

# Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army Field Reports and Guerrilla Activities during Zimbabwe's Armed Struggle

by

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## Abstract

This paper discusses the significance of materials that are among the primary evidence for the activities of the liberation forces in the battlefield during Zimbabwe's war of liberation. These are the field reports that were compiled by the guerrilla fighters on the frontline especially by the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), one of the liberation army units during the war. The author had the privilege of perusing through the documents, which were housed at the Zimbabwe African National Union/Patriotic Front (ZANU/PF) headquarters in Harare, when he was conducting fieldwork for his doctoral studies. Guerrilla activities included military operations, their interaction with the rural populace, wrongdoings or contravention of set rules. The study seeks to subject these documents to critical scrutiny as Zimbabwean liberation war historiographical sources and interrogate their value. This study is motivated by two perspectives as well as unsubstantiated insinuations on guerrilla activities that have emerged because of the explosion of liberation war histories; the nationalist school which portrays an exclusively rosy picture of the efficacy of revolutionary guerrilla warfare which the ZANLA fighters adopted; and the perspective that draws from Rhodesian government that the ZANLA fighters were terrorists who imbibed from alien communist teachings and had no clear-cut objective in waging the liberation war.

## Introduction

The history of Zimbabwe's liberation war has been documented from several perspectives and this has resulted in various versions. This has also made it susceptible to misrepresentations and distortions. Currently the scenario is worsened when members of the ruling party, the Zimbabwe African National Union/Patriotic Front (ZANU/PF) are jostling for power and have acquired a penchant to undermine each other's liberation credentials.<sup>1</sup>

The unfortunate victim in this case has been liberation war history. Partisan journalists, who are taking sides in the political schisms, perhaps out of ignorance, are also busy at work being accomplices in disfiguring the history of the liberation war. What comes to mind are articles that appear in the Zimbabwean newspapers, where liberation war narratives have become a common feature.<sup>2</sup> These newspaper narratives are in the majority of cases coated with embellishments which 'kill' historical accuracy. ZANLA war documents can come in very handy in addressing this conundrum where liberation war history is being subjected to mutilation. These ZANLA war documents were a product of ZANLA field report system. It is important to note that the report system was part of the internal communication nexus within the liberation movement (ZANU) in general and within the liberation army (ZANLA) in particular. Intimations that these wartime documents were propaganda or biased material are clearly based on ignorance as to their purpose and the context in which they were compiled. The Zimbabwe African National Union, the liberation movement and the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), the liberation army used the *Voice of Zimbabwe*, a radio broadcast from Radio Maputo (after Mozambique had attained independence) and the *Zimbabwe News* as instruments of propaganda. The liberation army's field reports were not part of the propaganda machinery because they were not meant for public domain.<sup>3</sup>

The liberation fighters, before being deployed into Rhodesia to wage the liberation war, underwent training which was both military and political.<sup>4</sup> The politico-military training included what was referred to as the reporting system which prepared the nationalist guerrilla fighters for the task of compiling reports of their activities in the battle field. During the reporting system lessons accuracy and honest were emphasised.<sup>5</sup> The ZANLA trainees were made aware during training of the importance of reports which included showing failure or success of tasks, challenges and requirements. These could be daily, monthly, quarterly or annual reports. Guerrillas also compiled reports of specific incidents that took place during the course of their fighting. It was a requirement that these reports should be free of fabrication and lies and were compiled timeously. The reports were meant to keep the military leadership at Chimoio, the ZANLA's military headquarters, informed of developments at the front. The military commanders used these front-generated documents to study and analyse the war situation and institute improvements. The maxim to ZANLA guerrilla commanders was:

We should study and observe the reporting system. We should report what is really taking place and not what we wish to take place.<sup>6</sup>

The military supremoes sometimes made visits to the battle field in response to these reports.<sup>7</sup> They undertook these visits to resolve such challenges as the poisoning of relations between the rural African population and the guerrilla fighters. The relations could be strained by guerrilla indiscipline that included unnecessary harassment of the rural populace, engaging in activities that were deemed unbecoming such as improper relations with women. These activities were brought to the attention of the military leaders through the field reports which then prompted them to take corrective action. It was therefore necessary to compile accurate and honest records of activities at the battlefield. Operational reports, which were part of the field reports, recorded the military operations that the ZANLA freedom fighters mounted or found themselves forced to engage in. It is important to note that accounts of the liberation war which have not benefited from ZANLA war documents are deficient in one way or another. This is largely because such narratives are not privy to regulations and rules that were instituted to guide the conduct of the liberation fighters in the war zones. It is the ZANLA war documents that reveal these rules and regulations.<sup>8</sup>

### **Sources (other than ZANLA war documents) of Guerrilla Activities**

In order to appreciate the value of ZANLA's operational reports one has to make a survey of the other sources of frontline activities of the guerrilla armies. Various publications which included newspapers and magazines largely controlled by the Rhodesian government also carried stories of purported battlefield activities of the freedom fighters. These included *The Rhodesia Herald*, *The Chronicle*, *The African Times*, *The Sunday Mail*, *Parrot and Outpost* and Ministry of Information and Immigration publications. All these publications carried stories about the activities of the liberation fighters in the operational areas. The slant in the accounts was that the ZANLA fighters were terrorists who murdered members of the rural African population for no reason. Reports from these sources gave an exaggerated depiction of the alleged terrorist activities of the liberation fighters. It was purported that they murdered civilians in cold blood and wantonly maimed them. Grisly pictures of injured African villagers were shown in some of these publications. People had their eyes removed, had ears cut off and parts of their noses cut off. Daily reports of ZANLA's brutal attacks on the civilian population appeared in *The Rhodesia Herald* and *The Chronicle*. The Rhodesian Ministry of Information, Immigration and Tourism published the following booklets: *Anatomy of Terror* (May 1974), *The Massacre of Innocents'* (January 1978) and *The Murder of Missionaries in Rhodesia* (July 1978). These booklets described the alleged atrocities committed by the ZANLA forces on the African civilian population and missionaries. The so-called atrocities perpetrated by the freedom fighters were said to include murder, rape, abduction, torture, beatings and robberies.

What should be noted is that these booklets and newspapers and magazines which were controlled and produced by the Rhodesian government became instruments of propaganda. The following piece from the booklet, *The Murder of Missionaries in Rhodesia* testifies to the propaganda crusade:

By 1976, numbers (sic) of missionaries, often acting against official advice, had become dangerously vulnerable. Although it had taken time for the undisciplined terrorist bands to appreciate this exposure of soft targets, it was inevitable that mission establishments and their members would prove irresistible prey for well-armed cowards.<sup>9</sup>

The Rhodesian authorities stressed that the ZANLA fighters lacked discipline and were cowards who rather than fight against the Rhodesian security forces turned on soft targets like missionaries. Such publications were meant for the consumption of the international community and the local missionaries who continued to support and sympathise with the guerrilla fighters who they referred to as freedom fighters. The following comment from the same publication expressed wonder and dismay on why the so called terrorist continued to receive support:

The tragedy of Africa is not just that such savagery still persists. It is that terrorism has been given respectability. That the men with the guns are regarded as freedom fighters, as liberators, when they are no more than thugs and animals. When will the World Council of Churches appreciate that it must stop aiding men who kill and maim the innocents? When will our local political priests accept that it is time to condemn, instead of support, such forces of evil? When will Mr Andy Young and people like him realize that every man, woman or child who dies at Elim or at Kolwezi, or anywhere else on this dark continent, is a victim of insensate hate and barbarism? When will they back the forces of peace, of tolerance, of goodwill, instead of supporting the brutal and beastly terrorists?<sup>10</sup>

The other publication, *Anatomy of Terror*, had this to say about its contents:

This is not a pretty book. The pictures inside depict a few of the many atrocities perpetrated by the so-called Freedom Fighters in Rhodesia... The incidents and pictures in this book record the wave of atrocities-murder, rape, abduction, torture, beatings, robberies and cattle maimings, over the last 18 months. If as they, the people are on their side, why is it necessary for them to resort to such barbarism in order to convince them? It is a sober thought that the people who perpetrate these crimes are financed and comforted by the international community and the World Council of Churches.<sup>11</sup>

The mention of the international community and the World Council of Churches is indicative of the fact that this was part of Rhodesian propaganda. The hope was that the World Council of Churches and the international community would refrain from supporting the liberation movements whose fighters were portrayed as terrorists. Again the atrocities depicted in the booklet, *Anatomy of Terror*, were not witnessed by the rural African people who interacted with the liberation fighters. The counter-accusations by the nationalists that this was the work of the Rhodesian Selous Scouts carried weight because in their disguise as ZANLA fighters the Selous Scouts committed atrocities. Parker's publication in 2006, lends credence to this because he cites atrocities committed by the Rhodesian Selous Scouts to which he was part. The murder of Father Killian Heusser at Berejena Mission in January 1979, for which initially ZANLA was blamed, was perpetrated by the Rhodesian Selous Scouts.<sup>12</sup>

The accuracy of the majority of the stories they carried needs to be questioned on the basis that the alleged atrocities depicted a degenerate liberation army. Again the success of the liberation guerrilla war was a result of the cooperation between the nationalist fighters and the rural African population. This cooperation would not have been possible if the later had been victims of the alleged wanton guerrilla atrocities. Writing in 1987 Flower, who was the head of the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) during the war, notes:

Guerrillas were beginning to avoid contact with the Security Forces and concentrated on 'politicisation' which led inevitably to intimidation and in which worst forms became terrorism – murder, rape and other brutalities.<sup>13</sup>

The newspapers and magazines contained reports of the military exploits of the ZANLA forces. The emphasis was that the liberation fighters were poor marksmen and cowards who avoided confrontation with the Rhodesian security forces. Such insinuations or assertions reflected the ignorance of the Rhodesian authorities and white Rhodesian population about guerrilla warfare which the ZANLA forces adopted in the military contest against the conventional army forces of the Rhodesian government. The liberation fighters avoided direct confrontation with the Rhodesian security forces not because they were cowards. This was tactical and in keeping with the tenets of guerrilla warfare which they adopted in their fight against the conventional forces of the Rhodesian army.

The Rhodesian Broadcasting Corporation (RBC) was an important platform through which guerrilla activities were revealed. The radio and television services issued communiqués in which the deaths of several guerrilla fighters were reported. Purported murders of innocent African villagers were reported. It was commonplace for RBC to make broadcast such as 'terrorists murdered innocent villagers or raped a sixteen year old girl'.

There were also announcements on the murder of innocent missionaries at rural outposts. The murder of missionaries at Elim Mission in June 1978 and St. Paul's Musami in August 1977 are among the many incidents that were reported in the government-controlled newspapers and Ministry of Information publications. Fingers pointed at the ZANLA forces.

A sizeable number of ex-Rhodesian soldiers have documented their experiences during the war in autobiographies. This literature has revealed the alleged activities of guerrilla fighters which included their military conduct and their interaction with the rural population. On the military side these authors have demonstrated that the ZANLA fighters were largely not successful in their military operations and the storyline is that they always came second best to the Rhodesian security forces. Ron Reid-Daly, Chris Cocks, Jim Parker, Alexander Binda, Barbra Cole, Chas Lotter, Dennis Croukamp and others have lauded the fighting prowess of the different units of the Rhodesian army but have disparaged the fighting ability of the liberation fighters.<sup>14</sup> It has been stressed that the latter have concentrated on 'soft targets' in the form of unarmed civilians who included missionaries. Ron Reid-Daly and Jim Parker have indicated that the guerrilla fighters would pump more than ten bullets into a victim apparently wasting bullets. According to Parker, ex-Detective Sergeant Masunda, who had retired, was executed by ZANLA forces on 6 October 1976 in front of his family without ceremony, riddling him with 34 bullets.<sup>15</sup> This literature shows that the execution that the liberation fighters conducted were haphazard and Parker indicates that the fighters used their bullets carelessly since 34 shots could be pumped into one person.

These writers have demonstrated that *pungwe* gatherings that brought ZANLA fighters and the rural population were scenes of executions of alleged sell outs or traitors. They failed to realise the political mobilisation role of these gatherings. Reid-Daly writes that sometimes a man, a wife, mother, or a father, or a whole family would be pushed to the front by the crowd and would be publicly put to death by commissars by beating, shooting, bayoneting or by being forced into their thatched huts, that would be then set ablaze.<sup>16</sup> It is also demonstrated in this literature that ZANLA fighters were cowards who always took to their heels when they got into contact with Rhodesian security forces. Units of the Rhodesian army came into contact with bands of ZANLA fighters who avoided direct confrontation after realising that they would be wiped out. Such tactical move by the guerrilla fighters in the expediency of survival was construed as cowardice. The avoidance of set battles against the Rhodesian security forces by the ZANLA forces was in consonant with the tenets of guerrilla warfare.

In their narratives ex-Rhodesian soldiers have referred to the guerrilla execution of sell outs (*vatengesi*) as 'murder of innocent villagers'. This raises the question why the Rhodesian soldiers described murdered sell outs as innocent civilians. Reid-Daly has written that Rhodesian Selous Scouts tricked ZANLA fighters to meet with them by sending villagers with messages and the Selous Scouts would fire on the unsuspecting guerrilla fighters.<sup>17</sup> This paints a picture of a liberation army that was careless and lacked organisation.

There are academics that have drawn from Rhodesian propaganda in their studies of the Zimbabwean liberation war. Norma Kriger is one such scholar who comes to mind. She has in her study investigated the activities of ZANLA liberation forces in Mutoko District. Her findings are that guerrillas used force to get the cooperation of the African peasants in the guerrilla war. She further argues that the African peasantry was during the war divided along generational, economic and gender lines and their support of the guerrilla fighters followed these divisions.<sup>18</sup> The slant of her argument draws greatly from Rhodesian propaganda which saw ZANLA freedom fighters as terrorists who could not persuade the rural populace to support them. The *modus operandi* of the ZANLA fighters according to Rhodesian propaganda was to control by fear and intimidation and get individuals committed by default.<sup>19</sup> Other academics include Peter Godwin, Peter Moorcraft, Hancock, Wood, Cate and these have used propaganda from Rhodesian-controlled publications as evidence for guerrilla activities.

ZANU and its armed wing, ZANLA, also had instruments of propaganda like the *Voice of Zimbabwe* broadcasts which have also been documented. The *Zimbabwe News*, a wartime newspaper publication of ZANU, was used for propaganda purposes. Together with the *Voice of Zimbabwe* they represented the nationalist paradigm in the documentation of guerrilla activities in Rhodesia. Cases of guerrilla indiscipline and violence are absent in this media. Reports that appeared in both the *Zimbabwe News* and the *Voice of Zimbabwe* were adopted from ZANLA's field reports but these painted glowing pictures of guerrilla activities on the war front. Whilst field reports presented the activities as they were the articles in the *Zimbabwe News* on the other hand did not mention the death of guerrilla fighters in their encounters with the Rhodesian security forces. These articles would only give the numbers of enemy soldiers who would have been killed in the encounters. In all cases the articles indicated that there were no ZANLA casualties. Monthly or annual reports compiled by ZANLA commanders, revealed misdemeanours perpetrated by the guerrilla fighters in the Rhodesian countryside, the theatre of the war. These were not, however, reported on the propaganda platforms of ZANLA that is the *Voice of Zimbabwe* and the *Zimbabwe News*.

Oral testimonies of people who experienced the war provide information about guerrilla activities during the war. These people could be ex-guerrilla fighters, villagers who participated in the war, white farmers, missionaries and ex-members of the Rhodesian army forces. Testimonies are in most cases coated with biases but it is the task of the historian to validate information that he gets from interviews. Oral testimonies are shaped by prevailing circumstances and situations. For example, in the current situation in which the Zimbabwean ruling party is plagued with divisions there are efforts to overplay one's role and to belittle the part played by others during the war. Guerrilla activities in the battlefield are either exaggerated or downplayed in this scenario. What for example comes to mind is an article in one weekly newspaper where an ex-guerrilla leader shows lack of understanding to who was a *chimbwido* (a teenage girl who during the war worked with the liberation fighters) or a *mubereki* (adult or married person during the war).<sup>20</sup> The ex-guerrilla leader intimates that one woman was a *chimbwido* during the war when this woman was a married person then. This has the effect of distorting Zimbabwean liberation history.

## Field Reports: Record of military operations

These reports largely compiled by the frontline commanders spelt out the situation at the war front and those who compiled them expected feedback from the rear commanders.<sup>21</sup> The records of what was taking place at the front also influenced the training of cadres at the rear. Reports revealed the military tactics that the Rhodesian security forces adopted at various stages and it was expected that the training of liberation cadres had to be tailored in accordance with the adopted tactics. Operational rules were sometimes written down like the Gaza Province Operational Regulations were handwritten in one Dicks P. Magada's diary. Rule 6 read: Our true (sic) operation should be written down in in the form of reports. The reports should be accompanied by all items captured during the raid or attack.<sup>22</sup> These regulations were diarised as reminders. It was likely that the reporting system was birthed during the establishment of the ZANLA Military Planning Committee in 1969. One of the stated tasks of the Military Planning Committee was to analyse thoroughly (sic) all battles and correct any errors that might have been committed. The members of the Military Planning Committee could only be apprised of the battles through operational reports compiled by the cadres at the front. There were annual and monthly reports made by the provincial and sectorial war zone leadership.

Cadres were presented with a format to use in compiling reports. ZANLA's operational reports were uniform in the style of presentation whether compiled by commanders in any of ZANLA's provincial war zone, Tete, Manica or Gaza. The format was generally along the following lines:

Unit:

Commanders:

Date and Time of Operation:

Place of Operation:

Type of Operation:

Enemy Strength:

Our Strength:

Our Losses:

Enemy Losses:

Material Lost:

Material used:

Time Spent on Operation:

General Remarks:

Reported by:

Signed by:

Approved by: <sup>23</sup>

The reports also indicated the names of the provincial war zone, of the sectors and sometimes of the detachments. ZANLA's war zones were divided into three provinces, namely Tete, Manica and Gaza.

The names of these provinces corresponded with provinces with similar names in Mozambique. Each province was further divided into sectors. Gaza Province for example had four sectors which were called Sector 1, Sector 2, Sector 3 and Sector 4. Tete Province was divided into five sectors namely Percy Ntini, Nehanda, Chaminuka, Tangwena and Takawira.<sup>24</sup> Sectors were further divided into detachments. The last division was a section and each province had several sections. The names of sectors and detachments can be gleaned from the many field reports that were compiled by the frontline commanders.

These operational reports which were handwritten at the war front were sent to Chimoio, the military headquarters of the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army, where they were typed. At the ZANU/PF headquarters most of these documents are in both forms, handwritten and typed. Unit referred to the number of guerrilla fighters involved in the operation. General Remarks entailed a description of how the operation was conducted. It was on the sections Our Losses and Enemy Losses where honesty of the commanders who compiled the reports was vindicated. More often than not commanders indicated unknown on Enemy losses. These reports gave the explanation that guerrilla fighters did not have the opportunity to establish enemy losses. Sometimes reports indicated actual figures of enemy losses and the explanation was that the numbers were provided by the teenage boys referred to as *vanamujibha* in wartime parlance. On the section Our Losses the number and names of guerrilla fighters who would have died in a 'contact' were documented. Accurate reporting of what really took place was also revealed in the general remarks. Execution of sell-outs were also part of the documents prepared by the commanders and under General Remarks the justification and the process of the execution of a sell-out was recorded. The type of operation referred to one of the following: ambushes, surprise attacks, sabotage operations or what was referred to as mine warfare. The time spent on operation depended on the type of operation but generally all military operations by the guerrilla fighters were of short duration. The guerrilla fighters could not afford long drawn-out battles because of the small number of fighters in each group. They also avoided a situation in which their adversaries would call for reinforcement and in keeping with the principles of guerrilla warfare they engaged in hit and run operations. Some operations took long not out of choice for the liberation fighters but because they would have been cornered.

Field reports could hide some information but generally the training that the compilers of the reports received helped to minimise inaccuracies that were both deliberate and sometimes unintentional.

## **Records of Guerrilla Indiscipline**

Nationalist historiography would like to underplay and not even mention cases of indiscipline and violence committed by the ZANLA liberation fighters. Whilst every effort was made by the liberation fighters to maintain good relations with the rural populace there were sporadic cases of guerrilla indiscipline and violence. These incidents were documented and the records are part of ZANLA's field reports.

There are examples of reports about cases of guerrilla fighters who made women pregnant which were in contravention of rules that governed the activities of liberation fighters in the battlefield. Those fighters who were responsible were penalised for these transgressions and these were recorded. Among ZANLA field reports are these records of misdemeanours and the punishment meted out to the culprits. It was the combination of the set rules that regulated the behaviour of the liberation forces and the penalties for breaking these rules that minimised guerrilla indiscipline and violence. Guerrilla misconduct included harassing and beating civilians unnecessarily, improper relations with women, fighting among themselves, holding *pungwe* (political mobilisation meetings) at places which compromised the safety of civilians. Bhebe cites a case of one rogue guerrilla fighter who assembled students at Chegato High School in Mberengwa and addressed them in a 'one-man organised *pungwe* meeting'. The consequences were disastrous because the lone guerrilla fighter and three school pupils were murdered when Rhodesian security forces made an attack.<sup>25</sup> This was a breach of ZANLA regulations largely on two accounts. Firstly, schools were considered risk venues for holding political gatherings and ZANLA fighters were prohibited from doing that. Secondly, guerrilla fighters had either *vanamujibha* (teenage boys who acted as guerrilla assistants) or some of the guerrilla fighters or both perform sentry duties to ensure Rhodesian security forces did not invade these political gatherings. If one organised a *pungwe* gathering alone the chances were that there would be no sentry.

The major objective of the rules and regulations that governed the conduct of the liberation fighters in the war zones was to ensure that the relations between them and the rural population were harmonious.<sup>26</sup> This was imperative because the fighters depended on the civilians for food, clothing and information about their opponents. The survival of the guerrilla fighters was determined by the rapport between them and their benefactors, the African population in the war's operational area.

In order to ensure that real sell outs were executed by the guerrilla fighters a process of verification of the wrongdoing by a civilian was engaged. This is why reports about the killing of sell outs gave an explanation of why such a decision was taken. The executions, according to the field reports, were carried out by only those occupying positions from detachment level and above.<sup>27</sup> The guerrilla practice on the execution of sell outs was to ensure that needless killing of people was avoided. In their accounts of the war, ex-Rhodesian operatives have not understood how sell outs (*vatengesesi*) were identified and how it was established that they were guilty. This is the reason why this literature has referred to the murder of 'innocent civilians' among the rural population. Writing in 2006, Jim Parker, an ex-Special Branch Officer, has referred to the 'indiscriminate and brutal murder of innocent tribesmen by ZANLA.' Parker says that the selection procedure (for picking up sell outs) was somewhat similar to a game of Russian roulette. He stresses the point that if one was denounced a Rhodesian security force collaborator one was executed without trial or even interrogation.<sup>28</sup> This perhaps reflected both bigotry and ignorance on the part of Rhodesian authorities and soldiers.

Wrongdoings by guerrilla fighters as mentioned above included making women especially teenage girls pregnant and the uncalled for harassment of the rural people. These offences were documented not only by commanders but also by other ordinary members of guerrilla bands. One guerrilla fighter by the name Comrade Digden Muhondo, who operated in Mutema Detachment in Musikavanhu Sector, reported his superiors who were responsible for pregnancies.<sup>29</sup> In the same Musikavanhu Sector, a report was made in 1979 of two guerrilla leaders namely Amon Wadukuza and Sub Shumba who had numerous charges of indiscipline levelled against them.<sup>30</sup> ZANLA field reports provide reliable material to construct the history of the war. However, it should be pointed out that the ZANLA documents can be complemented by oral testimonies

## Conclusion

ZANLA field reports are very important sources of guerrilla activities in the war zones during the Zimbabwean liberation war. Their dependability derives from the purpose for which they were compiled which was to improve the conduct of the war. They were internal communication within the liberation army and were not targeted at any audience outside the liberation movement. These documents as evidence of happenings in the liberation war's operational area can be complemented by other sources like oral testimonies which however are strongly susceptible to biases and preconceptions. Rhodesian government newspapers and publications were largely for the purposes of undermining the ZANLA fighters in the face of their benefactors such as the rural population and the international community. For this reason they became devices of propaganda. Propaganda in most cases runs parallel to credible historical evidence. Autobiographies of ex-Rhodesian soldiers, who experienced the war is another source that was explored. The weakness of this source was largely the ignorance about guerrilla warfare of the Rhodesian security forces. This was also coupled with the bigotry and stereotype about the African people that has haunted white Rhodesians. ZANLA was involved in a military as well as a political contest with the Rhodesian security forces. On the political level it employed propaganda and it had its instruments for its propagation. The *Zimbabwe News* and *Voice of Zimbabwe* were used for this objective. These misrepresented facts about guerrilla activities in the operational areas to achieve their objective. For that reason the *Zimbabwe News* and the *Voice of Zimbabwe* are sources that should obviously be used with circumspection in the study of guerrilla activities in the theatre of operation.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> The ruling party in Zimbabwe is currently riddled with factional fighting. One Vice-President and several Ministers were expelled from government and the party in 2014 and 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Articles on the Zimbabwean liberation war (more than three decades after the war) are appearing the weekly *Sunday Mail*.

<sup>3</sup> These reports were submitted to Chimoio, the military headquarters of ZANLA.

<sup>4</sup> ZANU Archives, Harare (hereafter ZAH); File: Training Department, *Subject allocation for current training session*, 31 July 1974, W. Mhanda, *Dzino: Memories of a Freedom Fighter* (Harare: Weaver Press, 2011), pp. 19-20.

<sup>5</sup> ZAH: Commissariat Department, Tembwe Base I, *Political Programme for 200 comrades*, 15 December 1978.

<sup>6</sup> This appeared in notebooks of guerrilla trainees.

<sup>7</sup> ZAH: File: Security and Intelligence Department, Meeting, Chaminuka Base, 20 July 1978.

<sup>8</sup> It was documented in some literature that it was a feat of courage for a single guerrilla fighter to hold and address a *pungwe* gathering. This was in fact prohibited and was a breach of rules because this exposed civilians to attacks by the Rhodesian security forces. One person would not be able to take precautionary measures to avoid such attacks.

<sup>9</sup> Ministry of Information, Immigration and Tourism, *The Murder of Missionaries in Rhodesia* (Salisbury: Government Printers, 1978)

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Information, Immigration and Tourism, *An Anatomy of Terrorism* (Salisbury: Government Printers, 1974)

<sup>12</sup> J. Parker, *Assignment Selous Scouts: Inside Story of a Special Branch Officer* (Alberton: Galago, 2006), pp. 284-285.

<sup>13</sup> K. Flower, *Serving Secretly: An Intelligence Chief on Record: Rhodesia into Zimbabwe, 1964 to 1981* (London: John Murray, 1987), p. 121.

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<sup>14</sup> C. Cocks, *Fireforce: One Man's War in the Rhodesian Light Infantry* (Roodeport: Covos Books, 1997), J. T. R. Wood, *The War Diaries of Andre Dennison* (Kent: Ashanti, 1989), B. Cole. *The Elite: The Story of the Rhodesian Special Air Service* (Amanzimtoti: Three Knight Press, 1984), J. Parker, *Assignment Selous Scouts: Inside Story of a Rhodesian Special Branch Officer* (Alberton: Galago, 2006), A. Binda, *The Saints: The Rhodesian Light Infantry* (Johannesburg: 30° South Publishers, 2007), Wood, *Counter-strike from the Sky: The Rhodesian All-Arms Fireforce in the War in the Bush* (Johannesburg: 30° South Publishers, 2009), R. Reid-Daly, *Pamwe Chete: The Legend of the Selous Scouts* (Weltevreden Park: Covos-Day, 1999).

<sup>15</sup> Parker, *Assignment Selous Scouts*, p. 81.

<sup>16</sup> Reid-Daly, *Pamwe Chete*, p. 71.

<sup>17</sup> Reid-Daly, *Pamwe Chete*, p. 25.

<sup>18</sup> N. Kriger, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992)

<sup>19</sup> Parker, *Assignment Selous Scouts*, p. 70.

<sup>20</sup> N. Mlambo, 'Wartime abuse of women exposed!' *The Mirror*, 21-27 October 2016, p. 1-2.

<sup>21</sup> There were five types of commanders among guerrilla bands at the front. These were operational, political commissariat, medical, logistics and supply as well as security and intelligence officers

<sup>22</sup> ZAH: File: Defence-operations Department, Diary (handwritten), Gaza Province Regulations: Operational Regulations. No date. It was pointed out that these regulations were drawn from rules crafted by ZANLA commanders.

<sup>23</sup> ZAH: File: ZANLA Headquarters: Chimoio, Defence-Operations Department, *Style of presenting operational reports*, 28 October 1976.

<sup>24</sup> ZAH: File: Defence-Operations Department, Operational Reports, *Position of Provincial Military Leadership*, 13 July 1976.

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<sup>25</sup> Bhebe, N. *The ZAPU and ZANU Guerrilla War and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1999), p. 173.

<sup>26</sup> These rules and regulations included the ‘Three Rules of Discipline’ and the ‘Eight Points for Attention’ which were adopted from Mao’s teachings and writings.

<sup>27</sup> ZAH: File: Defence-Operations Department, Diary (handwritten), Gaza Province Regulations: Operational Regulations. No date. It was pointed out that these regulations were drawn from rules crafted by ZANU.

<sup>28</sup> Parker, *Assignment Selous Scouts*, pp. 96.

<sup>29</sup> ZAH: File: Defence-Operations Department, Manica Province, Musikavanhu Sector, Report on comrades who were made women pregnant by Digden Muhondo.

<sup>30</sup> ZAH: File: Defence-Operations Department, Operational Reports, Manica Province, Musikavanhu Sector, *Security and Intelligence Report*, 30 June 1979.

Harare, Zimbabwe (CNN) Zimbabwe has known only one leader since independence. First as prime minister, then president, there has only been Robert Mugabe at the top for the last 36 years.Â Erstwhile confidants of Mugabe, themselves liberation war heroes, are emerging to challenge him for political leadership. And members of the security forces, so key to maintaining order, are no longer unquestioningly loyal. Are all of the ingredients finally in place for a change in Zimbabwe.Â During the bloody liberation struggle of the 1960s and 1970s, Mutambara called himself "Dragon" and he was a key field commander. After independence he took diplomatic posts in the critical ally nations of Cuba, Russia and Mozambique. Agrippa Mutambara called himself "Dragon" during his days as a general. 5 Zimbabwe's Politics and the Military. 6 Security Sector Reform in Zimbabwe: An Overview. 7 Key Challenges to SSR in Zimbabwe.Â Knox also taught at the Zimbabwe National Army Staff College, on the Joint Command and Staff Course (JCSC). He has published widely in academic and popular media on Zimbabwean and wider African defence and security issues. Edited by Anna Rader and Adrian Johnson.Â This report will give the historical context of current Zimbabwean politics and security sector challenges. Perhaps more importantly, it is intended to serve as a preliminary discussion forum and to make the case that national dialogue about the security sector should not be remaindered until after national elections.