

TIMELINE OF THE ANC'S APPROACH TO THE CRISIS IN ZIMBABWE 2000-2003

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DATE	STEPS TAKEN	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
2000		
FEB 12-13 REFERENDUM HELD ON THE NEW DRAFT CONSTITUTION		
15 February	The election directorate announces a victory for the "No" campaign. A total of 697,754 people -- 54.6 percent -- voted against the constitution, while 578,210 voted in favour.	
26-27 Feb	The violent occupation of white farms by 'War veterans begins.' The strategy was decided on by Zanu-PF leaders, and it is organised and co-ordinated by the military. The military deploys between one and two thousand personnel to lead the occupations. It also provides food and transport to the War vets. The occupations are motivated, in part, by anger within Zanu-PF at the open support given by some white farmers and businessmen to the MDC.	<p>According to a senior Zanu-PF source quoted in the <i>Guardian</i>:</p> <p>"No one trusted the war veterans to organise it on the scale the leadership was thinking of. They thought the veterans would just loot the farm houses and go home so the army was brought in to make sure they got onto the farms and stayed there. So they called in the military men who know how to do these things. The soldiers were also a restraining force, to make sure it only went so far. They didn't want it getting out of hand."</p> <p>"You must not underestimate the anger at the farmers who support the MDC, so it was a logical step to make land the issue. Once that is decided, then of course the state will use all the means at its disposal," he said.</p> <p>(Chris McGreal, "Army set up farm occupations, says insider" <i>Guardian</i> 5 May 2000)</p>
21 April	<p>President Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Mbeki of South Africa, Chissano of Mozambique, and Nujoma of Namibia, hold a summit meeting at Victoria Falls. In a press conference following the summit Mbeki and Chissano came out in support of Mugabe referring to him as a "champion of the rule of law".</p> <p>Following the summit Ronnie Mamoepa, spokesman for the SA Department of</p>	<p>According to <i>SouthScan</i> (Vol 15 No.9 5 May 2000) Mbeki had lobbied "leaders of the US, Europe, Britain and Southern Africa to back a rescue plan for Zimbabwe, which he presented to Mugabe at the summit. Mugabe reportedly agreed to order his 'war veterans' to end their occupations of farms, hold free and fair elections and tone down his inflammatory rhetoric. In return, Britain agreed to fund Mugabe's</p>

	Foreign Affairs stated that the resolution of the land question in Zimbabwe was “central to the resolution of economic problems in Zimbabwe”, and that Britain and the US had been called on to give funds to help address the problems. (<i>Southscan</i> May 2000)	land reform... while the US\$150m held back by the IMF would also be released. SA would lobby the multilateral financial organisations and local businesses on Zimbabwe’s behalf.”
4 May	<p>In televised address to the nation Mbeki claims that the current crisis in Zimbabwe is the direct result of a failure to address the land question.</p> <p>He stated that the South African government had been in contact with both the British and the Zimbabweans. The objectives of this contact included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • getting “a common commitment to solve the Zimbabwe land question” (according to the 1998 framework); • “to end the violence that has attended the effort to find this solution; • “to create the conditions for the withdrawal from the farms they have occupied of the demonstrating war veterans”. 	<p>For Mbeki, “The land question, a direct product of the colonisation of Zimbabwe, essentially and substantially, remained still to be addressed. The results of the failure to deal with this matter in the manner agreed in 1998 is what has led to the events which, as we have said, have dominated our media in the recent period.”</p> <p>Mbeki lambastes the “mischievous effort to create and feed a psychosis of fear in our own country, based on nothing else but racist prejudices, assumptions and objectives.”</p>
5 May	<p>Mbeki speaks at the opening of the Zimbabwe Trade Fair in Bulawayo, in the presence of President Mugabe and many of his government colleagues. He is photographed walking hand-in-hand with Mugabe.</p> <p>Although Mbeki later cites this speech as evidence that he has criticised violent land seizures all along, taken as a whole (and in context) it represents a clear statement of support for Mugabe.</p> <p>Mbeki begins the speech by publicly saluting Mugabe and “the rest of the leadership and the people of Zimbabwe for what they did to ensure our liberation from apartheid tyranny.”</p> <p>Mbeki (following Mugabe’s line) states that the conflict that has erupted in Zimbabwe is the result of the unresolved land question. He does call for it to be addressed in “a co-operative and non-confrontational manner”.</p>	<p>Mbeki states, “Land dispossession was one of the most iniquitous results of the colonisation of Zimbabwe... Both of our countries, which experienced extensive land dispossession of the indigenous majority by those who colonised our countries, are confronted by the challenge to address this colonial legacy.”</p> <p>“We trust that ways and means will be found to end the conflict that has erupted in some areas of Zimbabwe, occasioned by the still unresolved land question in this country. Peace, stability, democracy and social progress in Zimbabwe are as important for yourselves as they are for the rest of the region." (This last paragraph is quoted in <i>ANC Today</i> 23 March 2001).</p>
10 May	Addressing the National Assembly Mbeki accuses critics of his refusal to condemn Mugabe of racism.	“Here one has a black government across the Limpopo which is perceived to be doing particular things regarding this land matter. What guarantee do we have that the black Government this side of the Limpopo will not do the same things?

		That is what is driving this demand, not the resolution of the Zimbabwe question.”
23 May	In an notice of motion read out in parliament by Pallo Jordan the ANC condemns the loss of human life, brutality and thuggery in Zimbabwe. It questions whether free and fair elections are possible in Zimbabwe because of the political violence and intimidation in that country. (<i>Sapa</i>).	
	During a visit to the US Mbeki dismisses the claim by the National Democratic Institute that free and fair elections are impossible in Zimbabwe.	"We don't agree... It is not correct to be making any prejudgments. If you stand there a month before the elections and already discredit them, I don't think that is correct," Mbeki told reporters. (<i>Sapa</i>)
24 May	At a press conference, Themba Nobathana, the political adviser to ANC Chief Whip Tony Yengeni, denied that there was any contradiction between the parliamentary motion and Mbeki's statement. He accuses the media of misinterpreting the motion.	<p>“There was a commitment by President Robert Mugabe to ensure free and fair elections, in terms of the agreement reached at Victoria Falls with other regional leaders”, he said.</p> <p>"We believe that President Mugabe will implement the resolutions, which among other things, recognises the need for free and fair elections. Our motion was echoing that." (<i>Sapa</i>)</p>
25 May	Pieter Venter, the head of the ANC's media in Parliament and the official who drafted the motion resigns. He says the ANC in Parliament was forced to backtrack after intervention from ANC headquarters.	Venter said that the notice of motion had meant exactly that -- that the loss of life, brutality and thuggery meant that free and fair polls were, in fact, not possible. (<i>Sapa</i>)
	The South African Parliament increases the size of its delegation to observe the Zimbabwean parliamentary election from 7 to 20. ANC Chief Whip Tony Yengeni is to head the delegation.	Yengeni states, "The presence of South African parliamentarians will also contribute to the creation and promotion of a free and fair election in that country."
27 May	Following a meeting between the ANC and Zanu-PF in Johannesburg, Kgalema Motlanthe strongly condemned the British government's refusal to provide funds for land redistribution in Zimbabwe unless certain conditions were met.	Motlanthe said: "The ANC does not accept any conditions put on funds (for land reform) by the British government." "They should come to the party to honour their own promises," he added. The British government should not attach a list of instructions to funding, Motlanthe said: "It is filibustering aimed at compounding an already difficult situation... We believe that is their intention." Motlanthe denied that the ZANU-PF government was using the land issue as an opportunistic political weapon to offset the consequences of a deteriorating economic and political situation. (<i>Sapa</i> report)
7 June	Parliamentary delegation, lead by Yengeni, leaves for Zimbabwe.	

16 June	In a speech to a <i>Youth Conference on National Building</i> Mbeki describes the “defining feature” of South African society, are the racial disparities “in terms of the distribution of wealth, income, opportunity and skills.”	“If we do not address these disparities, which, like the land question in Zimbabwe, were central to the struggle for liberation in this country, at some point in future we will experience an enormous and angry explosion by those who remain disadvantaged.”
20 June	In Zimbabwe Yengeni claims (despite protestations to the contrary by the MDC) that violence has declined. He implies that what violence there is, has been perpetrated equally by Zanu-PF and the MDC.	He states, "Reports by various stakeholders to the South African observers indicate that the presence of observers has resulted in a drastic decline in the levels of intimidation and violence. However, sporadic incidents of violence have been reported throughout the country." "Although most rallies [attended by the observers] ended without incident, reports were received of Zanu-PF members or MDC supporters attacking each other."
24-24 JUN	PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ARE HELD IN ZIMBABWE	
27 June	Registrar-General Tobaiwa Mudede announces the election results: Zanu-PF wins 61 seats, the Movement for Democratic Change 58, and Zanu-Ndonga one. However, officials said afterwards there had been a "computing error", and the tally was revised to 62 seats for the ruling party, 57 for the MDC and one for Zanu-Ndonga.	
	Tony Yengeni, issuing a statement on behalf of the observer delegation, calls on the all parties to accept the outcome of the election. The statement implied that the pre-election violence had not materially altered the result of the poll. Although it condemned the violence it did not name those responsible.	"The delegation has been impressed by the Zimbabwean people's wholehearted commitment to the process of democracy," the statement said. "In the meantime we call on the leaders of Zanu-PF, MDC, all other political parties, and the people of Zimbabwe to accept and respect the outcome of the polls."
	The ANC release a press statement congratulating ZANU (PF) on their victory. The statement claimed that the election had “underscored the fact that democracy is taking root not only in Zimbabwe but in the sub-region and, indeed, in the whole of Africa.”	The statement describes ZANU (PF)'s victory as “a milestone in the political growth of Zimbabwe.” It also appeals to those “who lost in their various constituencies to accept defeat with honour.” And it concludes, “Once again, well done ZANU (PF), well done President Robert Mugabe. Well done Mr Morgan Tsvangirai and other leaders of political parties that contested the elections. By your exemplary conduct you have proved the prophets of doom wrong.” (Released by Smuts Ngonyama, Office of the ANC Presidency.)
	In a government statement Mbeki welcomes	“South Africa is particularly heartened

	the conduct of the parliamentary elections in Zimbabwe, and endorses the results as reflecting the will of the people.	by the massive turnout of ordinary people impelled by the desire to shape the destiny of their own country. We are certain that the entire leadership of Zimbabwe will not fail them! Like the rest of the world, South Africa is confident that all parties to the elections will respect and abide by the outcome as the expression of the democratic will of the people of Zimbabwe.” (DFA statement.)
	Yengeni, acting as Mbeki’s envoy, meets Mugabe for 90 minutes at Zimbabwe House in Harare.	According to the South African High Commissioner Jerry Ndou everyone at the meeting had expressed satisfaction at the way the election had gone and had expressed the hope that the post-election period would lead to a consolidation of democracy in Zimbabwe. According to an unnamed ANC source, "The South African government has promised to work closely with Zimbabwe, especially now after elections." (<i>Sapa</i>).
	Speaking to the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation after his meeting Yengeni criticised the European Union for condemning the conduct of the election.	"We thought the EU was supposed to be humble and at least allow Africans to express themselves, because we are Africans from the continent. But they jumped the gun and said the things that they said. That is very unfortunate. I think they should learn to allow Africans to be responsible for their own issues and take their cue from us." (<i>Sapa</i>).
28 June	Following a meeting the SA cabinet releases a statement welcoming “the conduct of the elections in Zimbabwe.”	Cabinet further resolved “to work with the government and people of that country as they address the many challenges that they face. In this regard, the President will appoint a Task Team of Ministers to work with their counterparts in pursuing economic recovery and stability in the region.”
7 August	In a statement the SADC heads of state congratulated the government and people of Zimbabwe on the conduct of the parliamentary elections. They expressed “satisfaction that the elections were held in a transparent, peaceful, free and fair environment, in accordance with our shared democratic principles and values.”	The statement condemned “the partisan and biased manner” in which the international media had “misrepresented the land policy of the government of Zimbabwe”. They reiterated their “acceptance of the urgent need to effect land redistribution in Zimbabwe to address land hunger and poverty affecting millions of black Zimbabweans.” The statement welcomed “the assurance given by the President of Zimbabwe that the land reform programme would be handled peacefully, and within the provisions of the laws of Zimbabwe”.

		They called on the United Kingdom government to “honour its obligations” to fund land reform, and condemned the Zimbabwe Democracy Act of 2000 passed by the US Senate on 23 June.
4 Sept	Mbeki is asked in an interview whether he is disappointed about developments on the African continent. He says he is not and cites the Zimbabwean elections as indicating democratic progress.	He says, “In Zimbabwe one of the interesting things in that election was that you had a ruling party which came close to losing power. Yes, there were problems and violence but despite those problems it confirmed the viability of the democratic process.” (<i>Time Magazine</i> 4 th September)
13 Sept	After a two and two-and-a-half month delay the report of the SA parliamentary observer team is tabled in parliament. The report concludes that the poll broadly reflects the will of the Zimbabwean people, and that voting and counting were peaceful with negligible chance of foul play. It refuses to pin blame for pre-election violence on Zanu-PF.	The report acknowledged that, “many parties and organisations reported that the violence and intimidation emanated mainly from the ranks of Zanu-PF.” However, “The mission observed that no single party seemed to have a monopoly on the use of violence.” (<i>Sapa</i>).
20 Sept	Answering questions in Parliament Mbeki reiterates his view that the crisis in Zimbabwe is a product of the land question. And that the goal of the South African government is to assist the Zimbabweans in resolving that question. While he states that it is “incorrect that land should be illegally occupied” he argues that the Zimbabwean government is now pursuing its land redistribution policies within the framework of the law. He assures the house the Mugabe has publicly stated that “they would indeed remove people who have occupied land illegally” and that the police in Zimbabwe have acted to remove some people from the land. As a result of this steps, he states that he does not believe there “is any need for any [political] pressure on anybody on this matter”.	“What we have to help address in Zimbabwe is... the land dispossession of the majority of the people of Zimbabwe that took place as a result of the colonial system.” While this had to occur within the context of the Zimbabwean constitution, and the law, and should not threaten stability, the continued ownership by the white minority of large tracts of land in Zimbabwe was a “serious problem... and has to be addressed”. He dismissed the notion that the principle task of the South African government was to “stand on platforms and denounce the government of Zimbabwe”. However, he reiterated that the reason he would not do that was because it “is not going to result in addressing this colonial legacy”. He added that if this resulted “in the isolation of the President of the Republic of South Africa from some people, I do not mind. I do not mind at all. So long as we ensure this particular result [the overturning of the colonial legacy] is achieved.”
13 October	The ANC hosts a seminar of former liberation movements: MPLA of Angola, Frelimo of Mozambique, Swapo of Namibia and ZANU PF of Zimbabwe. The theme is	According to an ANC press statement the seminar would “analyse elections in Southern Africa with the view to sharing experiences, strengthen party-to-party

	<p>"Working for peace, stability, democracy and integrated development in Southern Africa." Kgalema Motlanthe led the SA delegation, while John Nkomo (Zanu PF national chairman and Minister of Home Affairs) would lead the Zimbabwean delegation.</p>	<p>relations and cooperation with the view to deepening the gains of the revolution in the region and analyse the balance of forces in Southern Africa, as well as consolidate progressive forces in the region.</p> <p>The different country presentations would focus on the "major characteristics of the present phase of struggle for transformation, programme of the party in this phase, mobilisation of social and motive forces in support of this programme." They would also analyse the "forces against change and transformation". (ANC statement 11 October)</p>
15 October	<p>The <i>Sunday Times</i> runs a report on the meeting entitled "Tightening their grip on party power: Southern African liberation movements brainstorm ways to beat opposition".</p> <p>The article states that the "former liberation movements of Southern Africa have launched a bid to tighten their grip on political power and halt the growing support for opposition movements in the region".</p>	<p>Mavivi Myakayaka-Manzini, head of international relations in the ANC, was quoted as saying:</p> <p>"Never before have these parties come together like this. We are linked not only in the agreements sealed through our governments but our relationships are also sealed in blood. We fought with each other in our battle for liberation."</p> <p>She said SA could learn from the "hurdles" of other countries. "In Zimbabwe the transition was smooth in the beginning but now they have come across some problems. We need to see what can be done and learn from that."</p>
2001		
24 January	<p>The <i>Cape Times</i> reports that Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma had sent a strongly worded letter to her British counterpart, Robin Cook, protesting at comments made by Peter Hain, Minister of state and the Foreign Office, criticising South African policy towards Zimbabwe. Dlamini Zuma implied that Hain's comments placed Mbeki's state visit to England later that year in jeopardy.</p>	<p>Hain had told the <i>Sunday Independent</i> (7 January) while on a social visit to South Africa, that the SA government's policy of constructive engagement had failed and was causing SA "considerable damage".</p> <p>The letter signed by Dlamini-Zuma said that the SA government found Hain's comments "deeply offensive" and "confirmation of the contempt in which he holds that [the SA] government". (<i>Cape Times</i> 24 January 2001)</p> <p>In his response Robin Cook, in a letter to Mrs Dlamini-Zuma, offered reassurance rather than an apology. "We are very clear we do not see a fundamental difference between the South African position on Zimbabwe and our own," said a Foreign Office spokesman. (<i>Financial Times</i> January 24th)</p>

	On the same day, in what is described as a demotion, Peter Hain is moved by Tony Blair from the Foreign Office to the position as a minister in the Department of Trade and Industry, responsible for energy.	According to the <i>Guardian</i> (26 Jan) "The official view from Downing Street and the Foreign Office was that he was moved to a domestic job to broaden his experience. The unofficial view, summarised by a colleague, was: "They wanted him out. The Foreign Office had been expecting him to go.""
16 February	Speaking at a parliamentary briefing Minister of Foreign Affairs Nkosazana Zuma said that South Africa would not condemn Zimbabwe for its internal policies.	She says, "If you are asking are we going to be combative, we are not. But we will do it in a way that builds bridges rather than spoils for war. We will not treat the Zimbabwe government as if it was an illegitimate government. It was elected in democratic elections that were free and fair. Don't try and push us into a combative role". (<i>Sunday Times</i> 18 February.)
27 February	In an address to Parliament on the situation in Zimbabwe ANC chief whip Tony Yengeni states that the Zanu-PF government is democratically elected.	"Zimbabwe is a democracy with a democratically elected government. We cannot only believe in the ballot box when it suits us. Let us leave the internal politics of our neighbours to the people of those countries but always reaffirming our commitment to justice, freedom of expression and the rule of law."
2 March	In a written question Mbeki is asked by Tony Leon: (1) Whether he intends taking any punitive steps against the Zimbabwean government if it does not fulfil its undertakings to him at the meeting to be held between himself and President Mugabe, as announced on or about 25 February 2001; if not, how does he intend obtaining compliance from President Mugabe; if so, what punitive steps?	Mbeki replies: "No, South Africa's objective is to contribute in the process of addressing the economic challenges facing Zimbabwe and to assist with the resolution of the land question. We believe that the efforts made to assist Zimbabwe in the spirit of good neighbourliness will produce better results. Punitive measure will set us back rather than advance the objectives stated above. The Leader of the Opposition's view of use of punitive measures will only set us back rather than advance the objectives stated above." (Question No. 277).
	In an interview with the Mail & Guardian the Myayaka-Manzini accused the media and the opposition of wanting the ANC to "outrightly just condemn, condemn." She said the reason "We can't do that at the ANC. Firstly, we have historical ties with Zanu-PF " especially with Zapu (Zimbabwe African People's Union), which is part and parcel of Zanu-PF now. These are our	When asked about the dismissal of the country's chief justice this week she implied that this was justified: "People have lost confidence in the judiciary and what is the cause? Deprivation of land and people not seeing what they fought for—transformation—that is the feeling in Zimbabwe and even in South Africa."

	comrades we fought with in the struggle ... Our relations have been sealed in blood."	(When challenged on this she back-tracked somewhat.) (<i>Mail & Guardian</i> 2 March 2002)
7 March	Following a meeting with his Zimbabwean counterpart, Patrick Chinamasa, Justice Minister Penuell Maduna told reporters that he was fully satisfied with Cde Chinamasa's comments on the state of Zimbabwe's judiciary.	"He (Cde Chinamasa) reassured me that there was no threat to the judiciary and that the Zimbabwe Government was committed to the rule of law," Mr Maduna said. "I am satisfied with the assurances given to me by the minister," he added. (<i>Herald</i> 8 March) (Chinamasa was President Mugabe's point man in the assault on the rule of law in Zimbabwe, and was responsible for purging the judiciary of independent minded judges.)
14 March	Answering questions in Parliament on Zimbabwe Mbeki claims that by solving the land question stability would be restored to that country.	Mbeki states: "Regarding Zimbabwe, our immediate common objective is to see what contribution we can make to address the economic challenges facing Zimbabwe. We have a common objective to resolve the land question in Zimbabwe so as to stabilize the situation politically and thereby create an environment conducive to economic recovery and development. This we do not only for the people of Zimbabwe but for the rest of the Southern African region." (Response to questions in National Assembly.)
23 March	In a 2000 word article in <i>ANC Today</i> Mbeki attacks critics of his Zimbabwe policy as racist. He claims that demands for condemnation of Mugabe are indicative of a deeply entrenched racism among white South Africans. In the article he writes, "Zimbabwe is not a province of South Africa but an independent state, with its own government, democratically elected by the people of Zimbabwe."	For Mbeki, "She [the proverbial Martian visitor] would see that what is required of us is that we must accept that some within white South African society are convinced that we are savages and that we must therefore do everything in our power to prove that we are not savages, to the satisfaction of white South Africa." [This strident attack on white South Africans, sits in marked contrast with Mbeki's refusal to condemn Mugabe.]
21 April	In <i>ANC Today</i> Pallo Jordan defends the ANC's policy towards Zimbabwe against criticism from Van Zyl Slabbert and Heribert Adam.	According to Jordan, "Whatever its faults, the government led by ZANU (PF) is a government elected by the majority of Zimbabweans in inclusive, non-racial elections. It has been returned to office in an election judged to be acceptable by the international community. No government in this country, prior to 1994, could make the same claim."

15 June	Justice Minister Penuell Maduna condemned the US for excluding Zimbabwe from the benefits of the United States' African Growth and Opportunity Act. He told a seminar of the United States' influential National Bar Association in Cape Town that in taking a position on President Robert Mugabe's government, the United States was punishing Zimbabwe's masses.	He said that selecting a few "good" countries for participation in Agoa and rejecting others, frustrated efforts at regional development. "It's not to our benefit for Zimbabwe to be excluded from the benefits, the opportunities and the projects of Agoa." (<i>Sapa</i>)
6 Sept	<p>The Committee of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers on Zimbabwe meets in Abuja, Nigeria, at the invitation of President Obasanjo. Ministers from Canada, Jamaica, Kenya, South Africa, Zimbabwe and the UK and the Australian High Commissioner to the UK attended. The meeting was chaired by Nigeria's foreign minister Sule Lamido. An agreement is reached which is supposed to restore peace, stability and democracy to Zimbabwe.</p> <p>It actually hardly refers to restoring democracy to Zimbabwe at all and focuses instead on "resolving the land question" (although it insists that this be done equitably and under the rule of law.)</p>	<p>The actual agreement, endorsing both Mugabe and Mbeki's line, states that:</p> <p>"Land is at the core of the crisis in Zimbabwe and cannot be separated from other issues of concern to the commonwealth, such as the rule of law, respect for human rights, democracy and the economy. A programme of land reform is, therefore, crucial to the resolution of the problem".</p> <p>The agreement calls for the "orderly implementation" of land reform and that it be carried out "with due regard to human rights, rule of law, transparency and democratic principles".</p> <p>The agreement does not call for the removal of farm invaders only that there be "no further occupation of farm lands". The UK also affirmed "commitment to significant financial contribution" to a land reform programme, along with the UNDP.</p>
2 October	<p>The Zimbabwe Supreme Court overturned an earlier judgement (Dec 2000) that banned the state from seizing land and ruled that the seizure of white owned farms could go ahead. With this ruling the Abuja agreement's requirement that land reform be pursued within the framework of the law was nominally satisfied.</p> <p>Of the five judges who issued this ruling, only one had partaken in the earlier decision. The four new judges, including Chief Justice Geoffrey Chidyausiku, were appointed to the Supreme Court last month following a purge of that institution. (<i>Daily Telegraph</i> 3rd October)</p>	<p>According to the <i>Times</i> (UK) Diplomats said that Mr Mugabe would present the judgment to the international community as proof of its adherence to the rule of law and to the agreement drawn up by Commonwealth foreign ministers in Abuja, Nigeria, last month to end the state-driven violence.</p> <p>The ruling follows Mr Chidyausiku's appointment to replace Mr Gubbay, who reluctantly resigned in March after being threatened with violence by supporters of Mr Mugabe's Zanu (PF) party. Mr Mugabe added three new judges, prompting accusations that he was "packing the court" to ensure that its decisions would be favourable to his regime.</p>
20 Dec	A four member ANC delegation led by Kgalema Motlanthe, Mosiuoa Lekota (ANC chairman), Sydney Mufamadi(NWC) and	In an interview on ZBC Mdladlana stated, "It's unfortunate that there are people who have decided to quote my

	Membathisi Mdladlana (Labour Minister) met with a Zanu-PF delegation led by John Nkomo (chairman).	president out of context. President Mbeki is a friend of Zimbabwe". "We have never even mentioned we will abandon Zimbabwe," he added. (<i>Sapa</i> 21 st December)
2002		
8 February	In his opening address to parliament Mbeki states that "we will work tirelessly to support the people of Zimbabwe in their quest to hold free and fair elections in their country. He announces the that the government would send a South African Observer Mission (SAOM) to Zimbabwe, headed by (former ANC MP) Dr Sam Motsuenyane.	Mbeki stated that "It is in the interest of the people of Zimbabwe and, indeed, the whole region that the government that emerges from the March elections is legitimate and enjoys the support of the majority." "Clearly, the mission and the conditions that our [observer] teams seek to create are one and one only: let the people of Zimbabwe speak through the ballot box!"
18 February	The SA government calls the decision by the EU to impose targeted sanctions on Zimbabwe "regrettable and unfortunate" saying they are likely to compound the situation.	"The people of Zimbabwe need to speak through the ballot box. In this regard, the South African Government calls on the International Community to spare neither strength nor effort towards assisting the people of Zimbabwe towards the creation of a climate conducive to free and fair elections." (<i>DFA statement</i>).
22 February	During a visit to Stockholm Mbeki is asked if he thought that political intimidation and violence in Zimbabwe would result in a vote that was not free and fair. He responded by saying: "The South African experience wouldn't lead me to that conclusion."	Mbeki said, "When we had the elections in 1994, 1,000 people died in the two months leading up to the elections. "There was a great deal of violence, a great deal of instability. But the elections took place and indeed everybody said that they reflected the will of the people of South Africa and that the elections were free and fair," Mbeki said. "As a South African, I have to measure what happens" in Zimbabwe "in terms of my experience." (<i>Sapa</i>)
28 February	Deputy President Jacob Zuma returns from a visit to Zimbabwe. He was accompanied by Jeff Radebe (Public Enterprises Minister), Thoko Didiza (Agriculture & Land Affairs) Membathisi Mdladlana (Labour). The delegation met with President Robert Mugabe, Vice-President Joseph Msika and a number of cabinet ministers. Zuma also met with the head of the South African Parliamentary Observer Team, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula. From these meetings Zuma "gained an impression that a lot of effort is being put into creating an atmosphere that would make the March 11 elections in Zimbabwe free and fair."	Zuma stated that Mugabe had given the following assurances: "most parts of the country are peaceful and that electioneering was continuing normally"; Morgan Tsvangirai had not been charged with treason; "those contesting the elections would not be interfered with, that the Zimbabwean government believed in the principle of fair play for all leaders." While Mapisa-Nqakula had "informed him that the team had covered most parts of the country, and that although there were areas where there were incidents of intimidation, the team believes work is going on to ensure a climate conducive to

		free and fair elections". (Statement Issued by the Presidency 28 February)
1 March	The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) convenes in Australia	
2 March	Despite an interim report from the Commonwealth's election observers detailing major abuses by Mugabe supporters African leaders defy Tony Blair's call to suspend Zimbabwe.	African leaders block debate on Zimbabwe at the summit's opening session. (<i>The Observer</i> 3 March 2002)
3 March	Six days before voting, Sam Mutsuenyane, head of the SAOM, says that the conditions existed for free and fair elections.	"While the situation is far from ideal, we believe that conditions prevail for elections to be held to reflect the true will of the people of Zimbabwe," "We believe the situation is not catastrophic," he said, noting that members of the team, 50-strong as of Sunday, had attended large rallies of both major parties that were "on the whole" peaceful. (<i>Sapa</i>)
4 March	Mr Blair, backed by Australia, Canada and New Zealand, pushed for immediate suspension of Zimbabwe at the summit in Australia but they were opposed by a bloc of African countries. A compromise resolution, adopted by the summit, delays a decision on whether to suspend Zimbabwe until after the presidential election the following weekend. It refrains from ascribing blame for the pre-election violence. In terms of the resolution a three-man team—consisting of Australian prime minister, John Howard, the Nigerian president, Olusegun Obasanjo, and Thabo Mbeki—would decide on what action to take on the basis of the final Commonwealth Observer Group Report. Both Obasanjo and Mbeki opposed Zimbabwe's suspension.	Tony Blair was exceedingly critical of the decision. "We should have provided a far stronger statement and backed it up with action. We have postponed the day of judgment of Zimbabwe. I think that is the wrong thing to do." (<i>Guardian</i> 4 th March) Mr Blair said the credibility of the Commonwealth was at stake if it failed to "do the right thing" after the Zimbabwe elections. He added: "There can be no question of Mugabe being allowed to stay in power with a rigged election. That's been Britain's position throughout. "What I say to those countries that have been ambivalent about Mugabe is: If Africa wants a decent future, this type of behaviour has got to stop." Helen Clark, the Prime Minister of New Zealand. "The communique reads a little like everyone is responsible for the violence and intimidation. That is not the case," she said. (<i>Daily Telegraph</i> 5 th March)
8 March	In <i>ANC Today</i> Thabo Mbeki launches a veiled but vicious attack on Blair and Helen Clarke accusing them of harbouring racist sentiments. Mbeki's accused (unnamed) critics of the Commonwealth's failure to act against Mugabe (by implication Blair & Clarke) of	Mbeki states that "If the decision-making process within the Commonwealth is going to be informed by this kind of thinking" then the Commonwealth should be disbanded. "Alternatively, those inspired by notions of white supremacy are free to depart if

	possessing a “stubborn and arrogant mindset [that] at all times the white world must lead. Its demands must determine what everybody does”.	they feel that membership of the association reduces them to a repugnant position imposed by inferior blacks.” (“Letter from the President” <i>ANC Today</i> Vol 2, No. 10, 8 - 14 March 2002. See also <i>Daily Telegraph</i> 9 March)
9-10 MAR	PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS HELD IN ZIMBABWE	
13 March	Tobaiwa Mudede the registrar-general of the state electoral directorate declares President Robert Mugabe the victor with about 54 percent of the vote. According to government figures Tsvangirai received 40 percent, and spoiled ballots made up the remaining 6 percent.	Election officials said 3.1 million of the country's 5.6 million registered voters cast ballots. With 1.7 million votes going to Mugabe and 1.3 million to Tsvangirai. (<i>Sapa</i>).
	The Presidency releases a statement saying that Mbeki is consulting with world bodies and governments over the Presidential elections in Zimbabwe, and that he is awaiting reports from the leader of the South African Observer Mission; SADC; OAU and Commonwealth Observer Missions before making a comprehensive statement on the matter.	He is quoted as saying: "It would be incorrect to comment now on whether the elections in Zimbabwe were free and fair".
	In a statement the ANC warmly congratulations ZANU PF and President Mugabe for a convincing majority win. "Indeed the people of Zimbabwe have spoken and left their will be respected by all."	Smuts Ngonyama stated “These elections have shown how the people of Zimbabwe value democratic processes," The statement also congratulated the “various Observer Missions from South Africa and elsewhere in the world, for a job well done!”
	In an interim report Sam Motsuenyane states that the South African Observer Mission considers the outcome of the elections “legitimate”.	The SAOM stated that the participation of the opposition in the campaign legitimised the outcome of the elections; In going out to vote in large numbers the Zimbabwean people had “demonstrated their commitment to expressing their will in determining who should be their President”. The report concluded that, based on their observations, it “is the view of the SAOM that the outcome of the 2002 Zimbabwe Presidential elections should be considered legitimate”.
	Government communications releases a statement: “The South African Government has noted the outcome of the Presidential elections in Zimbabwe, and it welcomes the fact that the actual elections and subsequent processes have proceeded without any significant conflict among the participants. The government has also noted the Preliminary Report of the SA Observer Mission that the elections should be considered as legitimate.”	According to the statement Mbeki “will make a comprehensive statement on the outcome of the elections once he has received additional reports of the observers, particularly from SADC, the AU, and the Commonwealth.”
14 March	In its report the Commonwealth observers catalogue a litany of abuses by Mugabe’s	

	government. They conclude “that the conditions in Zimbabwe did not adequately allow for a free expression of will by the electors.” (<i>Sapa</i>).	
	ANC Deputy President, Jacob Zuma visits Zimbabwe where he hugs Mugabe. Together they give the black power salute.	Mr Zuma said that South Africa would take the Commonwealth report into account, but insisted: "We sent observers here, who were observing each and every detail. They have reported . . . the elections were legitimate, are valid. They were free and fair and we have got to respect that." (<i>Daily Telegraph</i> 15 March)
15 March	The <i>ANC Today</i> claimed that “The will of the people of Zimbabwe has prevailed” in the presidential elections in that country.	According to <i>ANC Today</i> “While the process was clearly not perfect, the ANC believes that the people of Zimbabwe have spoken. Naturally, in any election contest, there are winners and there are losers. The outcome of which might not be popular. It is also clear that the media will take sides, such as has been the case in Zimbabwe.”
18 March	Following a three day NEC meeting the ANC denounced "hostile forces, particularly the United Kingdom" for seeking to destabilise Zimbabwe by calling for punitive sanctions.	ANC secretary general Kgalema Motlanthe criticised the United States and European countries for suggesting the Zanu-PF government should not be recognised. "Zimbabwe should not be regarded as a free game for all these groupings to determine who should rule that country. That's the right of Zimbabweans" He added, "It would be presumptuous of us to go in there and remove Mugabe. That's the agenda of the US and Britain. We will never align ourselves with the US and Britain. If it's possible for Tony Blair to say the election won't be free and fair unless one side (MDC) wins in Zimbabwe, they'll do the same for South Africa as well tomorrow." ANC spokesman Smuts Ngonyama added: "The Zimbabwean people should be left to decide on who should lead them. There must be a mutual respect for every country's sovereignty". (<i>Sapa & Reuters</i> 18 March)
	In an interview on SAFM, Joel Netshitenzhe (ANC NWC member and head of the GCIS) is asked about Jacob Zuma’s statement in Harare endorsing the elections as free and fair. Netshitenzhe prevaricates saying that Mbeki will make a determination based on various different (and conflicting) observer reports.	Netshitenzhe does say, “If you assess the turnout during the election days, if you assess the margin as well as other factors, you would come to the conclusion perhaps that not totally free and fair, but there is an extent to which this might reflect the will of the Zimbabwean people.”

	Mbeki flies to Zimbabwe for a meeting with Mugabe. They are photographed walking hand-in-hand.	
19 March	<p>South Africa's National Assembly approves a motion (by 193 votes to 69, with eight abstentions) that the Zimbabwean election "substantially" reflected the popular will. The motion noted the report of the South African Parliamentary Observer Mission -- which was tabled in the House earlier.</p> <p>It stated that the "2002 presidential elections are a credible expression of the will of the people of Zimbabwe" and resolved to "call on all Zimbabweans to work together towards national reconciliation of the people of Zimbabwe". (Sapa)</p>	<p>ANC chief whip Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula (and head of the parliamentary observer mission) criticised British Prime Minister Tony Blair for pre-judging the presidential poll by saying he would not accept President Mugabe's re-election.</p> <p>"That was not only unfortunate, but also extremely dangerous coming as it did from the head of a former colonial power," she said.</p>
	Mbeki arrives in London for the meeting with Obasanja and Howard for the meeting with Obasanja and Howard to decide on the Commonwealth's response.	Commonwealth election observers' report had found that "the conditions in Zimbabwe did not adequately allow for a free expression of will by the electors".
	During the Mbeki is also presented with evidence that Tsivangari had won the presidential election but that hundreds that hundreds of thousands of votes were shifted to alter the result after the votes had been counted. ¹	Howard's information was based on diplomatic reports from the Zimbabwean capital, Harare. Those reports said that despite all the underhand pre-election activity by President Robert Mugabe's ruling Zanu-PF party - including violent intimidation, last-minute changes to the election laws and the disenfranchisement of thousands of voters when voters were chased from voting stations - Tsvangirai won. (<i>Sunday Independent</i> 7 April)
	Under massive pressure from Britain and the US (both threatening to withdraw support for Nepad) Mbeki finally agrees to the suspension of Zimbabwean government from the councils of the Commonwealth but only for a year. Thus, Mbeki concedes but only the bare minimum.	According to Anton La Guardia in the <i>Daily Telegraph</i> Howard "did not deny the deep divisions had been difficult to overcome during the four hours of talks. Mr Mbeki pointedly declined to speak in public. The Commonwealth decision shows all the signs of an uncomfortable compromise. Mr Howard refused to say whether he, or the leaders of South Africa and Nigeria, considered Mr

¹ These intelligence reports were based on interviews conducted by Western officials of reliable sources inside Zimbabwe. They stated that Zanu-PF "manipulated those reported results through a "command center" in the capital, Harare, that was supervised by two of Mugabe's top aides: the minister of state for national security, Nicholas Goche, and the ZANU-PF secretary for administration, Emmerson Mnangawa." Officials at the command center "realized that despite attempts to reduce the opposition vote Mugabe was running well behind and was in danger of losing by 200,000 to 300,000 votes. The Mugabe operatives were said to have been surprised by how well the opposition candidate, Morgan Tsvangirai, and his Movement for Democratic Change were doing in Mashonaland, a rural area in central Zimbabwe that was expected to back Mugabe. Fearing they would lose, officials in the ZANU-PF command center "fiddled the figures" by adding tens of thousands of names to Mugabe's total before the ballots were sent on to the Registrar-General, Tobaiwa Mudede, for a final count, according to an official who has reviewed the evidence gathered by Zimbabwean insiders." The article quotes R.W. Johnson as pointing out that during the period when votes were being counted, there was a sudden jump in the total votes cast, from 2.4 million to 2.9 million. (David Ignatius "New doubts cast on Mugabe victory; Fearing election defeat, aides said to have inflated vote totals" *International Herald Tribune* 2 April 2002)

		Mugabe to be the legitimate leader of Zimbabwe.” (<i>Daily Telegraph</i> 20 March)
19 March	<p><i>The Herald</i> newspaper reported the decision of the Commonwealth troika as a partial victory for the Mugabe government as the threat of sanctions had been warded off.</p> <p>“Zimbabwe was facing either suspension or sanctions or both from the Commonwealth.”</p>	On unnamed ‘observer’ is quoted in the report as saying, "This (suspension) does no harm to Zimbabwe except giving Britain, Australia, Canada and New Zealand a decent exit from their mess. It's like letting loose a toothless bulldog. It will certainly bark but will not bite."
20 March	In the South African government's definitive statement on the election, the Cabinet expresses its support for the Commonwealth statement but proceeds to endorse the results of the election as legitimate and credible.	<p>It's statement says: “The decision of the Commonwealth to suspend Zimbabwe for a year is an important symbolic gesture both to express the displeasure of the organisation with the weaknesses which were manifest in the electoral process, and to serve as an incentive for the role-players in Zimbabwe to unite and work together to rebuild their country.”</p> <p>Nonetheless, it continues, “the South African government will continue to relate to the Government of Zimbabwe as the elected government of that country. In this regard, president Mbeki has noted and accepted the report of the SA Parliamentary Observer Mission adopted by parliament yesterday, and the interim report of the SA Observer Mission.”</p>
22 March	In an Editorial the <i>Mail & Guardian</i> attacks the “tacky cleverness” of Mbeki's diplomacy around Zimbabwe, and particularly his promotion of the concept of a government of national unity.	It states: “The timing of his enthusiasm for the GNU concept was clearly intended to alter the focus of public attention so as to enable him to delay giving his own judgement on the poll. How, otherwise, was he going to finesse the contradiction between his own private view and the Commonwealth observer mission's judgement that the election did not reflect the popular will? This week, however, now that public focus has been successfully shifted, a little-noticed Cabinet statement declared: "President Mbeki has noted and accepted the report of the SA parliamentary observer mission — and the interim report of the South African observer mission." Meaning? Mbeki believes the elections were "credible".
23 March	In an address to the ANC Provincial Conference in Mpumalanga NEC member Dumisani Makhaye accuses the Western powers of trying to roll back the frontiers of liberation in southern Africa.”	Makhaye accused the West of wanting to “impose presidents of their choice in our region. Zimbabwe is only a strategic hill. The objective is South Africa. The gross interference into the internal affairs of Zimbabwe by Western powers is a dress rehearsal for South Africa. Their

		strategy is to weaken as much as it is possible governments and parties of the former national liberation movement in southern Africa...We condemn an attitude that says elections shall be deemed free and fair only if the result accords to the interests of Western powers. The Western powers must not be allowed to impose Morgan "Six pence" Tsvangiraison (sic) on the people of Zimbabwe."
3-7 April	The Alliance Summit is held between the ANC, Cosatu and SACP. In his opening address Mbeki stated that emphasises the ANC's leading role on the continent, and for progressive transformation.	<p>In a veiled attack on the West Mbeki claimed that there are some people who "do not like that we can think independently, that we can identify for ourselves what our interests are and what we need to do about them. These people are accustomed to dealing with a continent that can be told what to do. The more we are able to think and act independently, the more those forces will try to subvert that action. If we allow them to succeed, we will fail to achieve the transformation of South Africa and Africa."</p> <p>According to one report on the meeting, senior members of the ANC "are convinced that there exists a widespread conspiracy, led by the US, to promote a 'rightwing agenda' within southern Africa. Peter Mokaba led this charge. "According to this theory, which sees the ANC alliance as a radical force bent on challenging the hegemony of the US, Washington is actively encouraging the emergence of 'rightwing forces'. ...The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in Zimbabwe is seen as [one of the] vehicles for US aims." (<i>Global News Wire</i> 19 April)</p>
13 May	Kgalema Motlanthe arrives in Zimbabwe for talks with Zanu-PF and the MDC. According to later reports, he delivers a confidential letter from Mbeki to Mugabe.	
30 May	<p>The Zimbabwe Herald reports on a meeting held of the seven ruling parties in SADC in Windhoek, Namibia.</p> <p>The parties attending the meeting were the African National Congress of South Africa, the Botswana Democratic Party, the Chama Cha Mapinduzi of Tanzania, Frelimo of Moza-ambique, the MPLA of Angola, Swapo of Namibia, the United Democratic Front of Malawi and Zanu-PF.</p>	<p>At the meeting the parties congratulated Mugabe for winning the presidential election "convincingly against all odds".</p> <p>A resolution adopted on Zimbabwe states:</p> <p>"The meeting was unequivocal in condemning the unsubstantiated, grossly fabricated and far-fetched propaganda deliberately perpetrated against the Government, people and sovereignty of</p>

		<p>Zimbabwe by those who are bent on sowing the seeds of discord, confusion, strife and anarchy in our region," the parties said in their resolution on Zimbabwe.</p> <p>"The meeting condemned, in no uncertain terms, the West for using double standards when they address issues of elections and democracy.</p> <p>"The meeting further condemned attempts to install puppet regimes and to impose surrogates that guarantee the exploitation of our resources."</p> <p>The parties acknowledged that the degree of international focus on Zimbabwe was a reflection of British and Western interests in Zimbabwe and other countries in the region. The attack on Zimbabwe, they noted, reflected a racist agenda that had no respect for the aspirations of the people of Africa.</p> <p>The ruling parties resolved to unequivocally support "the irreversible land reform and resettlement programme taking place in Zimbabwe in accordance with its Constitution and laws"². ("Parties Back Zimbabweans for Resisting Neo-Colonial Agenda" <i>The Herald</i> 30th May 2002)</p>
2 June	<p><i>The Sunday Times</i> (SA) reports that the letter conveyed by Motlanthe to Mugabe has been leaked to two government owned newspapers in Zimbabwe. According to the article the letter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraged Zanu-PF back to talks with the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (after they had withdrawn when the MDC refused to retract their court challenge.) • Mbeki suggested a change to the make-up of the Zanu-PF delegation. 	<p>"One of the articles" the Sunday Times reported, "contained a thinly veiled attack on Mbeki by the Zimbabwean government, accusing him of manipulating the Nigerians to further the agenda of a "domestic and imperialist lobby".</p>

² CONTINUED: They agreed to join forces in condemning the continued short wave transmissions directed to Zimbabwe from Britain and the Netherlands, which are meant to misinform and cause ethnic divisions and social tension in the country. They also resolved to condemn all non-governmental organisations that act as extensions and fronts for foreign policies of some of the Western governments and countries through direct involvement in local politics. They deplored the imposition of the Western-biased perspective of democracy and good governance, saying this interference had seen the West sponsoring, financing and sustaining opposition parties in the region. The sister parties resolved to "fight together with all progressive forces against neo-colonial designs imposed on our region".

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It also raises problems related to the land reform and resettlement programme and warns of the possibility of more world pressure against Mugabe's government if the talks do not produce positive results. 	
1 August	Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, dismisses calls that Mugabe's government should be suspended from the AU on the basis that it was constitutionally elected.	<p>She said Zimbabweans in general had accepted the election result. Challenging the outcome of an election in court was an accepted procedure in any democracy. "The mere challenge (by the MDC) does not nullify the result,"</p> <p>According to Zuma The elections in Zimbabwe took place in accordance with that country's constitution. She said the OAU's decision to exclude countries with undemocratically elected governments was only taken in 1999.</p> <p>"That was the cut-off point. From 1999 onwards, people who are not constitutionally elected will not take their seats," the minister said.</p> <p>"There is no one who took a seat in the AU who was not constitutionally elected since 1999. There is no double standard." (<i>Sapa</i>)</p>
19 August	The ANC publishes various documents in preparation for its 51 st National Conference. In <i>Umrabulo</i> Number 16, August 2002. In its report international affairs, it acknowledges that it has been strengthening ties with the national liberation movements in Southern Africa.	"Much of the focus of the ANC's international work has been to build relations with progressive forces in Africa, strengthening relations with our historical counterparts in southern Africa - SWAPO, MPLA, FRELIMO and ZANU-PF - and building ties of cooperation with other African countries."
23 Sept	The Commonwealth Troika—Obasanjo, Mbeki and Howard—meet in Nigeria. Howard, backed by Britain, push for the full suspension of Zimbabwe from the Commonwealth. But Mbeki and Obasanjo blocked these attempts to impose further sanctions.	<p>Howard told a Press conference he jointly addressed with Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and South African President Thabo Mbeki: "There was a difference of opinion. "Australia was of the opinion that Zimbabwe should be fully suspended from the Commonwealth with immediate effect."</p> <p>According a communiqué issued by the troika:</p> <p>Nigeria and South Africa "wish to see how Zimbabwe responds to the Marlborough House Statement over the next six months as foreshadowed in that Statement, as which point stronger measures might need to be considered."</p> <p>"We've agreed that it's necessary to continue to try to engage with President</p>

		Mugabe, in the interests of all the people of Zimbabwe," President Mbeki said. (The Herald September 24)
27-30 September	The ANC holds its national policy conference in Ekurhleni in preparation for the national conference in December. Various draft resolutions are drawn up. These include one on strengthening party-to-party relations with other liberation movements in Southern Africa.	The resolution, noting that traditionally relations had operated in a reactive way and the recent efforts to engage the former liberation movements. Reaffirmed: "The correctness of party-to-party relations in mediating and circumventing state-to-state relations that are subjected to bureaucratic procedures." And resolved" that the ANC must 1.) "strengthen Party-to-Party relations at a programmatic and strategic level with former liberation organisations and the progressive movement in general." 2.) "To continue to engage with former liberation movements to strengthen democratic and progressive policies practices." (<i>Umrabulo</i> No. 17 October 2002)
4 October	In a column entitled "What the Media Says" <i>ANC Today</i> condemned SAFM for an interview conducted with the journalist, Peta Thornycroft. In the interview Thornycroft had questioned the independence of the judges hearing the MDC's challenge to Mugabe's election victory (all of whom were recent appointees).	The column expressed its "amazement and deep concern" that such views could be expressed on the public broadcaster. The column concluded: "It is astounding that the South African public broadcaster should consider it its right and within its competence, to communicate the message that this judiciary is nothing more than a bunch of political stooges, who have no capacity impartially to adjudicate the laws of Zimbabwe."
10 October	The Department of Foreign Affairs announces that Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma will be visiting Zimbabwe.	According to a DFA statement "The visit by... Dlamini-Zuma is part of efforts by South Africa, acting as part of the international collective, to assist the people of Zimbabwe in their strides towards national reconciliation which will lay a firm foundation for their political and economic recovery," (Sapa)
11 October	Nkosazana Zuma arrives in Harare for talks with the Zimbabwean Foreign Minister, Stan Mudenge, and Robert Mugabe. According to a well-informed <i>Sunday Times</i> article the meeting was aimed at thawing the chill in the relationship between the two countries, which had set in after the letter written by Mbeki to Mugabe (June 2 nd) had been leaked and then attacked by the state controlled media in Harare.	The article states, "Dlamini-Zuma's effort at friendship was part of a broader South African plan - to heal the rift with its neighbour. She and Mudenge decided to meet every six months. They also decided to resuscitate the SA-Zimbabwe Joint Commission, which had stalled during the rupture, to maintain formal co-operation. Issues like trade, finance and land are expected to top the agenda. Dlamini-Zuma was briefed on the controversial land-reform programme and was told that the results were double what had been envisaged: 11 million

		<p>hectares of land, instead of five million, had been reclaimed....Diplomatic sources say Mugabe and Mbeki have resumed talks on the telephone after an intermission of several months.” (20th October 2002)</p>
	<p>During the course of her visit, Zuma questions the picture of ‘doom and gloom’ painted by the media. She also says that it would be ‘unrevolutionary’ to criticise the land seizure programme.</p>	<p>Zuma tells the local press, "We are not seeing any signs of that bloodbath and maybe we are too blind to see this looming war, but we are saying we are not blind and there is not any looming bloodbath," she said.</p> <p>"The media in South Africa wants to paint a picture of gloom and doom, but we think the public wants to be informed about what exactly is going on." (The Herald 12th October)</p> <p>On the third day of her visited she told state television "People may have views about how you do it (land reform)... The real thing is that the issue is about the redistribution of land to the Zimbabwean people and that can't be wrong," Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma said on the third day of her visit. "It would be unrevolutionary to say it is wrong to give land," she added. (<i>Sapa-AFP</i> 13 October 2002)</p>
08 October	<p>In an interview with the <i>Sunday Times</i> Mbeki reiterates that the problem in Zimbabwe is about land.</p> <p>He states, “Our position remains the same: we still have to address the land question in Zimbabwe so that it will be resolved.... We never took land from the Zimbabweans and gave it to whites. There was never an obligation on the South African government to, say, supply money to pay compensation. This was a matter between the colonising power and their colony.”</p> <p>Mbeki is also dismissive of the import of the Commonwealth observer mission report.</p>	<p>“In 1998, I spoke to President Mugabe, to the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and said to both: this land question in Zimbabwe is going to explode unless you people handle it properly. You've got to handle it in such a way that the Zimbabwe government is able to address the land question. Because it must be addressed. You can't allow a continuation of this colonial legacy. But it has to be addressed in a manner that doesn't create other problems.”</p> <p>“We have been explaining this. I'm sure the nation understands when we've said the matter of the land question in Zimbabwe must be handled in the context of the law, without any conflict, in the interest of both black and white in Zimbabwe. We've said that many times.” (“Mbeki on the state of the nation” <i>Sunday Times</i>, 13 October 2002)</p> <p>On the Zimbabwe presidential elections:</p> <p>“Something happened in Zimbabwe, whichever way people put it, but the Commonwealth observer's team had a very interesting formulation - they said</p>

		<p>the outcome of the presidential election was not fully representative of the will of the people of Zimbabwe.</p> <p>They did not say it was unrepresentative; they said it was not fully representative because they think that some people did not get on to the voters' role and, maybe, you should have extended the time on the voting day by a few hours, or something”.</p> <p>(GCIS transcript of interview conducted on 8 October 2002)</p>
17 October	<p>Answering questions in Parliament Mbeki reiterates that there will be no change of policy towards Mugabe.</p> <p>He states that the South African government would “continue to engage the government of Zimbabwe. Indeed, that is precisely why our Foreign Minister was in Zimbabwe last week. We will continue to engage them in order to produce the sorts of results that were visualised by the Commonwealth.”</p>	<p>“We have sought to achieve the objective... of assisting the Zimbabweans to come out of their problems. We think that is important and we will continue to do that. But there are other people who think that our task is to punish, to defeat, to crush Robert Mugabe and Zanu-PF. They will say that they are standing for human rights and therefore: Down with Mugabe. They are standing for democracy, therefore: Crush Mugabe, and so on.</p> <p>We would say the same thing: Democracy and human rights are very important, and the way to get there is not to crush anybody, but to assist so that Zimbabwe gets on to a different path, a different course of development. That is what we have to do. Indeed, many of the people who are calling for the crushing, etc, then put the obligation on us to crush. [Laughter] Instead, if they want to crush people, I do not know why they do not go and do it themselves. [Laughter]” (<i>Hansard</i>, un-revised transcript)</p>
10 Nov	<p>The Zimbabwe-South Africa Joint Commission convenes a two-day meeting in Pretoria. The meeting is co-chaired by South African Foreign Minister Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and her Zimbabwean counterpart, Dr Stan Mudenge.</p>	<p>According to the <i>Zimbabwe Herald</i> “Observers said the meeting, which comes in the wake of a visit to Zimbabwe by Dr Dlamini-Zuma a few weeks ago, was a sign of the good relations between the two countries... The focus was now on production and economic revival, especially after the completion of Zimbabwe's fast track land reform programme.” (<i>Herald</i> 11 November)</p>
11 Nov	<p>Addressing a joint press conference Dlamini-Zuma called on Britain to compensate white farmers for the lands that had been taken from them. She also called for an ending of the sanctions regime</p>	<p>Dlamini-Zuma stated, "We think it would be nice to end this matter in a neater way, in a way that does not leave a sector of the Zimbabwean population bitter, (and that) all those who lose land are</p>

	against the Zanu-PF leadership.	compensated" . "We are looking to countries like Britain to try and assist (in compensation)," "Those countries that have imposed sanctions against Zimbabwe - we don't think that's a situation which should continue for a long time," She added that South Africa and Zimbabwe would work to end the isolationist measures. (<i>News24</i> 11 November 2002)
16 Dec	Mbeki delivers his political report to the ANC national conference in Stellenbosch. Calling Zanu-PF "our ally and fellow liberation movement" he announces a renewed engagement to bring various "controversial issues" to a close in Zimbabwe.	"We are also convinced that it is necessary to bring to a close the controversial issues relating to our important neighbour, Zimbabwe. In this regard, we are ready to engage both our ally and fellow liberation movement, ZANU-PF, and all others concerned, to help resolve the various issues in a constructive manner. Like the leadership of the people of Zimbabwe, we are interested that everything is done to address the challenge of ensuring a better life for all the people of this sister country, both black and white."
	In his report to conference, ANC secretary general, Kgalema Motlanthe reported on the ANC's "bilateral interactions with a range of parties on the continent" as well as "the convening of a number of meetings of the Southern African former liberation movements forums".	He also stated that the ANC had strengthened its relations with Zanu-PF, among others, through bilateral meetings and visits.
17 Dec	Senior Zanu-PF member, Emmerson Mgangwana, Zimbabwe's speaker of parliament, delivers his party's statement of support to the ANC conference. He vigorously defends Zanu-PF's land seizure programme as an agrarian revolution "intended to right a historical wrong and return the land to its rightful owners – ourselves." He also thanks the ANC for the support it has given Zanu-PF over the past few years. Following his speech he is given a standing ovation by half the conference delegates and is embraced by Thabo Mbeki.	Mnangagwa said Zanu-PF valued and appreciated the principled support it had received from the ANC at different forums, including the South African Parliament. "Indeed, on numerous occasions, you have sought to clarify the position in Zimbabwe in response to our detractors. We treasure your advice and counsel, and assure you that in us you have consistent and reliable allies who are fully aware that our destinies are inextricably intertwined." Zanu-PF was looking forward to continued solidarity and co-operation between the two parties. "Allow me to express the confidence that through the trials and tribulations that we face in Zimbabwe, we will continue to count on all experienced friends like the ANC for support and advice." (<i>Sapa</i> report).
19 Dec	Briefing the media at the ANC conference Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma states that the ANC conference commission on international affairs has resolved to broaden its contact with "progressive organisations"	Asked if Zanu (PF) was a progressive organisation, DlaminiZuma said: "Yes, for obvious reasons. First of all Zanu (PF) is a sister organisation to the ANC. We fought colonialism and oppression in

	<p>in Africa--including Zanu-PF (but not the MDC). She also said the ANC supported the land-reform programme in Zimbabwe while differing from some of the methods employed.</p>	<p>our countries and we liberated our countries and we set to improve the lives of our people in our respective countries and we also set ourselves to determine our own destinies and not be dictated to by somebody else."</p> <p>According to <i>Business Day</i>: Dlamini-Zuma said that the ANC was in strong support of the land-reform programme in Zimbabwe. It was the correct thing to do, she said. Although mistakes had been made in the implementation, this did not mean that the direction taken on the land issue was wrong, she said. (<i>Business Day</i> 20 December)</p>
	<p>Dlamini-Zuma told reporters that African countries would only attend the European Union/Africa summit—to be held in Portugal in April—if Robert Mugabe and Zimbabwe was also allowed to attend.</p>	<p>"It's up to them (Europe) to see how they overcome the problem. It is in their court. We as Africans are ready to go. The question is, are they ready to receive us?" Dlamini Zuma was quoted as saying. "There is no Africa that can exist without Zimbabwe. Africa is indivisible." <i>The Mercury</i> 20 December</p>
2003		
10 January	<p>On a visit to Zimbabwe South African labour minister Membathisi Mdladlana said South Africa has a lot to learn about land reform from its neighbour, Zimbabwe. Mdladlana has visited three farms, one of them owned by a white farmer, in the Mashonaland Central district, as part of his visit to Zimbabwe. He was accompanied by his Zimbabwean counterpart July Moyo, according to a statement released by Mdladlana's office from Zimbabwe.</p>	<p>Mdladlana said the impression had been created that all white farmers had left Zimbabwe in the wake of the land reform programme. "In South Africa, we thought that all white farmers have left Zimbabwe because of the land redistribution programme. I am encouraged by Wakefield's [the one white farmer] attitude and I wish that all white farmers should have a positive attitude about their country." He said South Africa also has a land reform programme and has to learn from Zimbabwe who had dealt with it since independence. <i>Sapa</i> report</p>
	<p><i>Africa Confidential</i> reports on a new South African initiative on Zimbabwe. The departure of Robert Mugabe would be traded for the lifting of sanctions, the compensation of white farmers who had lost their land, and aid for agricultural development. Zanu-PF would remain in power.</p>	<p>"The bargain would be that President agrees to retire within the year, in exchange for Britain lifting sanctions, compensating displaced white farmers and financing agricultural development. Key go-betweens are parliamentary speaker (and Mugabe's preferred successor) Emmerson Mnangwana and his business allies." (<i>Africa Confidential</i> 10 Jan Vol. 44 No. 1)</p>
12 January	<p>The <i>Sunday Times</i> (SA) reports on how on a trip to South Africa Zimbabwe's Minister of Information, Jonathan Moyo, "went on a shopping spree - surrounded by his bodyguards - and bought thousands of rands</p>	

	worth of food to take home to Zimbabwe.”	
13 January	In his response to the story in the Herald newspaper Jonathan Moyo was quoted as saying that South Africans [“these people”] were “filthy and recklessly uncouth” and that if they believe “they can lead an African renaissance, then God help them because they are joking”. This latter comment was seen as directed at Thabo Mbeki, the major proponent of the African Renaissance idea. (see <i>Business Day</i> January 14 th) Reports in the <i>Star</i> and <i>Citizen</i> accused Moyo of directly insulting Mbeki.	<p>Prof. Moyo was quoted as saying: “I have always had a nagging feeling that for all their propensity to liberal values and civilised norms, these people are dirty. In fact they are filthy and recklessly uncouth. Now the evidence is there for any decent person to see.</p> <p>Prof Moyo said no human being in this world would like to be treated in this primitive manner by a self-serving newspaper owned and edited by people who fancied themselves as God's gift to Black Africa.</p> <p>"If these people in the name of South Africa believe they can lead an African renaissance, then God help them because they are joking. Their barbarism will never take root or find expression in Africa."</p>
	<i>The Times (UK) reports on secret negotiations between Emmerson Mnangagwa, and General Vitalis Zvinavashe, commander of the armed forces, and Morgan Tsvangarai. They reportedly offered to deliver the resignation of President Robert Mugabe. On the publication of the reports both Zanu-PF and the MDC reject the putative deal.</i>	<i>Mugabe would be given immunity from prosecution and be allowed to go in to exile. A government of national unity would run Zimbabwe until elections in two years' time. (The Times 10 January)</i>
14 January	<i>Business Day</i> reports on a document supposedly written by Malusi Gigaba (ANCYL head and one of “Mbeki's principal political allies and power brokers”) attacking Australia and the UK, “the white commonwealth”, for their “hostility to Zimbabwe”. The document argues that motivated by concern for their “kith-and-kin” Australia and the UK are trying to defend “white privilege” in Zimbabwe and “entrench the land dispossession of the Africans”.	The document stated that the UK and Australia “has its clients and placemen standing by [the MDC] to take over as soon as the Government of President Robert Mugabe is brought down.” The document accuses the DA (defenders of white privilege in SA) of being as “opposed to a genuine resolution of the land question in our country, to eradicate the legacy of colonialism and apartheid, as they are to a similar outcome in Zimbabwe”.
	The MDC are accused of being placemen of these interests. The document reiterates that the main problem in Zimbabwe is the unresolved land question.	“It must be boldly re-stated here that the principal problem in Zimbabwe is not the lack of respect for the rule of law or property rights, but it is the persisting landlessness of the African majority! Solve this problem, other resultant problems shall be resolved!” (<i>Much Ado About Zimbabwe</i> ANCYL document January 2003).
	<i>The Guardian publishes a story on the likely motives behind the negotiations between and the reason for Tsvangarai's publication of them. Mnangagwa, and Zvinavashe are described as “not men committed to</i>	<i>John Makumbe, a lecturer in political science at the University of Zimbabwe is quoted as saying: "They want to return the country to some sort of normalcy so that they and Zanu-PF can have another</i>

	democracy”.	20 years in power," Mr Makumbe said. "It has nothing to do with democracy and nothing to do with a change in the regime. They want to secure continued power." It seems that the opposition leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, recognised this and that is why he publicised the secret talks. (Guardian 14 January).
14 January	The ANC welcome the decision by the English Cricket Board that England would play matches in Zimbabwe during the World Cup.	Ruth Ntshulana-Bhengu, ANC MP and chairperson of the parliamentary sport portfolio committee, was quoted as saying: "We note attempts to draw comparisons between apartheid South Africa and Zimbabwe. We believe that this comparison is both ill-informed and hypocritical," She said the government of Zimbabwe was elected in a poll "where all legitimate voters participated, unlike in apartheid South Africa where only a small section of the population participated in elections". (Business Day 15 th January 2003)
17 January	The Zimbabwean Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues a statement both clarifying Moyo's comments and distancing the Zimbabwean government from them. The statement claimed that Moyo's comments were directed at <i>Sunday Times</i> journalists not Thabo Mbeki nor the people of South Africa. It stated that the views expressed by Moyo were his own.	According to the statement "The ministry is also concerned about the inference made by the <i>Business Day</i> ... contained paragraphs meant to cast aspersions on President Thabo Mbeki's impeccable credentials as a Pan-Africanist and a seminal crusader of the African Renaissance. "Nothing could be further from the truth, nor as mischievous. The Government of Zimbabwe regrets the unfortunate inference by the South African <i>Business Day</i> that Prof Moyo's statement on his personal experience reflected the views of the Government and people of Zimbabwe." "The ministry wishes to assure our brothers and sisters in South Africa, colleagues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the South African government as a whole, that... the Zimbabwe Government respects and supports the role and efforts of President Mbeki to bring about the dawn of a new Africa and is happy and confident that he has the attributes to fulfil his role and achieve his dream." (The Herald 18 January).
	In a report in <i>Business Day</i> MDC spokesman Paul Themba-Nyathi accuses the ANC of openly supporting Zanu-PF, of not being an honest-broker in the	MDC secretary-general Welshman Ncube also lashed out at the ANC, saying it was "not an honest and neutral broker" on Zimbabwe given how it had

	negotiations between the two sides, and of wanting the MDC to be co-opted through the mechanism of a government of national unity. (<i>Business Day</i> 17 January)	embraced the ruling Zanu-PF at its national conference in Stellenbosch in December. "The South African government, frankly, is dishonest. It is not surprising, really, because it is the same SA government which is saying to the rest of the world: 'Don't do anything about Zimbabwe. Let [Zimbabwean President Robert] Mugabe go on with his torture and abuse. Let bygones be bygones!' " Ncube said. (<i>Sunday Times</i> 19 January 2003)
19 Jan	The <i>Sunday Times</i> (SA) reports that the South African Department of Foreign Affairs had summoned Zimbabwean High Commissioner to South Africa to account for Moyo's comments -- a move that amounted to a demarche.	It said the government was particularly enraged by Moyo's inference that President Thabo Mbeki was unfit to lead the African Renaissance --Mbeki's brainchild. (<i>Sapa</i> report)
	In a separate "analysis piece" by Ranjeni Munsamy the <i>Sunday Times</i> (SA), stated that there had been various past Nigerian and South African attempts to get Mugabe to retire.	According to the piece the ANC blames the MDC for scuppering the government of national unity talks by insisting on contesting the legitimacy of the election which had returned Zanu-PF to power.
	In the <i>Sunday Times</i> (UK) R.W. Johnson writes that Mbeki was trying to engineer Mugabe's departure. According to Johnson Mbeki "had seen the replacement of Mugabe by Emmerson Mnangagwa.. as a way to protect Zimbabwe from the wrath of the international community and to halt its growing isolation."	Johnson states that Mbeki "is determined that Zanu-PF must stay in power, even if Mugabe has to go. South Africa's diplomacy has accordingly moved from trying to persuade the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) to accept Mugabe's legitimacy to promoting Mnangagwa as heir apparent."
22 January	Foreign Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma meets President Mugabe and her Zimbabwean counterpart Stan Mudenge in Harare.	Departmental spokeswoman Basetsane Thokoane told Sapa the two also discussed the Zimbabwean land issue and the upcoming visit by agriculture and Land Affairs Minister Thoko Didiza. "In general, the one-day visit by Dlamini-Zuma is an attempt by South Africa to normalise relations between Zimbabwe and the international community," she said. (<i>Sapa</i> report). Dlamini-Zuma was quoted in The Herald as saying, "I think our relations are good". (AFP January 23 rd)
27 January	The <i>Sunday Times</i> (SA) reports that South Africa and Nigeria will oppose further sanctions against Zimbabwe when the Commonwealth Troika meets.	Mbeki's spokesman Bheki Khumalo said on Friday: "There is no need for sanctions against Zimbabwe. "We are totally opposed to it. It is not even a last resort. There will be total chaos and a meltdown that will threaten the very Zimbabweans we are trying to help."
29 January	A South African delegation, led by Agriculture Minister Thoko Didiza arrives in Zimbabwe. Didiza meets Mugabe at the Zanu PF headquarters. She said that there	According to a report in the Herald (30 January) "She said her country had always understood that the problem of land was not peculiar to Zimbabwe

	<p>was a need to resolve unequal land redistribution within the entire Southern African region. The delegation includes a number of South African farmers.</p>	<p>alone, as many countries in the region, including Malawi, South Africa and Namibia, faced the same problem. ‘Last year, we had Sadc Ministers of Agriculture and Lands meeting in Namibia where the issue of land was discussed and agreed that this is a matter that has to be resolved,’ said Ms Didiza.”</p>
30 January	<p>On her return to South Africa Didiza states that the Zimbabwean government has admitted that some "administrative errors" had occurred during its land reform process.</p> <p>According to Didiza "The challenges are there, but you are beginning to see some process of mitigation," she said. The Zimbabwean government had estimated that the maize that had been planted would yield a crop of 1,1-million tons, if the season went well.</p>	<p>These ‘administrative errors’ including the fact that some commercial farmers were left without any land; that two beneficiaries were allocated to the same farm; and that the uptake of land among commercial farmers was about 30 percent. However, "The government and the commercial farmers have started discussions to correct the administrative irregularities." (<i>Sapa</i> 30 January)</p>
31 January	<p>In a press conference the Agri SA component of the delegation were far more critical of the results of the land seizure programme. They claimed that there had been a massive decline in agricultural production, and that there was little sign of a turnaround.</p> <p>According to Agri SA they had found that the beneficiaries often did not have any "implements, and no money for input costs"; could not get collateral from the banks as they did not own the title deeds; while most did not know anything about agriculture and were only occupying homesteads.</p> <p>When they had met farmers their conversations had been inhibited. In some cases government representatives answered questions on the farmers' behalf, "like a ventriloquist". "We had the feeling that no one was allowed to speak freely."</p>	<p>According to Agri SA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75 000 tons of maize were expected, compared to the long-term annual average of 600 000 to 800 000 tons. • Less than half the soy-bean requirement would be met. • The recent wheat harvest amounted to 160 000 to 170 000 tons, compared to the over 400 000 tons required and the 300 000-ton long-term average. • Less than 10% of arable land was under some sort of grain. • The commercial beef herd had declined from 1,2-million to less than 200 000.. <p>(<i>Sapa</i> report 1 February 2003)</p>
1 February	<p>Thabo Mbeki and Tony Blair meet at Prime Minister's country retreat Chequers. Zimbabwe (along with Iraq) is one of the key topics of discussion. In the run up to the meeting an unnamed British diplomat was quoted as saying that the differences between the UK and SA on Zimbabwe are "of approach, not of objectives". (<i>Business Day</i> 30 January 2003)</p>	<p>According to Blair's spokesman "Clearly, we have expressed our concerns about Zimbabwe for some considerable time" and the Commonwealth Troika "will obviously want to discuss the situation. I don't think anyone is under any illusion that the situation is grim and deteriorating.." (<i>Press Association</i> UK 1 February 2003)</p>
	<p>After the meeting Mbeki conceded that "clearly something went wrong" with the land seizure campaign. However, he refused to commit himself to a renewal of the</p>	<p>Mbeki also complained about the calls for a sports boycott of the world cup cricket games in Zimbabwe. He claimed that there had been no boycott call in</p>

	suspension of Zimbabwe from the Commonwealth. "That is a matter we will discuss," Mr Mbeki said. "But they have not produced any change and the European Union-imposed sanctions have not produced any change."	regard to Zimbabwe's participation in the Commonwealth games in Manchester or in the Sidney Olympics. "What I am saying is it is a bit distressing that now when a big tournament like this comes to us suddenly the sports boycott becomes an issue." (<i>Press Association UK</i> 2 February 2003)
	In an interview with <i>The Times</i> after the meeting Mbeki reiterated his opposition to calls for a sports boycott. "It is not right... It does not have an ethical basis." He also repeated his opposition to sanctions (which he claimed only served to harden attitudes in Harare) and called for Britain and the EU to "back off" and instead re-engage the Zimbabwean leadership. He said that if he tried to intervene in Zimbabwe he would be denounced by The Herald as an "agent of Blair".	Mr Mbeki claimed that "There is a strong sense among Zimbabweans that issues like the land question constitute part of an uncompleted process of decolonisation... So when a demand comes out of Europe to impose sanctions... it does not produce a result that 'we must change'. It produces a result that 'we cannot be dictated to by a colonial power'." (<i>The Times</i> 3 February 2002)
3 February	Aziz Pahad, South Africa's deputy foreign minister refuses to condemn the treason trial of MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai and states that the law must be allowed to take its course.	According to Pahad, "We now have to wait and see what will come out in the trial... We are now just keeping an eye on it. Our high commission has been instructed to keep a very good eye on what's going on and brief us fully. We will obviously see how the rule of law is applied." (<i>AFP</i> 3 February 2003)
4 February	On his return from an African Union summit in Addis Ababa Mugabe states that he had bilateral talks with his South African counterpart in which Mbeki gave him an hour long briefing on his talks with Mr Blair.	According to <i>The Herald</i> Mugabe refused to divulge details of this hour long briefing saying he needed to report to Cabinet. "President Mbeki briefed me about his meeting with Prime Minister Blair. That's what I will be reporting to Cabinet tomorrow" he said. (<i>The Herald</i> 5 February 2003)
10 February	In Washington John Howard tells reporters that he had spoken to Mbeki who had told him that South Africa and Nigeria would not agree an extension of the sanctions against the Zimbabwean government, which were to come up for review the following month. There was thus no point in holding the scheduled meeting of the troika. As a result the suspension would lapse. (<i>The Australian</i> 11 February 2003)	In its response the South African presidency expressed its "regret and disappointment" that Howard had made public these private discussions. Mbeki's spokesman, Bheki Khumalo, said that no final decision had been reached and consultations were ongoing. (<i>Sapa</i> 10 February). On South African radio Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma states that "Zimbabwe should be assisted in recovering from its problems instead of being punished" (<i>The Guardian</i> on Saturday, Nigeria, 15 February 2003)
11 February	In a letter to John Howard, Olusegun Obasanjo claims that as the situation is improving the suspension of Zimbabwe	He writes: "the time is now auspicious to lift the sanctions on Zimbabwe with regard to her suspension from the

	should be lifted.	Commonwealth councils. This will represent an appropriate development for the final resolution of the crisis in that country.” (From the <i>Business Day</i> website.)
13 February	In a press briefing Acting Director-General of Foreign Affairs (SA), Abdul Minty, confirmed on Thursday that South Africa "is at this stage not asking for any further suspension". He also accused Australia of prejudging the issue. (Sapa 12 February)	In an address to Commonwealth Heads of Mission around this time he accused John Howard lacking objectivity and breaching confidentiality. According to one diplomat at the meeting: “There seems to be a coordinated move to delegitimise Howard, split the Commonwealth on race lines and force the Australians out of the game on Zimbabwe. A whole anti-West thing seems to be going on at the moment.” (<i>Mail & Guardian</i> 17 February 2003)
16 February	In an interview in the <i>New Straits Times</i> (Malaysia) Mbeki claims that it would be “illegal” for the troika to impose further sanctions on Zimbabwe as it did not have the mandate. (The interview is conducted in preparation for the Non Aligned Movement summit to be held in Malaysia.)	According to Mbeki “We (the troika) imposed a suspension for one year. There are no questions of the sanctions being lifted. We imposed a punishment for one year, and the one year will come to an end. Now, the question is being raised that the troika should impose additional punishment on Zimbabwe. We are saying the troika does not have the mandate...It would be illegal for us to impose sanctions, which we don't have mandate for.”
	In his state of the nation address Mbeki’s sole reference to the political situation in Zimbabwe is that “We will also continue to work with the people of Zimbabwe as they seek solutions to the problems afflicting their country.”	
	In an interview with SABC 2 following his state of the nation address Mbeki said that South Africa would neither impose sanctions on Zimbabwe nor seek a change of government in that country. Mbeki says that the matter of how governs Zimbabwe should be left in the hands of the people of Zimbabwe. Mbeki also states that it would not be in “our interest” to impose sanctions as they would “contribute to the collapse of Zimbabwe”.	According to Mbeki: “Some people want us to impose sanctions, people want us to participate in a process of the removal of the government of Zimbabwe and, so long as we don't do those things, they will criticise. We are not going to, and we have said this before, be going around the African continent, removing governments. The matter of who governs Zimbabwe is a matter that is in the hands of the people of Zimbabwe. The matter of who governs the people of South Africa is in the hands of the people of South Africa.” (GCIS transcript 16 February 2003)
18 February	In an article published on AllAfrica.com Alistair Sparks reports on an approach made by the ANC to the MDC in December 2002. In a meeting in Johannesburg David Coltart MDC MP met Patrick Moseke of the ANC. The plan being floated by the ANC and	According to Coltart the ANC reports recommendations “made no reference to elections and a transition to democracy. Instead it referred to the need for ‘a leadership succession plan.’ At the same time the document dismissed the MDC as a rudderless party lacking in both

	<p>elements of Zanu PF was that Mugabe would go (or serve as a ceremonial president) but there would not be new elections held. The MDC could serve in a government of national unity but only as a junior partner. The plan appeared to be an attempt by the ANC to re-legitimise the Zanu PF government in Zimbabwe.</p> <p>Moseke also showed him a document drawn up by the ANC whose recommendations had apparently been endorsed by Mbeki.</p>	<p>policies and unity. The impression this gave the MDC was that the ANC was not looking to new elections to produce a legitimate government as the solution to the Zimbabwe crisis, but rather a strategy to bring about a new leadership of ZANU-PF as the governing party.”</p>
21-25 February	<p>The Non-Alignment Movement Summit is held in Malaysia. Mbeki and Dlamini-Zuma attend, as does Mugabe.</p> <p>The Summit adopts a resolution on Zimbabwe commended the land redistribution programme being pursued in that country, and condemned the imposition of targeted countries by Western nations. It also called for the IMF and WB to immediately begin disbursing funds to Zimbabwe again.</p>	<p>According to the resolution the Heads of State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acknowledged actions taken by the Government of Zimbabwe in its endeavours at correcting historical injustices through the land redistribution programme in accordance with its national laws and called upon the international community to give full support to these efforts • condemned the unilateral imposition of targeted sanctions on Zimbabwe by the United States, Britain, the European Union (EU), Switzerland, New Zealand and Australia in violation of the United Nations Charter and called for the immediate lifting of sanctions. • expressed dismay and great concern over the decision by the Bretton Woods Institutions to withdraw financial support from Zimbabwe on political considerations and called for the immediate disbursement of financial support from these institutions. <p>From the Text of "Final Document of the XIII Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, Kuala Lumpur, 24-25 February 2003" Bernama News Agency Malaysia</p>
2 March	<p>Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma defends Robert Mugabe strongly. She claims that the reason why Mugabe has yet to fulfil (alleged) promises he has made to South Africa to amend a number of draconian laws is that “Zimbabwe is a democracy.”</p>	<p>"Zimbabwe is a democracy; the president (Mugabe) does not decree laws. They have to go to the cabinet. They have to go to the parliament and it's only after parliament has deliberated the laws that they come back to the president to sign... Here in South Africa, you don't say you are going to change the law today and tomorrow it has been changed. It doesn't work like that. But somehow you expect it to work like that in</p>

		Zimbabwe." (<i>Sunday Independent</i> 2 March 2003)
3 March	In an address to the National Press Club in Pretoria Dlamini-Zuma said that the ANC government would never condemn Zanu PF. She also claimed that the current government was not an imposed regime but one elected by Zimbabweans. "If you have a problems with the Zimbabwean government, go to the Zimbabweans" she said.	According to Zuma: "The problem with you [the media], is that you are waiting for one word --condemnation of Zimbabwe. You will never hear that. It is not going to happen as long as this government is in power." Europe and the United Kingdom could shout their objections to what was happening in Zimbabwe. "We are near, so we don't have to shout as much as Britain does, otherwise we will injure Zimbabwe's hearing mechanisms. The law of physics tells you that, never mind diplomacy." (<i>Sapa</i> report 3 March)
4 March	In an answer to a question in parliament Dlamini-Zuma confirmed that South Africa was one of 14 African nations which had supported no action on the European Union's proposed draft resolution on Zimbabwe at the UN Commission on Human Rights 58th session. The resolution had urged Harare to invite UN human rights experts to visit Zimbabwe.	Dlamini-Zuma complained that the South—and African states in particular—were being targeted in the commission. 9 of the 20 country-specific resolutions concerned African states. In her answer she stated, "The African delegations were disappointed and angered to discover that the text included only a scant reference to economic and social rights, while it did not mention the failure of the British government to meet its commitments in terms of the Lancaster House agreement. Nor was the primary importance of land distribution reflected in the draft."
	According to an article in <i>the Herald</i> Mugabe told reporters in Singapore (the previous week) that Blair had admitted to Mbeki that his policy towards Zimbabwe had failed. Mugabe was quoted as saying: "Blair admitted to President Mbeki that they were wrong and that we are right but that he has no way now of adjusting and of accepting publicly that they were wrong and they want to play their part."	The report further claimed: "In his meeting with Mr Mbeki last month, Mr Blair regretted that his government, at the behest of Minister of Overseas Development Ms Clare Short, treated Zimbabwe as a minor, if not non-issue during its first two years in power....Mr Blair told Mr Mbeki that his government did not realise the complexity of the Zimbabwe land question during the run-up to the 1998 land donors conference. By then it was too late as he and his ministers, notably Ms Short, Mr Peter Hain and Mr Robin Cook had dug in and misled the British public and created an anti-Zimbabwe media frenzy."
8 March	In response to the March 6 th order by President Bush that the US would freeze the assets of Mugabe and 76 of his officials, foreign affairs spokesman, Ronnie Mamoepa, said that South Africa opposes	"South Africa has never believed in sanctions against Zimbabwe. We have put great emphasis on the need for the international community to assist the people of Zimbabwe," he added. He said

	the opposes the imposition of any sanctions on the Zimbabwean government.	South Africa believed the different parties within Zimbabwe needed to be reconciled, "therefore setting the basis for economic reconstruction." (<i>Sapa</i> 8 March 2003)
16 th March	Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Don McKinnon, said that the suspension of Zimbabwe from the councils of the Commonwealth would be extended for nine months until the Commonwealth Heads of Government meet in December.	Announcing the extension in London, Mr McKinnon revealed there had been some disagreement among different members of the Commonwealth as to what should happen next. "Some member governments take the view that it is time to lift Zimbabwe's suspension from the councils of the Commonwealth when the one-year period expires on 19 March 2003," he said."Some others feel that there is no justification for such a step and that there is in fact reason to impose stronger measures." <i>Press Association</i> 16 th March 2003

	<p>The full statement reads as follows:</p> <p>"The Commonwealth Troika, mandated by Heads of Government to deal with the Zimbabwe issue, suspended Zimbabwe from the councils of the Commonwealth on 19 March 2002 for a period of one year. Under the Marlborough House Statement, the issue was to be revisited in twelve months time, 'having regard to progress in Zimbabwe based on the Commonwealth Harare principles and reports from the Commonwealth Secretary-General.' At their subsequent meeting in Abuja on 23 September 2002 the Commonwealth Troika decided to 'see how Zimbabwe responds to the Marlborough House Statement over the next six months as foreshadowed in that Statement, at which point stronger measures might need to be considered.'</p> <p>"Members of the Troika, in reviewing the Zimbabwe issue, agreed that I should undertake wider consultations among Commonwealth governments. Accordingly, over the past few weeks, I have been listening to the views of and discussing the issue with virtually all leaders across the Commonwealth. They have all stated that they wish to see the Commonwealth continue to work together on the issue of Zimbabwe.</p> <p>"Some member governments take the view that it is time to lift Zimbabwe's suspension from the councils of the Commonwealth when the one-year period expires on 19 March 2003. Some others feel that there is no justification for such a step and that there is in fact reason to impose stronger measures. However, the broadly held view is that Heads of Government wish to review matters at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Nigeria in December 2003 and that the suspension of Zimbabwe from the councils of the Commonwealth should remain in place pending discussions on the matter at CHOGM.</p> <p>"I have advised members of the Troika of these views. I have also submitted to them my report as foreshadowed in the Marlborough House Statement.</p> <p>"The members of the Troika have now concluded that the most appropriate approach in the circumstances is for Zimbabwe's suspension from the councils of the Commonwealth to remain in place until Commonwealth Heads of Government address the issue and decide upon a way forward at the CHOGM in December 2003.</p> <p>"I wish to reiterate that Zimbabwe and its people matter to the Commonwealth. All the Heads of Government I have spoken to have urged me to persist with my efforts at engagement with President Mugabe and his government in the context of my good offices role. I intend to do so.</p> <p>"The issue of land reform is at the core of the situation in Zimbabwe and cannot be separated from other issues of concern to the Commonwealth, such as the rule of law, respect for human rights, democracy and the economy. The Commonwealth and the wider international community remain ready to assist the Government of Zimbabwe in addressing this key issue. I once again call on the Zimbabwe Government to re-engage with the Commonwealth and the United Nations Development Programme on the issue of transparent, equitable and sustainable measures for land reform, as agreed at Abuja in September 2001. Commonwealth governments also look to the Government of Zimbabwe to honour its undertakings given to other regional leaders on issues of concern.</p> <p>"The Commonwealth looks forward to Zimbabwe being able to regain its full and rightful place in the Commonwealth family." (Commonwealth Secretariat "Commonwealth Statement on Zimbabwe" 16th March 2003)</p>
13 th July	<p>The Johannesburg <i>Sunday Times</i> reports that the Commonwealth is sharply divided about whether to readmit Zimbabwe to the councils of the Commonwealth.</p> <p>The Commonwealth troika on Zimbabwe - South African President Thabo Mbeki, Australian Prime Minister John Howard and Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo - were mandated by the CHOGM in 2002 to deal with the issue.</p> <p>While Howard, backed by Britain and New Zealand, has pushed for</p>

		<p>stronger penal action against Zimbabwe, Mbeki and Obasanjo have insisted that the troika's mandate has expired. In March, the two African leaders refused to make a pronouncement on the issue, arguing that since the expulsion was for only a year, Zimbabwe should be re-admitted after 12 months.</p> <p>According to Commonwealth secretary-general Don McKinnon, who was a guest at the African Union summit in the Mozambican capital Maputo this week, the "broadly held view" among Commonwealth countries was to maintain Zimbabwe's suspension until the December summit.</p>
15 th September	<p><i>The Australian</i> reports that "AUSTRALIA has headed off a push by African nations to allow dictatorial Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe to attend this year's meeting of Commonwealth leaders in Nigeria. In a diplomatic coup, John Howard has received assurances that Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo will ban Mr Mugabe from attending December's Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting."</p>	<p>The move to bar Mr Mugabe from the CHOGM talks in the Nigerian capital of Abuja is likely to cause unrest among some of the 54 Commonwealth countries.</p> <p>African countries, led by South African President Thabo Mbeki, have been</p>
		<p>A spokesman for Australian Prime Minister John Howard said Monday: "I can confirm that the Commonwealth secretary general and the Nigerian government have confirmed that President Mugabe will not be invited to the CHOGM meeting in Nigeria in December. The prime minister had opposed inviting Mugabe so this decision is welcome," the spokesman said.</p> <p>"We consider that in the absence of any progress in addressing the concerns which led to its suspension from the councils of the Commonwealth, Zimbabwe's suspension should stand." (AFP 15th September 2003)</p>
16 th September	<p>Mbeki's spokesman, Bheki Khumalo, speaking to Australian Broadcasting Corporation Radio, said that Zimbabwe should be allowed to attend the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting scheduled for December in Nigeria's capital, Abuja. "We are very disappointed because we don't think that excluding Zimbabwe from CHOGM in Nigeria will achieve anything." Associated Press 16th September 2003</p>	<p>Kumalo also stated: "We want to appeal to the Australians to understand that megaphone diplomacy will not produce results, I mean sanctions have been imposed against Zimbabwe now for a number of months with no result at all, and we don't think that using megaphone diplomacy will work." Khumalo urged the Commonwealth to reverse its decision. Prime Minister John Howard rejected the criticism, saying most Commonwealth leaders, did not support inviting Mugabe.</p>

		"Everything that Australia has said about Zimbabwe in the time I've been prime minister, and most especially since the rorted election in Zimbabwe two years ago, far from being megaphone diplomacy has been a plain statement of truth," Howard told parliament. (AFP 16 th September 2003)
17 th September	A spokesman for the Commonwealth stated that Zimbabwe would not attend the Commonwealth summit. Joel Kibazo told reporters Zimbabwe's suspension from the Commonwealth had ruled it out from being invited to the CHOGM meeting in Nigeria.	"All I can say is that the common practice is that those countries that are suspended do not attend CHOGM," Kibazo said on the sidelines of a Commonwealth finance ministers meeting taking place in the Brunei capital. "So as far as I know, 52 invitations have gone out." (Zimbabwe and Pakistan were not invited.) "All I can say is that the common practice is that those countries that are suspended do not attend CHOGM," Kibazo said on the sidelines of a Commonwealth finance ministers meeting taking place in the Brunei capital. "Put it this way, you must separate a bilateral relationship between Nigeria and Zimbabwe ... all countries have their own relationships," Kibazo said. "But if you are talking about in the context of the Commonwealth, then Nigeria is going to abide by the practice of the Commonwealth." (AFP 17 th September 2003)
18 th September	Speaking in the National Assembly Mbeki states that Mugabe will be invited to the CHOGM in December. There was no additional sanction barring Zimbabwe from attending the Commonwealth summit. Mbeki reminded the National Assembly that Zimbabwe's suspension from the Commonwealth had been for a period of a year, which had passed in March. He said the decision to suspend Zimbabwe for a year was taken within a very specific mandate."The troika decided to impose a maximum sentence of suspension for a year and that has been served. I am not aware of any additional sanctions."	On Thursday the president said a country's attendance at the summit was based on an invitation from the host country. "The invitation will come from Obasanjo. This is a matter he will deal with. So I think we will await a decision from the host on whether certain recommendations will be accepted." (SAPA 18 th September 2003)
19 th September	The <i>Zimbabwe Independent</i> reports that Australian Prime Minister John Howard said Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and the group's secretariat had decided that Mugabe would not be admitted to the CHOGM in Nigeria in December. The decision was taken by Nigeria on the grounds that Zimbabwe is still suspended from the club's councils. "Zimbabwe is a	According to the report: "Nigeria also wrong-footed South Africa when it confirmed Mugabe was not invited to Abuja at a time when Pretoria was claiming the issue was not settled." Zimbabwe and Pakistan have not been invited to the Commonwealth summit because they are still under suspension for violating the 1991 Harare

	<p>disaster, a human disaster," Howard said. "It is quite unacceptable that Zimbabwe continue to participate, or be allowed to resume participation, in Commonwealth affairs until there's a complete change of approach, and that can only happen with the disappearance of the Mugabe government."</p>	<p>Declaration," Nigeria's under-secretary in charge of regions and international organisations, Gbenga Ashiru, said. "There is no way the suspension of the two countries can be lifted before the summit." After this the spin in Pretoria changed. Khumalo later told the Zimbabwe Independent: "Nigeria has got the right to invite President Mugabe or not. We are not insisting that President Mugabe should go to Abuja. We will live by whatever decision Nigeria takes."</p>
1 st October	<p>The South African presidency states that it accepted, but did not support, the decision not to invite President Mugabe to the CHOGM in Nigeria. Bheki Khumalo said Mbeki was among those consulted by Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo before he opted to exclude Mugabe. Khumalo would not reveal whether or not Mbeki supported the move, but said: "The president accepts Mr Obasanjo's decision." Reports that Mbeki had insisted on Mugabe's presence at the summit in Abuja were unfounded, Khumalo said. "It is up to Nigeria to decide whether or not to invite Mr Mugabe.</p>	<p>We have all along been saying that this was their prerogative." Obasanjo reportedly confirmed this week Mugabe would be excluded. He was quoted as saying: "I believe there should be a big change in Zimbabwe for an invitation to be sent." This followed an announcement last month by Australia's prime minister, John Howard, and Commonwealth secretary general Don McKinnon that Mugabe would not be invited. (<i>Vanguard</i>, Nigeria, 2nd October 2003)</p>
6 th October	<p><i>The Times</i> reports that Zimbabwe, with the support of most African states, is trying to get Don McKinnon replaced as the Commonwealth Secretary General. According to diplomatic sources, Harare has enlisted the support of most of the other 16 African members of the Commonwealth and is attempting to win backing from states in the developing world by proposing that Mr McKinnon be replaced by an Asian candidate, possibly from Sri Lanka.</p> <p>Mr McKinnon is coming to the end of his four-year tenure. It had been assumed that he would automatically be voted in for a second term by the 54 heads of government, who are due to meet in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, in early December.</p>	<p>Mr Mugabe is known to be furious that he is being excluded from the gathering in Nigeria and blames Mr McKinnon. "There was a lot of antagonism (towards Mr McKinnon) after the suspension was extended," one source said. "Mugabe is very angry about not going to Abuja...The Zimbabweans are using all their influence to try to get a new candidate installed as Secretary General." (<i>The Times</i> (London) Monday 6th October 2003)</p>
16 th November	<p><i>The Sunday Times</i> reports that Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe is making frantic efforts to secure a late invitation to next month's Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (Chogm) in Nigeria, from which he is barred. Mugabe is engaged in critical talks with Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo in a bid to get an invitation to the Abuja summit, which runs from 5 to 8 December.</p>	<p>It is understood President Thabo Mbeki and Australian Prime Minister John Howard, who is Commonwealth chairman and head of its troika on Zimbabwe, are also being consulted.</p> <p>"Consultations are still going on and a final decision on the issue will be made in due course," a senior official at the Nigerian High Commission in Harare said. "Presidents Obasanjo and Mugabe</p>

		are talking."
17 th November	Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo again appeared to be angling to give Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe an invitation to the meeting in the face of fierce opposition. Obasanjo arrived in Harare for separate talks with Mugabe and opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai, meeting each leader twice during the day. "I am consulting across the board with Commonwealth leaders on what should be the line of action before CHOGM (Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting), during CHOGM and after CHOGM ," he said shortly before leaving Harare in the afternoon.	"I am still consulting," Obasanjo said when asked by reporters whether he would invite Mugabe to Abuja. Mugabe appeared confident, telling reporters, "consultation is always necessary and we look forward to attending... (inaudible)... the Abuja meeting." Obasanjo left for Dar-es-Salaam where he is to speak with Tanzania's President Benjamin Mkapa, who is also the chairman of the Southern African Development Community. South Africa and some other African Commonwealth members have been pressing for Mugabe to be allowed to attend, in the face of fierce opposition from Britain and Australia. (<i>Sapa</i> 17 th November 2003)
25 th November	Olusegen Obasanjo tells journalists that Nigeria has formally stopped President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe from attending the CHOGM. President Olusegun Oba-sanjo who is the chief host of the meeting Tuesday at his Ota farm house in Ogun State told journalists that Mugabe has not been invited to the meeting.	"He will not have an invitation," Obasanjo said. "If there is no invitation they (Zimbabwe) will not come," Obasanjo told journalists, pointing out that the summit will strengthen the Commonwealth family. (<i>This Day</i> (Nigeria) 25 th November 2003)
28 th November	President Robert Mugabe said Zimbabwe was prepared to give up its membership to the Commonwealth if it was not treated as an equal, hinting he was still waiting for an invitation to the 54-member grouping's summit meeting next week. "If our sovereignty is what we have to lose to be readmitted into the Commonwealth, well, we will say goodbye to the Commonwealth, and perhaps time has now come to say so," Mugabe said Friday in a eulogy at a funeral of a former nationalist, which was broadcast on state radio.	He said the country valued its membership of other organisations such as the African Union (AU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the UN because they treated it as an equal. "We expect no less (equal status) from the Commonwealth if it merits our membership, if its claim to be a club of equals is to be sustained." "And I want to see whether that principle of equal membership shall be sustained as we proceed to the next session of CHOGM ," Mugabe said. Channel NewsAsia 28 th November 2005
30 th November	The DFA announces that President Thabo Mbeki , accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, will lead a South African delegation to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Abuja, Nigeria, from Thursday, the Department of Foreign Affairs said.	Spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa said the theme of the meeting was "Democracy and Development: Partnership for Peace and Prosperity." Among the reports Mbeki and other heads of government -- barring Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe -- would study were: -- A report of the Commonwealth Expert Group on Development and Democracy; -- the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) report on Zimbabwe, Fiji, Pakistan, and the Solomon Islands. SAPA 30 th November 2003

<p>4th December</p>	<p>On the day the CHOGM opens in Abuja, Dave Clark previews the meeting. He states that Sri Lanka has proposed its respected former foreign minister, Lakshmi Kadirgamar, to replace McKinnon, in a move reportedly backed -- or even orchestrated -- by Mbeki. The delegates will probably be asked to vote on the challenge during the weekend's summit, officials said. Opinion on the outcome was divided amongst Commonwealth insiders. "It could be very close," said one. AFP 4th December 2003</p>	
<p>5th December</p>	<p>“Sources in Abuja now say that South Africa appears to have thrown its support behind a Sri Lankan candidate to run against McKinnon's reappointment. This is being seen as the country giving him his comeuppance for maintaining a hard-line stance on Zimbabwe.</p> <p>A Commonwealth official noted, "Frankly, we sometimes do find difficulty with South Africa's position." "Now it's backing the Sri Lankan candidate (Lakshman Kadirgaman). Why? Is it pique at the Zimbabwe issue? If so, why? What results has its position (of quiet diplomacy) yielded?" A spokesman for South African Foreign Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Ronnie Mamoepa, said she was still in consultation with the President and the cabinet about which candidate for the post of secretary-general the country would support.”</p>	<p>The emerging view as talks got underway was that there had been no progress in Zimbabwe to justify the lifting of its suspension. McKinnon said efforts by his organisation to secure reforms in Zimbabwe had yielded a "total lack of success...We have not met for 18 months and Commonwealth officers have been denied visas".</p> <p>He added: "I have talked to every Commonwealth leader and there is more than one view on how to proceed on Zimbabwe. But the discussion is by no means an Africa versus the rest of the world one." (<i>IPS-Inter Press Service</i> 5th December 2003)</p>