (Good, 2002). Benjamin Mkapa the former Tanzanian president also asserted that Mugabe was a champion of democracy and went on to argue that Mugabe was defending the democratic rights of his people (Good, 2002). Arguably a peer review mechanism that follows the western model of democracy in Africa is on a shaky foundation and will not work since some African regional leaders seem to share the Mugabe argument of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states. What this entails is that the majority of the Zimbabwean general populace will continue to exist in a ‘death cycle’, an unnatural living death: life which is denied its fullness. They are therefore hopeless men and women victimised by an endless invisible war which might not end as political parties continue to pull in different directions. This makes it difficult for the Zimbabwean citizens who have not benefited from the land reform programme and the indigenisation and empowerment initiative that has already degenerated into a looting exercise by ZANU-PF political heavyweights and the politically well-connected.

## The MDC Formations

The two MDCs (during the Mugabe era) were ‘pro-Nepadists’ and subscribed to the neo-liberal ideology. The MDCs are a sibling of civil society. It is a paradox; the MDC arose out of grassroots activists who were against neo-liberalism because they as urbanites had not been insulated from the harsh realities of economic structural adjustment programmes (ESAPs). What is interesting is that it found itself entangled with a neo-liberal ideology as a campaigning strategy and therefore developed a neo-liberal survival strategy that would propel them into the corridors of power. They were assured of the much needed financial muscle from civic organisations abroad to dislodge ZANU-PF that they regard as undemocratic, authoritarian and only interested in patronage politics. They argue that liberation war politicians are only interested in power, wealth and office. Link (1994) opines that “the elite still behave with the same condescension towards the illiterate population, their conquering hero mentality sticks in the throat and the order of priorities still have not changed at all....there is little or no far reaching structural reform. The same still old wooden legs are still in service; they have simply been put into plaster. All efforts have been cosmetic.”

Morgan Tsvangirai and many of his supporters were of the view that if African leaders adhere to the dictates of NEPAD and the PRM benchmarks, then it may be a positive check on despots who abuse their powers and do not respect the rule of law. While addressing a rally Morgan Tsvangirai remarked, “this New Economic Partnership for Africa’s Development is a step in the right direction, for it is a pledge by the African leaders on a common vision and a firm conviction, that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries both individually and collectively on a path to sustainable development and at the same time participate actively in the world economy and body politic.” It must be pointed out that after the working people’s convention the MDC was entrusted with the workers and all those who were no longer in support of the ZANU-PF government to usher in a new government that would introduce good governance and respect the rule of law. These hopes sank after the 2002 presidential elections and the subsequent March 2008 harmonised elections. According to the Manchester Guardian (2002) newspaper, after the 2002 controversial presidential elections, Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya rushed to “convey to your Excellency and dear brother, congratulations and best wishes to your re-election.” Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania said that the people of Zimbabwe had spoken clearly and loudly while the South African ANC said that the will of the people of Zimbabwe has prevailed. NEPAD’s trustworthiness was in question.

Tendai Biti argued that if NEPAD and PRM are to work, African leaders must insist on uniform international standards of respect for human rights, respect national coffers and the holding of free and fair elections. This resonates with Thabo Mbeki’s proposition that Africa must unite through the NEPAD PRM initiative to bring about sustained improvement in the lives of the African people (Mahube, 2002). NEPAD through the PRM should defend democracy, good political and economic governance. NEPAD and the PRM have come under heavy criticism that it has failed to deal with African conflicts and problems and censure deviation from the democratic norm. In 2008, ZANU-PF and MDC-T had a fiercely contested March election which Morgan Tsvangirai won but the ZANU-PF party refused to give up power. In the re-run there was widespread violence that in the end Tsvangirai boycotted the election. The AU leaders and SADC accepted Robert Mugabe to continue as president in a coalition government. Tendai Biti complained that the irony of African leaders is that they are fond of saying one thing and doing exactly the opposite.

The PRM has also been criticised because of its voluntary nature in that very few African leaders, if any, are willing to avail them to review by other leaders because they guard their positions jealously. This is worsened by the fact that NEPAD does not have an enforcing mechanism to make African leaders respect the rule of law and good economic and political governance. There is therefore a lack of restraining mechanisms so that African leaders are made accountable to their actions. By failing to condemn one of their own, Africa was losing an opportunity, an opportunity of using NEPAD as “an initiative that can permanently reshape the African continent and bring about sustained improvement in the lives of African people, an opportunity that will not arise for some time.” John Makumbe opined that Africa was failing to police itself and show the world that it can be able to take a step forward to democracy rather than to remain stuck in the muck of autocracy and stagnation (The Guardian). Eddie Cross argued that by failing to condemn and restrain Mugabe, SADC leaders were not able to guarantee the world that what happened in Zimbabwe will not recur in South Africa, Namibia or elsewhere on the continent.

## The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union (ZCTU)

Civil Societies in Zimbabwe also have their own views on NEPAD and the PRM. Many civil society groups agree with the already cited observation by Edgar Tekere in the early 1990s that in Zimbabwe democracy is in the intensive care unit. In the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union (ZCTU) there are some who are of the opinion that NEPAD and the PRM is the best way forward as long as there are sufficient consultations. They argue that though the NEPAD-PRM has some fundamental flaws, the ZANU-PF government should have signed into the PRM. They also thought that if the coalition government of Zimbabwe, the GNU had subjected itself to the NEPAD PRM then

significant strides towards good governance and democracy would have been made. The basis of their argument was that, the GAR 53/144 of the 9th of December 1998 outlines the rights and responsibilities of individuals, groups and organisations of society to protect universally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms. Trade Unionists argue that the ZANU-PF government has manipulated the constitutional and elective processes in Zimbabwe hence principles of good governance, rule of law and respect of human rights have been violated. They go on to argue that characteristics of a humanitarian crisis have manifested themselves in poor health delivery, attacks on human rights defenders like Jestina Mukoko and systematic violence against perceived supporters of the MDC-T party. There has also been serious militarisation of politics and politicisation of the army and police. Arguably, the point of departure will be voluntarily subjecting the government of the day to the NEPAD PRM which will be a restraining mechanism on the government of the day to adhere to principles of good political and economic governance processes that will benefit the ordinary person in the street.

Leftists in the ZCTU argue that workers must never embrace neo-liberalism as a form of economic development. Lovemore Matombo argued that workers had to resist this neo-liberal onslaught. Addressing a rally he said “we cannot continue to be used by these men, the MDC, the workers will kill us” (Gumbo, 2002). Munyaradzi Gwisai, a former MDC socialist MP called for mass action arguing that freedom is always forcefully taken and not given on a silver plate. He argued that civic movements had failed to make any meaningful progress against Mugabe’s dictatorship and the economically clueless MDC-T. The workers therefore had to disassociate themselves from the MDC who out of ideological crisis were now embracing the NEPAD-PRM neo-liberal agenda.

### **Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition**

The crisis in Zimbabwe coalition (CZC) is made up of civil society groups, for the promotion of human rights and good governance. They are of the view that human rights violations in Zimbabwe are being perpetrated by the ZANU-PF party, especially its sponsored militia. Brian Kagoro argued that this affects the entire continent and must be treated as a matter of urgency by African states and institutions, with the involvement of local and regional civil society groups. The CZC opine that a way must be found to address the Zimbabwean problem. They are concerned that the NEPAD document is silent on empowering women and on the treatment of the African ruling elite who plunder their countries enriching themselves through corruption and keep themselves in power through devious means.

The CZC is against the “bicycle theory” in which African leaders race ahead and engage themselves in commitments with the Developed Countries (DCs) and adopt neo-liberal policies that are arguably not arising from democratic outcomes in African Countries. On one hand the DCs support the bicycle theory in which African leaders will arguably continue racing without stopping to see whether they have made the wrong turn, because they might lose momentum and fall. This entails that the political leader is the one who makes the decision to join NEPAD even without any consultations. On the other hand the workers and other civil organisations are for the “bus theory” which advocates for gradual movement that is inclusive of the majority of the people ensuring that it will not be manipulated by the local ruling elite or the DCs. Nonetheless, the CZC believe that the restoration of the rule of law, respect of property rights and good governance can only take place if the Zimbabwean government of the day signs and subjects itself to the NEPAD peer review mechanism.

### **The War Veterans**

The Zimbabwe War Veterans Association (ZWVA) during the Mugabe era was against NEPAD and the PRM. They argued that if the Zimbabwean government of the day subjects itself to the NEPAD-PRM dictates it will be a betrayal of the liberation struggle and the 3rd Chimurenga. They posited that black empowerment that is mass and land based must continue unabated. The former chairman of the ZWVA, Patrick Nyaruwata vehemently argued that the liberation struggle was for the emancipation of all forms of oppression. The government of the day must therefore guard against neo-imperialism.

They viewed NEPAD’s acceptance of the neo-liberal ontology with emphasis on minimal state intervention as a strategy that is fundamentally flawed. They argued that the PRM does not work for it erodes the non-interventionist principle as enshrined in the UN charter. Interventionism will eventually culminate in forced and well calculated regime change agendas by neo-imperialists as what happened in Egypt, Ivory Coast and Libya. The ZWVA argued that Zimbabwe is a democratic country whose image is being tarnished by the MDC-T and its funders who are bent on a regime change agenda. NEPAD’s proposition that there will be equal partnership between Africa and the DCs is also a fallacy; there will never be equal partnership between a rider and a horse (The Herald newspaper, 11th May 2003). Arguably, when African leaders pretend to march towards the continent’s future alongside their ex-colonial masters, the former masters always ensure that Africa remains a junior partner in the race without any dignified future for itself. Paradoxically the WVA now led by Chris Mutsvangwa now supports the Mnangagwa led government’s signing into the NEPAD arguing that it shows that the Second Republic is reformist and democratic. Arguably such vacillations by the war veterans leadership show that most of them are

bootlickers. Below we give an overview of Emmerson Mnangagwa's promises after being assisted by the Zimbabwean military to be the first secretary of the ZANU-PF party and to occupy the highest political office in the land. His utterances are very important in that they are the benchmarks of measuring whether he is putting into practice what he promised.

### **Emmerson Mnangagwa, NEPAD and the Zimbabwe is Open for Business mantra: Any room for success?**

It is a fact that Mnangagwa is one of ZANU-PF's political heavy-weights who were the chief-advisors of President Robert Mugabe. Mnangagwa and others are responsible for the enduring party-military alliance that has kept ZANU-PF in power. It is interesting that after the military assisted in dislodging Mugabe from power Mnangagwa promised to undertake political and economic reforms. Noyes (2020) observed that Mnangagwa began "a public relations charm offensive aimed at reengagement with the international community. He often repeated slogans highlighting that Zimbabwe was under a "new dispensation," whereby he would allow political competition, cease repression, deliver free and fair elections, and invite international monitors back into the fold." Notably, what is worrying is that patronage politics, kleptocracy and kakistocracy have continued to be the hallmark of the 'new dispensation.'

Corruption has continued to rear its ugly head and Zimbabwe's economy has been cartelized. This is not amusing given that Mugabe had presided over these corrupt practices undertaken by members of his inner circle as well as the "ZANU-PF family." In 2016 Mugabe actually intimated that \$15 billion dollars could not be accounted for due to corruption. Though Mnangagwa has vowed to fight corruption, he has dismally failed to rein in corrupt members. Those who have been arrested have not been prosecuted. It seems that it's simply a ruse for the ordinary citizens to think that his government is doing something. His government has actually adopted a 'catch-and-release-strategy,' that has caused a lot of people to lose confidence in his government. Zimbabwe is thus the only country in the world whose citizens cannot have access to their money in banks and have to purchase it in the streets. Noyes (2020) submits that "corruption remains widespread under Mnangagwa. In July 2019, Zimbabwe's auditor general (AG) Mildred Chiri, released reports outlining massive mismanagement and corruption. Zimbabwe ranks 160 out of 180 countries on Transparency International's corruption perceptions index. In October 2019, the U.S. ambassador to Zimbabwe, Brian Nichols, said that corruption was the number one cause of the economic collapse in Zimbabwe, costing the country more than \$1 billion a year."

It must be pointed out that the Mnangagwa led government has promised not only Zimbabweans but also the international community that it will be reformist. However, little has been achieved in this regard. The Mnangagwa led government has continued on an authoritarian path. Many allege that his military insulated government has actually been more ruthless, corrupt and tribal favouring mainly those of Karanga lineage. According to Noyes (2020) "in apt description, a serving member of parliament characterized Mnangagwa's reform efforts as putting "mascara on a frog,"... the Mnangagwa government continues to prevent and violently suppress political protests, and the media remain heavily biased in favour of the ruling party... Human rights abuses, arrests, and disappearances of opposition members and supporters continue under Mnangagwa."

Mnangagwa deployed members of the security sector to crack down on demonstrators on the 1st of August 2018 resulting in six deaths and many people being injured. Security sector brutality in the post-Mugabe era has actually increased. Many people allege that it is now the gun that is leading government other than the other way round were the civilians are the ones supposed to lead government. Noyes in an interview with an opposition official was told that "there is no separation between Mnangagwa and the military, Mnangagwa uses the military to achieve his ends, commercially and politically." The Mnangagwa led government has not performed well on the economic front. The Zimbabwean economy has continued to deteriorate that there is nothing to talk about with regard to a government run economy. Many people especially civil servants, are of the view that the government has failed in its mandate to run the country well and improve the lives of the general citizenry; in fact the government has introduced a lot of taxes as a way of raising money for their upkeep.

Having discussed the ZANU-PF, MDC and civil society views on NEPAD and the PRM it must be pointed out that at a civil society consultative meeting on Zimbabwe, it was noted with grave concern that there are serious violations of democratic principles aggravated by lack of good governance inter-alia. It was suggested at the meeting that the Zimbabwean government must invite human rights investigators from the UN and the ACHPR to visit Zimbabwe and investigate human rights violations. It was also advised that SADC must see to it that the Zimbabwean government of the day comply with the provisions of the Windhoek declaration, condemning human rights violations and exert pressure on the ruling elite to remedy the situation. Arguably, if the Zimbabwean government of the day agrees to voluntarily subject itself to the NEPAD-PRM, through pressure from its peers it would be coerced into abiding with the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CATCIDTP) and incorporate its provisions in its domestic legislation.

Given NEPAD-PRM's existence Zimbabwe may successfully move out of its socio-economic and political doldrums and at the same time entrench a solid foundation for good political and economic governance. It cannot be disputed that NEPAD has fallen victim to realities of African politics. To expect African leaders to all of a sudden conform to NEPAD dictates is a false belief. Nonetheless ideas of NEPAD have given a wider legitimacy to basic ideas on governance that cannot go away. As already noted, the political and economic policies by the Zimbabwean coalition government, the GNU, were unsustainable. This is because they had parallel eco-political ideologies. Arguably, the politics of economic policymaking accentuated the ruling elite in ZANU-PF and the two MDC formations' desire to enrich them. They were all engrossed in 'politics of the stomach.' Apparently public policies have become fragile and unpredictable, and have little credibility on the Zimbabwean majority. Unpredictable policy shifts are very disastrous for they scare away potential investors.

Though some civil society groups correctly observed that there are some fundamental flaws in NEPAD and its PRM, they must lobby the Zimbabwean government of the day to engage it. This is one way of ensuring that the government of the day; be it a ZANU-PF, and MDC or a GNU will be accountable not only to its citizens but its peers as well. Comprehensive pressure from its AU peer governments in the region and the continent at large may carry the day as this will entail that there is political will from African regional leaders to address the Zimbabwean problems. Sam Moyo correctly observed that the "fast track" land redistribution exercise has redressed some of the imbalances of the legacy of racially skewed land ownership. However it has also opened up new inequalities and challenges that are apparent in the struggle between ZANU-PF and the Chamisa led MDC-A to agree on economic policies and political reforms that must be adopted by the Mnangagwa led government. This explains why the MDC-A has always threatened to economically and politically sabotage the Mnangagwa led government by making sure that the country is ungovernable. Those who refute NEPAD and the PRM must become aware that embracing the NEPAD project entails the promotion of sound political and economic governance principles. It is one way of exploiting into service some African leaders like Abdulaye Wade and former leaders like Thabo Mbeki and Olusegun Obasanjo and others who will be willing to set standards for good governance to 'peer lead' NEPAD activities at consultancy level. This will envisage the adoption of the PRM code of conduct.

Contrary to the ZANU-PF claim that Zimbabwe's problems have emanated from the land redistribution programme, Edward Lahiff (2003) suggests that the problems are neither about land nor some unfinished colonial business. The problems being experienced are a crisis of bad governance, authoritarianism and political legitimacy. Arguably these democratic and good governance deficits are suffocating development in Zimbabwe. It is beyond any reasonable doubt, that the NEPAD-PRM is the panacea to crises of this magnitude. Notably, arguments by NEPAD critics that its voluntary nature will not work because constructive engagement between ZANU-PF and the MDC-A has not made a major break-through are reductionist. What is needed is patience; sub regional and continental structures that promote good governance must have a combination of voluntary and mandatory processes.

During Mugabe's long reign political leaders who had wanted to engage ZANU-PF and the two MDC formations either found them chasing Mugabe's tail or not making any head or tail of what really is the strategy of the opposition parties in Zimbabwe. Ambassador Christopher W. Dell in his paper, "The End is Nigh" opined that "Mugabe is more clever and more ruthless than any other politician in Zimbabwe....he is a brilliant tactician and has long thrived on his ability to abruptly change the rules of the game, radicalize the political dynamic and force everyone else to react to his agenda." Commenting on the MDC-T leadership he wrote, "Zimbabwe's opposition is far from ideal....the current leadership has little executive experience and will require massive hand holding and assistance if they ever come to power." He went on to point out that Morgan Tsvangirai's major flaw was that he was not open to intellectual academic assistance, was uncertain and did not have a sound judgement and could be an albatross around the people's necks once in power. The MDC-M did not have a large following and arguably did not make a major impact on the political scene.

NEPAD and its PRM must be seen as a long term project that will eventually embolden good political and economic governance and democracy on the entire African continent. The promise of aid and investment from the western countries and the work by the Mo-Ibrahim foundation to rank countries, stimulate debate and promote continental good governance. It supports the work of the APRM and might eventually bring more countries on board. Civic organizations in Zimbabwe must therefore continue to exert pressure on the government of the day to avail itself into the NEPAD-PRM. Ultimately, it is the people and not the leadership who carry the day. Pressure from peers will in the end influence adherence to good governance and democracy in Zimbabwe as political leaders want recognition from other African leaders, be it the ZANU-PF leadership or the MDC.

The proposed amendments by the SADC troika can only be done as a result of peer pressure on the Zimbabwean Second republic by SADC member countries and the AU. What the AU and SADC leaders must comprehend is that Zimbabweans are yearning for a 'second independence' from a political leadership whose conduct of public affairs has marred and impinged economic development. Zimbabwe must avoid the 'Zambian syndrome' were the Movement for Multi-party Democracy was even more corrupt and had political leaders who were bent on wealth accumulation at the expense of the majority of Zambian ordinary people. It is easy to be

pessimistic about the Zimbabwean prospects, but there are signs of real hope. NEPAD and the PRM have opened up a window of opportunities which if exploited will be the answer to redressing the Zimbabwean problem. It is evident that the pressure that was exerted on the ZANU-PF government and the two MDC formations by the AU and SADC leaders in 2008 paid dividend as leaders of all the parties agreed to come to the negotiating table and try to find solutions to the Zimbabwean problem. This culminated in the formation of a GNU. A new Zimbabwean constitution is now in existence and what is needed is peer pressure from neighbouring countries so that political and economic reforms are done in accordance to SADC leaders' propositions. The new constitution will be a self-restraining mechanism for the current government to adhere to good governance principles especially now that SADC countries are calling for the unconditional removal of economic sanctions. Being part of NEPAD and its PRM will therefore propel and enable Zimbabwe's movement in the good political and economic governance direction.

The Zimbabwean people have braved themselves this far, if they "capitulate, it is because they are victims of force and injustice (*rerum novurum*)," (Miranda, 1971). They are being kept in a state of disempowerment; what might force them to surrender before the system is the widespread institutional sadism which encircles them with hunger (Miranda, 1971). Thabo Mbeki in his Gallagher speech proposed that the people must be active participants and not passive observers on governance matters that concern them. It cannot be denied that SAPs exacerbated hardships and caused further economic decline in Africa, even so, valuable time will be lost if African governments refuse to embrace NEPAD and its PRM. K.Y Amoako noted with concern that only one country in Sub-Saharan Africa was on track to reduce infant mortality rate and only six countries were on track to cut malnutrition in half by 2015. Given that NEPAD demands for the reduction in poverty, promotion of accountability amongst the ruling African elite, Zimbabwe must be part of such developments. NEPAD and its PRM are commendable points of departure from 'the nothing good comes from Africa syndrome.' The good thing is that the Zimbabwean president E.D. Mnangagwa has appended his signature that Zimbabwe be part of NEPAD. It is one thing to sign into NEPAD and another to make a break with the ZANU-PF way of political and economic administration. Given this scenario, to discard NEPAD and its PRM will be synonymous to throwing both the bath water and the baby. It is not easy to break the ground and it will take time for the NEPAD-PRM ideal to take root and have full expression. Some may view ZANU-PF continued authoritarianism and heavy handedness as a treacherous lack of democracy and good governance but they must understand that 'Rome was not built in a day.' If the Mnangagwa led government is pressured to subject itself to a peer review scrutiny, this may influence sustainable political and economic development.

Conclusively, we strongly opine that if the loose ends of NEPAD and PRM are tied it might influence a return to good governance in Zimbabwe since it will be peer reviewed time and again. Zimbabweans must take advantage of NEPAD and the PRM to lobby the government of the day to avail itself to the NEPAD PRM scrutiny on good political and economic governance. Voluntary subjection to peer pressure from its peers will be a restraining mechanism on the Zimbabwean government to be more democratic. The argument is that the formation of the GNU was a result of pressure on the Mugabe led ZANU-PF government and the two MDC formations to come together and find a way forward. It therefore becomes apparent that comprehensive peer pressure from its neighbours in the SADC region and the AU may carry the day as this shows that there is political will by African leaders to address the Zimbabwean problems. It must be pointed out that the Mnangagwa led second Republic in February 2020, acceded to the NEPAD Peer Review Mechanism and this will warrant further research on whether this was not synonymous to putting the cart before the horse and whether his government will walk the talk.

## Abbreviations

ACHPR	African Commission on Human and People's Rights
AIPPA	Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
CZC	Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition
CATCIDTP	Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
DCs	Developed Countries
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
EU	European Union
GNU	Government of National Unity
GPA	Global Political Agreement
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai
MDC-M	Movement for Democratic Change-Mutambara
MDC-A	Movement for Democratic Change Alliance
NAI	New Africa Initiative
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PRM	Peer Review Mechanism
POSA	Public Order and Security Act
SADC	Southern African Development Community
WB	World Bank
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union

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