



AN UPDATE LETTER FROM BEN FREETH, MCF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Update on the Zimbabwean Elections and other developments



Dr Nevers Mumba (Zambia), head of SADC Election Observer Mission



*A fleeting view of
Cape Town from Devil's Peak*

I went down to Cape Town recently after my cousin, very tragically, committed suicide. On the morning after the funeral I felt compelled to climb up to the top of Devil's Peak next to Table Mountain in the mist and rain and wind at the end of a big Cape winter storm and read out Ephesians chapter 6 about our battle not being against flesh and blood but against the principalities and powers of this dark world. Immediately after reading it, the mist cleared and opened a wonderful window to look down on Cape Town and the ocean beyond.

I believe that the battle between the old Africa of dictatorship and kleptocracy and corruption is coming up against the new Africa of democracy and the rule of law and the blessing of development out of the hardship of abject poverty. I believe that much of this battle is spiritual. Please pray that things move in the right direction in this regard, especially where the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Zimbabwe's August 2023 elections are concerned. There is still much discussion going on behind the scenes regarding the severely flawed election process.

Constitutional Court Case: Please also pray for the Constitutional Court that will have a hearing on 7 November in South Africa regarding our Zimbabwean farmers' court case. It is a long culmination of successful legal battles where we hope to have the court declare that the South African government's involvement in closing the regional human rights court, the SADC Tribunal, has a financial prejudice element to it. From there, the door to damages claims will hopefully be opened, giving the South African government an incentive to reopen the Tribunal to cases where justice has failed citizens in individual African countries.



Constitutional Court of South Africa - photo credit: eNCA

Compensation/ Restitution: There is much going on to try to get Zimbabwe's dispossessed commercial farmers/title deed owners to sign up to a highly suspect and unacceptable government treasury bond deal. We are advising title deed owners not to touch it.

Rwanda: I was very blessed to travel to Rwanda recently to the first African-focused Christian Economic Forum gathering. It was remarkable to see what Rwanda has achieved since the horrific genocide of 1994. They courageously grasped the nettle and made sure that 1.9 million cases were heard to bring accountability regarding the genocide. Further to that they did something truly remarkable: they surveyed the land and issued in excess of 10 million title deeds! By so doing they literally created vast wealth from thin air. Each of those title deeds now has significant value. This means that owners can now take a long-term view of their land and develop it properly and steward it. It was so encouraging to see how that is happening and how well organised, productive and developed Rwanda has become in such a short period of time. It shows what Justice and the rule of law and property rights can achieve.



At the building where the Belgian UN commandos were murdered by Rwandan forces during the genocide

Foundations for Farming: We ran a conservation agriculture training course recently in the Chegutu district for destitute farm workers and others, and it went very well. It is wonderful to be part of imparting such knowledge to the poorest of the poor. The highlight of the course was when the trainers demonstrated the “holing out” process for each of the lines with the plant stations. The course participants divided up into teams of two, and two old ladies showed up everyone else by completing the holing out of plant stations for 5 weeks of food in 7 minutes! The course was slightly marred by ruling party (ZANU PF) officials arriving with the aim of closing things down. However, when they spent some time with us, they realised it was a good thing and they want a course to be run for themselves!



The “holing out” process - planting holes are dug at pre-measured intervals

The Seed Project: 13,360 of our free, open-pollinated “EET with Joy” seed packs have been distributed all over the country ahead of the rains next month. Each seed pack can produce enough maize to feed a family of 5 for a year. Using the Foundations for Farming methods, these seed packs will feed 66,800 people. This is a wonderful gift, especially as the seed is true and can be harvested for growing again in years to come, and for blessing neighbours who cannot afford to buy seed.



*Distribution of free seed packs – photo credit Zimbabwe Victims Support Fund
(distribution partner in Matabeleland)*

The School: The Chegutu school we helped build is continuing to develop and bless 183 children who would otherwise not be educated. This is a fantastic gift for each one of those children.



Excited learners in one of the classrooms at the new Chegutu school

Persecution: Please pray for the persecuted. In the wake of the election there has been a significant amount of intimidation. Gift Konjana (MCF) has had numerous visits and threats. Job Sikhala, an opposition Citizens Coalition for Change MP, remains in jail without trial after nearly 500 days. Even the Zambian President, Hakainde Hichilema, has had death threats* from our former Minister of Justice, Patrick Chinamasa, who was largely responsible for the disbanding of the SADC Tribunal.

**The reason for ZANU PF's death threats is that President Hichilema, who is currently chair of the SADC region's Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, was responsible for appointing former Zambian deputy president Dr Nevers Mumba as head of the SADC Elections Observer Mission (SEOM). And, for the first time ever, the SEOM refused to endorse Zimbabwe's August 2023 elections, stating that they were fraught with numerous irregularities and fell short of the requirements of the SADC Guidelines.*

Please pray that the evils of threats, intimidation and jail without trial are swept away.

Thank you all, once again for your prayers and support. We so appreciate it. We hope and pray for a new era in this land where a Rwanda-type miracle can unfold.

God bless you all

With love and heartfelt thanks

Ben



Ben Freeth

Executive Director

Mobile: +263 773 929 138 (Zimbabwe)

Whatsapp: +44 7539 070 122

E-mail: benfreeth7@gmail.com

Mike Campbell Foundation UK

Claire Freeth, Chairman

Woodgate, Oad Street

Borden, Nr Sittingbourne

Kent ME9 8JX, England

Claire Freeth mobile: +44 775 600 1400

E-mail: claire@mikecampbellfoundation.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MikeCampbellFoundation/>

Website: www.mikecampbellfoundation.com