

Platform for Concerned Citizens (PCC)

Statement on the Arrest of Essential Workers

7th July 2020

In the midst of the worst national crisis that Zimbabwe has faced since Independence, with citizens reeling under the triple hardship of economic collapse, starvation and the Covid-19 pandemic, it is outrageous that the government resorts to attacking essential workers such as nurses, doctors, teachers and others.

Civil servants are demonstrating because they cannot live on their meagre salaries, never mind that they all have to work in unsafe and under-resourced workplaces. Yet the government chooses to see a political hand in all these actions, responds by coercive actions, and is unable to deal with the real issue, a country collapsing in on itself.

This government demonstrates daily that it has lost control, both economically and politically. It is scarcely strange that the citizens have lost the last vestige of political trust in the ZANU-PF government, and the government has only the resort to coercive control in order to survive. In fact, this government, and the government, it replaced always resort to coercive control: the people post political trust nearly two decades ago.

It can, therefore, come as no surprise that there are increasingly calls for the government to resign, or that the country is awash with calls for a national strike on 31 July. When a government fails so abjectly to deal with a national crisis, the most usual response is resignation, and, failing that to face the wrath of the country.

The PCC is unsurprised at all these developments, pointing out four years ago that the country was headed for a hard landing, but no-one could have anticipated would be how hard this landing. Zimbabwe will be unable to move out of this crisis without a major reform process, and hence we would hope that protect would have a positive message for the government: not merely expressing discontent with the government and demanding its resignation, but calling for a full reform under a transition. As we stated before, there is **NO OTHER WAY BUT AN NTA, TODAY!**

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