



W/O 3/93

Campaigners for Human Rights

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## ZimRights' statement commemorating Africa Day 2022

25 May 2022

ZimRights joins the nation and the African continent in commemorating Africa Day. The Day, commemorated every 25<sup>th</sup> of May seeks to acknowledge successes and to encourage the progress that Africa has made under a specific theme while reflecting upon the common challenges that the continent faces in a global environment. This year, the day is being commemorated under the theme "Strengthening Resilience in Nutrition and Food Security on the African Continent: Strengthening Agro-Food Systems, Health and Social Protection Systems for the Acceleration of Human, Social and Economic Capital Development".

It is against this background that ZimRights reflects on the dire food situation on the African continent and specifically in Zimbabwe. The day comes when close to 8 million Zimbabweans are under the threat of starvation due to a number of reasons. ZimRights identifies erratic weather patterns, imprudent management of the economy, hyperinflation, poor agricultural productivity, a shortage of foreign currency and high levels of unemployment as the major hindrances to food security in Zimbabwe.

While ZimRights acknowledges role of natural phenomenon like erratic weather patterns, it is concerned with the imprudent management of the country's economic affairs to the food insecurities. Corruption and misappropriation of resources has taken centre stage. One area where this manifest is in the partisan distribution of food aid. Because of the perennial food challenges, Zimbabwe has come to heavily depend on food aid mainly from government and humanitarian organisations. However, the distributions from government have largely been used to further political interests by members of the ruling elite and the cases are well documented. This has plunged those Zimbabweans deemed to be opposition supporters into further food insecurity. This is a threat to the right to food, as enshrined in section 77 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe and flies in the face of this year's Africa Day theme.

ZimRights would like to remind the government of Zimbabwe of the words of Special Rapporteur on Food security in 2019, Hilal Elve that, "The right to food is an inclusive right and should be understood holistically to encompass other related rights, including the rights to health, housing, social security, water and sanitation, a healthy environment, access to decent work and land, as well as freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, all of which are based on the principle of non-discrimination."



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Therefore, the government of Zimbabwe should:

- Enforce the non-politicisation and non-discriminatory nature of food aid distribution.
- The Government of Zimbabwe adhere to the institutional framework for vulnerable and food insecure communities to access food aid assistance.
- The Zimbabwe Anti Corruption Commission deal decisively with those who have abused resources under the Presidential Farming Inputs, Pfumvudza and Command Agriculture Schemes
- Ensure the economic environment is conducive for people to have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life

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