

## How ZANU-PF “Won” the 2013 Harmonized Elections in Zimbabwe

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**ABSTRACT:** Against general expectations of a Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-T) victory it was the former ruling ZANU-PF party that “won” the landmark elections with a margin the stunned all and sundry. Out of the 210 contested seats in the national assembly ZANU-PF garnered 160 seats while the opposition MDC- T party managed a paltry 46 seats with the remainder going to independent candidates. With respect to Presidential elections Robert Gabriel Mugabe of ZANU-PF outpolled Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC –T party by 61 percent to 34 percent thereby giving him the Presidency of the country. The question to ask is: how did ZANU-PF manage to achieve that against a backdrop of seeming more popular support on the ground for the MDC-T party than for it? A conjuncture of factors can be proffered to explain that. First ZANU- PF re-organized itself following its defeat in the 2008 General and Presidential elections and its indigenization programme appealed to many. Second, the MDC-T had laxity until a few months before the 2013 Harmonized. Third and more importantly were a series of electoral shenanigans by the ZANU-PF party in complicity with the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC). In assessing these factors that explain ZANU-PF’s “victory” we aver that it was the electoral shenanigans that were at the centre of ZANU-PF’s “victory” in the Harmonized elections.

**KEYTERMS:** Harmonized Elections, electoral shenanigans, vote rigging, manifesto

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe recently held Council, House of Assembly and Presidential elections which have generally been termed Harmonised elections. It was the margin of ZANU-PF’s win in these elections which stunned many watchers and participants alike because the margin of the party’s “victory” flew in the face of popular expectations and support for the opposition. Out of the 210 contested seats in the House of Assembly ZANU – PF garnered 160 while the MDC-T party managed a mere 49. The other one when to an independent (The Herald,26 September, 2013) . In the Presidential election R.G Mugabe got 61.09 percent while Tsvangirai managed 33.94 percent of the cast votes. The other MDC party led by Professor Welshman Ncube managed a paltry 2.68 percent of the casted votes and no parliamentary seat out of the 210 seats in the House of Assembly (Sunday Mail, 3/8/13). This paper analyses these elections and gives a variety of reasons for the ZANU-PF “victory”. It argues that a combination of factors should be used to explain the “landslide victory”. In a bi-cameral Parliament with 270 members, ZANU-PF won a total of 197 seats and Tsvangirai’s MDC getting 70 seats and the smaller faction of the MDC led by Professor Welshmen Ncube taking 2 seats, and one seat falling to a ZANU-PF rebel who contested as an independent. Among other reasons the paper notes that ZANU-Pf engaged in a serious introspection and re-organization following its defeat at the polls in 2008. On its part the MDC-T party also re-awakened late in the day such that it was almost caught napping. The party also made a number of blunders while in the Inclusive Government that were used to discredit it in the run up to the polls. Over and above everything, ZANU-PF engaged in a variety of electoral shenanigans that ensured its “resounding victory”.

### II. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Following Morgan Tsvangirai’s election lead in the first round of Presidential elections in 2008 there was a run-off since he had failed to garner fifty percent of the cast votes plus one. In the June 29 2008 run-off, Tsvangirai pulled out of the race citing massive violence against his supporters as the main reason why he withdrew from the contest. A crisis of legitimacy ensued in the aftermath of the single horse race in which R.G Mugabe emerged winner. To resolve the crisis of legitimacy the Southern African Development Community (SADC) convened the historic Dar es Salam meeting in which it was resolve that Thabo Mbeki, former President of South Africa, was to mediate in the political crisis in Zimbabwe. The mediation efforts culminated in the Global Political Agreement (GPA) that was signed in September 2008. To consummate the GPA the Government of National Unity (GNU) comprising the three major political parties in the country- ZANU-PF,

MDC-T and MDC- was established in February 2009. Government business was to be run by the three parties together with Mugabe as the Head of State and Government while Tsvangirai was to be the Head of Cabinet since he was given the Prime Minister’s post. The MDC then led by Arthur Mutambara was given the Deputy Prime Minister’s post. Later on Welshman Ncube assumed the presidency of the MDC but up until the expiry of the unity government he was never sworn in as one of the Deputy Prime Ministers. The GNU was supposed to be a temporary creature whose major mandate was to create socio-economic and political stability in the country and it was also to superintend over the establishment of the pre-conditions necessary for the holding of credible, transparent, free and fair elections. The most important mandate of the GNU was to preside over the drafting of a new constitution for the country, media reforms, and security sector reforms, political as well as electoral reforms. All the reforms were supposed to be the bedrock upon which a new democratic dispensation found on peaceful, free and fair elections was to be based.

### **Justification of the research**

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 2013, three days after the date of Harmonised elections and before the official announcement of results, one of the commissioners of ZEC, Mkhululi Nyathi resigned. In his resignation letter addressed to President Mugabe ,Nyathi stated “*I do not wish to enumerate the many reasons for my resignation ,but they all have to do with the manner the Zimbabwe 2013 Harmonised elections were proclaimed and conduct.*” (Zimbabwe Light; August 3 2013). This is a mouthful statement which points to a direction where one is tempted to interrogate the exact manner under which the elections were conducted. There has been a lot of speculation on who was exactly in charge of these elections. ZEC is the Constitutional body responsible for running elections and this paper seeks to interrogate the general notion that ZEC was as ineffective as “*a toddler playing referee to an adult football game, who is just there in name only but otherwise may just as well not be there*” (Zimbabwe Light; August 3 2013). This paper interrogates the various factors that influenced the outcome on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2013 elections.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The paper makes use of two theories, one micro theory and the other a macro theory. The micro theory says that in politics politicians demonize first in order to have a basis for destroying. In this case ZANU-PF labeled the MDC-T party and Tsvangirai as sellouts and stooges of Western imperialism (Bond and Manyanya, 2003, Blair, 2005). They were described as being unpatriotic and against the historic land reform programme. ZANU-PF politicians demonized the opposition in order to justify the slogan “*Pasi naTsvangirai*” (meaning Down with Tsvangirai). All this was meant to dissuade voters from voting for him and his party. This demonization has characterized ZANU-PF’s relations with the MDCs especially the MDC-T because the party has been the most serious opposition to the party that has even seriously challenged for control of state power. The other theory that informs this study is that almost all elections are rigged. The institutions and actors seized with elections such as the media, civil servants and election management body (ZEC) are so diverse in character and objectives such that there is no way they can be totally impartial, and therefore elections cannot be free from bias. **Vote rigging** is directly related to the phrase **electoral fraud**. According to Chigora (2012: 14) electoral fraud is illegal interference with the process of an election and vote rigging involves a whole range of pre- and during voting activities whose objective would be to work in the direction of a preferred election candidate or party. Vote rigging involves the following institutions/individuals tasked with particular election duties: media (both print and electronic); election management body (ZEC); constituency delineation commission; polling officers and peace officers. Given the diversity and vested interests of these institutions and individuals having elections that are free and fair is almost impossible.

### **ZANU-PF’s Re-organization following the 2008 Defeat**

In the aftermath of its humiliating electoral defeat in 2008 ZANU-PF went back to the drawing board and quickly re-organized. Part and parcel of the re-organization included revamping its structures from cell level right up to the level of its provincial leadership. Its members were urged not just to buy membership cards but also to register as voters and vote for it. Since a number of development programmes are co-ordinated by chiefs and District Administrators (DAs) aligned to ZANU-PF it can be insinuated that this re-organization had undertones of compulsion. A number of villagers would register for fear of being left out of development and other programmes, not least among them being the issue of food aid. As the party was doing this it was at the same time busy discrediting the MDC-T party for corruption and running a parallel government, among other evils. The War Veterans were deployed full swing to campaign for ZANU-PF during the whole GNU period such that the duration of the dysfunctional unity government ZANU-PF remained in a campaign mood spearheaded by the War Veterans leader Jabulani Sibanda. This was done over a considerable period of time nearing the whole duration of the GNU such that come election time in 2013 the party had awakened from its slumber of 2008.

Part of ZANU-PF’s re-organization included sweeping the exploitation of the country’s resources especially mineral resources under the carpet. The windfall from such murky activities like the management of the sale of diamonds would then be used to finance the party and its campaign activities. The First Secretary of the party, President R.G.Mugabe himself had this to say: “*If you are eating (from the same table) with the enemy you must use a long spoon*” (The Herald, 15 July 2013 ). What is clear from that statement is that there are a number of things that were hidden from the MDCs which were meant to advantage ZANU-PF in the long run.

### **The MDC-T’s Re-awakening late in the Day**

Once in the inclusive government the MDC-T party made a number of mistakes of omission and commission. A number of its councilors especially in Chitungwiza, Gweru and Kwekwe were involved in so many acts of corruption such that in the end their national executive organ had to chip in by firing the concerned people from the party. The dent on the image of the party was very big. It became difficult to draw the line between ZANU-PF corruption and inefficiency and their own. Critics would have the arsenal to paint the two parties with the same brush. Another error of commission was that the MDC-T party expended considerable energies on seeking high posts in local and central government. This point is succinctly summed up by Sinvula (2013) who in a newspaper article titled “*Zimbabwe Elections: Contest that Never Was*” wrote in the following terms: “*The MDC expended most of its energies in fighting for self enrichment of its top elite by insisting on hefty appointments to the central and provincial governors, attorney-general and ministry of agriculture instead of focusing its energy on constitutional reforms*”. Of course Sinvula (2013) misses the point by insinuating that the MDC-T party did not focus on constitutional reforms. That it did. The consummation of its efforts in that regard was the new constitution that was overwhelmingly endorsed by the people of Zimbabwe in the referendum of March 2013. However, he has a point in highlighting that the MDC-T party misplaced its priorities. Re-organization of the party and campaigning were ignored for a long time until a few months before the landmark elections.

The MDC-T’s national organizing structure led by the youthful then Minister of Information Communication Technology (ICT), Nelson Chamisa, that is responsible for organizing the party towards elections was caught napping by the Supreme Court judgment that elections were to be held on or before 31 July 2013. Soon after the pronouncement of the election date the MDC-T was not ready because it had not organized for the elections and initially was not sure whether to go for the elections or to boycott. The two MDC formations even joined hands at the SADC summit in Maputo to push for a delay in the holding of elections so that the necessary reforms could be implemented before the elections. When the election date could not be extended at the behest of ZANU-PF the MDC-T had to hold primary elections hurriedly resulting in many disgruntlements. This resulted in many of its members standing as independents in the General elections and some leaving the party altogether just before the holding of crucial elections.

As the MDC-T party engaged in its election campaigns one could see that it could not match the resources of ZANU-PF. The latter had generous “*donations*” in terms of campaign materials from its Chinese friends. The materials inscribed faces of election candidates and the party’s catch phrase included shirts, T-shirts, pieces of cloth, hats as well as stickers. ZANU-PF might have got these as a token of appreciation from the Chinese for their investments in the country. On the other hand the MDC relied on its own resources and certainly these were no match against those of ZANU-PF. When it also campaigned the party did what it could under the circumstances. Compared with ZANU-PF the MDC-T Party had 29 of its members standing as independents while the former had 3 (The Herald, 21/08/13). This shows that in terms of organization ZANU-PF was better than the MDC-T party. The former could rein in on its errant members more than the MDC-T could.

### **ZANU-PF’s Electoral Shenanigans**

To ensure its victory in the Harmonized elections the ZANU –PF party engaged in a plethora of electoral shenanigans that can be described in simple terms as vote rigging. These ranged from coming up with more constituencies in its traditional strongholds, *gerrymandering*, the surprise announcement of election dates, voter registration, voter migration to intimidation and the alleged involvement of the Israeli company, Nikuv ,in electoral processes in the country.

### **Delineation of Constituencies**

Overall, the drawing of constituency boundaries was done in such a manner that was meant to give an advantage to the ZANU-PF party. Since the inception of the MDC in 1999 rural areas have always been a stronghold of the revolutionary party. This is because the rural folk who bore the brunt of the liberation struggle of the 1970s are easily intimidated. They have persistently been told that there would be war again in the event

of a ZANU-PF loss to the MDC. With their memories of the brutal armed struggle still lingering in their minds the rural folk tend to be gullible and vote en masse for ZANU-PF. In the delineation of constituencies for the 2013 elections a number of constituencies were drawn from ZANU-PF strongholds. Uzumba-Maramba – Pfungwe, a traditional ZANU-PF stronghold was split into three namely: Uzumba, Maramba and Pfungwe. This was also done in a number of areas such as Mazowe and other parts of Mashonaland Central where the revolutionary party enjoys much support. This would give the party an advantage with respect to the number of representatives in the House of Assembly.

### **Gerrymandering**

This is another form of vote rigging that was upheld by the ZEC commissioners in the delineation of boundaries for constituencies. Gerrymandering can be defined as some form of re-districting in which electoral districts or constituency boundaries are manipulated in order to disadvantage one party/candidate while advantaging the other (Chigora, 2012:47). In the 2013 Harmonized elections gerrymandering can be seen in the case of Harare South constituency that has components of Harare urban as well peri-urban areas where there was land settlement by ZANU-PF party loyalists. Urban areas have since 2000 been MDC-T party strongholds and these have been diluted by being lumped together with adjacent rural/peri-urban areas. Another typical case of gerrymandering is the Chiwundura constituency that has sections of Gweru urban, precisely Senga and some parts of Mkoba high density suburb were conjoined with Chiwundura rural areas. As a result of this the MDC-T party candidate, Tim Mkahlera, lost to ZANU-PF's Kizito Chivamba. Zvishavane town, despite having grown significantly in terms of population and development, has been denied the opportunity of a stand-alone constituency and was merged with rural and resettlements and so ZANU-PF won.

### **Announcements of Election Dates**

The announcement of election dates for the 2013 Harmonized elections was done in such a manner that the other political contestants were surprised. The Prime Minister thought that in line with the inclusive spirit and dictates of the GPA the dates were going to be announced in consultation with him. To catch the MDCs off guard ZANU-PF decided to go it alone. The President exploited some clauses in the Constitution that confers him with powers to proclaim election dates alone. Rather than going through Parliament to align some sections of the Electoral Act (Chapter 2: 13) to the new Constitution, the President used a Presidential Proclamation to align the same and as a result of this there were no meaningful electoral reforms that preceded the Harmonized elections. His argument for going it alone was that by going through Parliament it was going to take much time yet the Constitutional Court had ruled that elections were supposed to be held by 31 July 2013. Even attempts by the MDC formations to lobby the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the guarantor to the GPA, did not bear much fruit since government was asked to approach the courts to seek an extension of the time frame for election. By asking government to approach the courts seeking an extension of the election date, SADC feared interference in the internal matters of a fellow member. When the application for extension of the holding of elections was dismissed by the Constitutional Court the stage was set for the holding of the Harmonized elections without the necessary political and legal reforms.

### **Voter Registration and Voter Migration**

The demands for voter registration in the urban areas were quite cumbersome. Of course voter registration is an on-going exercise but before the landmark election voters were to be given a special dispensation in which to register where they intended to cast their ballots. In rural areas one was required to produce their national identity document (ID) or passport while in urban areas over and above one's ID /passport, proof of residence was required. This proof of residence could be in the form of a lease agreement, proof of ownership of house or utility bills in one's own name. The proof of residence requirement against a backdrop of serious lack of housing and the informal nature of the house renting agreements meant that it was such a heavy toll for many possible urban voters to register as voters. In the process huge numbers eventually decided to vote with their feet- they just did not bother to register. For those who took the burden to register it was disheartening to note that come polling day quite many had been placed in the wrong constituencies or wards. This voter migration disenfranchised many especially in the traditional MDC-T strongholds. ZEC reported that as many as 305,000 people had been turned away from polling stations for a variety of reasons such as inappropriate identity documents and turning up in the wrong constituencies ([www.zimbabwesituation.com](http://www.zimbabwesituation.com) 2013/08/05).

### **Voters' Roll**

According to section 20 of the Electoral Act, Zimbabwe's register of voters, the Voters' Roll must be kept by ZEC and anyone who needs access to it must be allowed to do so at a reasonable cost. In the 2013 Harmonized elections political parties and individuals were not allowed access to the Voters' Roll, which in

actual fact was not in the general custody of ZEC but in the effective custody of the Registrar General’s office. Opposition members were not able to audit the Voters’ roll and had to approach the courts to compel delivery of this vital document. It was the unavailability of the Voters’ Roll that made the concept of voter migration possible. It was this control of the Voters’ Roll by the Registrar General which was the basis of Morgan Tsvangirai’s now withdrawn election petition court case. According to him, Nikuv allegedly tampered with the roll. Further suspicion of the involvement of Nikuv can be gathered from the alleged visit of its Chief Executive Officer, Emmanuel Antebi, to Harare for a 90 minutes talk with President Mugabe ([www.zimbabwesituation.com/news 5/8/13](http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/5/8/13)). There has not been any rebuttal from state officials about this alleged visit and that might be taken to mean that indeed it took place.

### **Intimidation of and by Chiefs**

In a country that prides itself with one of the highest literacy rates in Africa (Chetsanga, 2010) it becomes ironical that the country had such a very high number assisted voters. ZEC reported that as many as 207,000 people were “assisted voters” who needed help from polling officers to cast their ballots ([www.zimbabwesituation.com/news 9/08/13](http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/9/08/13)). What seems to have happened is that there was intimidation of chiefs by ZANU-PF so that they would whip into line people under their jurisdiction to vote for it. Some chiefs would in turn intimidate their people who, in a bid to prove that they did not vote for the opposition, they would profess ignorance and then get assisted to cast their ballots by known ZANU-PF loyalists who in the majority of the cases were appointed to be the Presiding Officers at polling stations. It is interesting to note that the ZANU-PF strongholds of Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland East had some of the highest numbers of assisted voters. Masvingo also had a very high number of assisted voters with 34 950 ([www.zimbabwesituation.com/news 9/08/13](http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/9/08/13)). The “invisible hand” of the party becomes visible. Otherwise it becomes very disingenuous to have such a high number of assisted voters against a backdrop of a very high literacy rate for the country hovering around 93 percent. In 2008 there was no such questionable numbers of assisted voters and it becomes preposterous to think that five years later Zimbabweans had become less literate.

### **More Polling Stations**

To cope with a large number of voters who turned up for voting on election day ZEC was said to have come up with an additional 65 polling stations ([www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2013-08-05](http://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2013-08-05)). This was an irregularity on the part of ZEC because the law stipulates that participants in the election should be notified of the places where polling stations would be set up three weeks before polling. Echoing this sentiment, Simba Makoni, leader of Mavambo Kusile Dawn who had formed an alliance with Morgan Tsvangirai said “ZEC acknowledged the irregularities and that an additional 65 polling stations were established on Election Day in contravention of Section 51 of the Electoral Act which stipulates that they should be publicized three weeks before polling”. ([www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2013-08-05](http://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2013-08-05)). The requirement for publication of the polling stations well before polling is not frivolous. It is meant to give the belligerents enough time to prepare for deployment of polling agents well in advance. In this particular instance it is not clear whether or not the opposition political parties were able to deploy their election agents at the new polling stations. If they could not, then that could give credence to allegation of rigging or ballot stuffing and double voting.

### **The Alleged Involvement of Nikuv in Ballot Printing**

A number of suspicious events point to the involvement of an Israeli consultancy company in Zimbabwe’s elections. A South African investigating company Nasini Projects is reported by the Daily News (5/08/13) claiming that it was 99 percent sure that the elections which ended the Unity Government were rigged. Nasini Projects claims that a delicate ballot paper was used to rig the election alleging that the ballot that was used had a watermarked X against Mugabe and ZANU-PF’s name such that if any ink was placed on the paper the substance on the paper would react and remove the ink and that activated the watermarked X into print([www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2013/08/05](http://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2013/08/05)). The same paper reported that some teachers who took part in the counting of the ballot papers claimed that some of the Xs were very faint. While this is really difficult to prove a number of events on the ground give credence to such claims. First, there has been considerable secrecy and suspicion regarding the place where the ballot papers were printed. In a transparent, free and fair system there is no need for such secrecy. Second, as the MDC-T was preparing for its court challenge against the credibility and fairness of the poll it requested for the materials used in the elections but what is in the public domain is that those election materials were not given to it forcing it to withdraw its petition from the Constitutional Court.

### **More Ballot Papers**

Nikuv allegedly assisted ZEC to print 35 percent more ballots than the registered voters ([www.zimbabwesituation.com/news 05/08/13](http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/05/08/13)). This raises eyebrows given that international best practice pegs

the extra threshold of ballots at 5 percent. Allegations of rigging become difficult to rebut under such circumstances. *Why would the election management authorities waste so much paper, ink and time printing a lot more ballots than necessary unless they had something up their sleeves?* The printing of such a big number of ballots over and above the required ballots gives substance to allegations of rigging.

### **State Media**

The post 2000 society of Zimbabwe has been faced with a myriad of complex ethical dilemmas in the public media. The Public Media and general media reforms were part of the fundamentals the GNU was mandated to tackle before the 2013 Harmonised elections. This is so because the Public Media, that is Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) and Zimpapers are basically funded by government and they are expected to report their news in a well balanced manner. They are also expected to give equal coverage to the activities of all political parties. ZANU- PF and its Presidential candidate held 10 provincial rallies, in all the 10 provinces of Zimbabwe with live coverage as if they were state or national events. This is called a “*contradictory dual decay of democracy and authoritarianism*” (Ronning H and Kupe T. 2000). Quite evident is that the single television broadcaster, ZBC, was controversially assisting only one party to campaign at the expense of the others. The Zimbabwe Media Commission failed to register other independent players before the 31<sup>st</sup> of July 2013 to effectively ensure that come elections, the public would be starved of election campaign broadcasting for the opposition MDC parties and others like ZAPU.

The formation of GNU in 2009 created a false sense of hope that a process of credible media reform would be initiated and results in the creation of a diverse and pluralistic media environment. The Global Political Agreement (GPA) in *Article 19* recognized the importance of the right to freedom of expression and role of the media in a multiparty democracy (GPA 2008) and the Zimbabwe Media Commission (ZMC) given the task of licensing other players failed to do so and in actual fact the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ) which handles the far more important and pervasive broadcasting sector, remained accountable to the executive for all practical purposes and therefore remained at the beck and call resulting in no new players being licensed.

The public broadcaster fought in the corner of ZANU-PF by labeling ZANU-PF as a patriotic party while the MDCs especially the MDC-T was labeled as a party for traitors. The import of this was to sway voters away from the MDCs in favour of ZANU-PF. The state media promoted a version of nationalism that essentially divided Zimbabweans into two groups, that is either, patriotic and therefore supporting ZANU-PF or traitors supporting the opposition (Ranger, 2005). Between the dissolution of Parliament and the announcement of election results in 2013 the public broadcaster depicted Morgan Tsvangirai as a person in a state of confusion and a person that approaches issues with “*a shut mind and an open mouth*”. The perpetuation of unmitigated propaganda journalism greatly aided ZANU-PF while disadvantaging the MDCs.

### **The Unfair Legal Framework**

Under the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) which can be seen as Law and Order Maintenance Act (LOMA) incarnate, it is a requirement for organizers of political meetings to first of all notify the police about their planned meeting. Ostensibly this is in order for the police to provide them with protection. However, in practice the politics of incumbency has been at play. In almost all the instances ZANU-PF would hold its meetings without much ado while the MDC-T would be frustrated in its attempts to hold its campaign rallies. In its Star Rally at Freedom Square near the Harare rainbow Towers on 29 July 2013 the MDC-T was nearly denied permission to hold the rally by the police who argued that they had already deployed their officers to polling stations and therefore did not have the capacity to provide security ([www.zimbabwesituation.com/30/07/13](http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/30/07/13)). This was just the tip of the iceberg. The police whose seniors have liberation war credentials have not hidden their support for ZANU-PF and have been on record for frustrating the opposition. One of the senior police officers, Oliver Mandipaka, left the force and went on to contest the General Elections on a ZANU-PF ticket and he won in Buhera. This goes on to show that by and large the legal framework has been titled against the opposition and that scuttled its operation in a big way.

### **III. CONCLUSION.**

From the foregoing it is evident that the two theories informing this study are quite robust in explaining the phenomenon under study. The 2013 Harmonized elections were characterized by demonization of the opposition as well as vote rigging. In assessing the combination of factors that explain a ZANU-PF “*victory*” at the polls we aver that it was the cocktail electoral shenanigans rather than popular support that were central in ensuring ZANU-PF’s “*victory*”. In all this, it appears that the election management body (ZEC) was a willing accomplice; no wonder why two of its commissioners resigned, one of them Mkhululu Nyathi

resigning during the elections citing lack of professionalism in the manner ZEC was handling the elections and the other one Professor G Feltoe immediately after the elections without giving clear reasons. If the peaceful avenues for the transfer of political power are frustrated with this kind of impunity that might in future have serious implications on the security and development of the country.

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