

Who will guard the Guards? State fragility and the involvement of security force personnel in crimes

so
you
greetings to all greetings to you all
greetings and welcome to the
this policy dialogue today
which is a very unusual topic but very
important one
and i want to introduce you to my sister
justin m koko
who
run the show
introduce everybody
and introduce our main
presenter tunrilla
justina welcome
thank you very much for that
introduction doc and good evening to
everyone who is joining us for this
policy dialogue
the 16th number 16 um
this year
and
like the doc has said we are looking at
a very interesting topic
um and
i am at this stage going to be
introducing tony riller who is a senior
researcher with a research and advocacy
unit
to
kick us off on this discussion that has
caused a lot of
discomfort for a lot of citizens because
where we think we are supposed to be
getting
people who look after us and also look
after our property
what we are seeing is the rise in crime
committed by those same people
over to you tony thank you very much
thank you very much justina and good

evening everybody
on behalf of the forum
i think it's very important to
discuss this issue
it was prompted by
i think a general noticing as justine
has pointed out
that the newspaper reports were filled
with reports in which it appeared that
members of the security forces were
involved in criminal activities and
serious criminal activities
that was reinforced by
senior members the government and even
the president
talking about their concerns about what
was happening
so
this particular report is to
try to unpack that and to unpack it
in the context of zimbabwe
and i
i will share my screen now if i may
so that
you're able to see
the points i'm making
and and follow what i'm saying
okay
okay so
who guards the gods
it's an old old old political question
that those who are in charge of the
coercive forces of the state
must be under some kind of control
and the subject is to monitor crime and
security force involvement in crime and
as i pointed out
very senior members of the government
have expressed concern about this
but we must look at it in
a real context it's not just enough in
contemporary zimbabwe to say
soldiers and policemen and others are
involved in crime so what we've got to

look at this in the context of zimbabwe
and zimbabwe currently
is regarded as a fragile state by
objective measures by many
observers of
the politics around the world zimbabwe
is regarded as one of the most fragile
states in the world by the fragile
states index
and fragility
and its relationship to crime become
therefore important to look at
so
let's just and i'm not going to spend a
huge amount of time this
context of this is not to talk endlessly
about
the current context of zimbabwe
but it is important to to unpack what
they mean by fragility because every
time the word fragility is used in
failed states
people
interchange them and fail state is not
what zimbabwe is but it certainly is
fragile
so there are some definitions and there
is some consensus
and i've highlighted this in red because
there are different senses in which
states are fragile
some states are fragile where national
and local authorities are incapable of
delivering crucial public goods such as
safety security and other basic services
we're not a state
where we're having a contest over
authority with armed groups in ethnic
secession or any of those kinds of
non-state actors that's not zimbabwe
and zimbabwe is not failed it still has a
state much as we might
draw some conclusions as to whether the
state is functioning or not but

nonetheless there is a state and the state does control the coercive power quite clearly so what are these features of fragility now there are series of different factors when you try to decide whether a country is fragile or not you look at structural and economic factors you look at political and institutional factors you look at social factors and you look at international factors now not all of these applied to zimbabwe but some quite clearly poverty low income and economic decline natural resource wealth the fights over resources demographic stress we have demographic stress we have uh one of the one of the very large youth bulges in the world 70 of our populations under 35. they're political and institutional factors crises of state legitimacy authoritarian governance repression of political competition succession crises reform crises state predation near patrimonial politics these these are factors again that are there and i'm highlighting the ones in red because you can argue that these apply to zimbabwe currently the social factors social exclusion gender inequality lack of social cohesion including lack of social capital and weak civil society and finally international factors legacy of colonialism international political economy that's important zimbabwe is a country that is repudiated by many international actors and there's a subject of

restrictive conditions and some
some sanctions
and of course we're a country that is
going to be at great risk of climate
change um that's just come out on the
ipcc
now when fragility exists
then
something also comes along with it and
and this is a very big concern in
fragile states and what people call
transnational organized crime
or toc
so when
when states become fragile and
governance becomes weak then it creates
space
for criminal activities and they talk
about transnational because it's not
merely local it begins to move across
borders in particular kinds of ways
and this happens in conflict of
afflicted states
where there's clearly civil war or major
insurgency going on like in mozambique
at the current time but it also happens
in fragile states
and what they look at
is
three things that are involved in this
transnational organized crime the sale
of illegal goods and services
a certain organized structure with some
form of hierarchy
and the perpetuation of their existence
through violence
or threats of violence and corrupt
relations with public officials now of
course i would draw your attention
to a series of reports that came out
recently about cartels
and linked to that that organized crime
becomes a very serious issue for a
country and that's illicit financial

flows now what happens with crime is the money may stay in the country but it also leaves the country and that becomes very important and it is agreed by what's called the eastern southern african money laundering group a group which zimbabwe was part of many years ago has been assessed by the uh eastern this this this anti-money laundering group and in the report which is a joint report done by the group the experts to the group and the zimbabwean government it was agreed that these kinds of activities that are on your screen now drug trafficking uh smuggling of precious minerals gold for example parallel market activities involving foreign currency deals corruption in particular practices in the fuel industry we know about that misrepresentation of quality and nature of exports that's been linked to the cigarette trade and at the bottom armed robbery and theft of motor vehicles and stolen vehicle registration it's agreed by the government that these are existing problems and that the government must take measures to deal with that so this is a frame we we wish to to to look at in the context of crime and the involvement of the security force in crime now just one point that's important about linking transnational organized crime and illicit monetary flows

is
the sense of transnational organized
crime brings up people like the
colombian cartels or the mafia or those
sorts of things but workers in africa
talk about uh
a
synergistic relationship that often
happens between criminal groups
and
and state agencies maybe even the
government so there can be this flow
backwards and forwards
where
it's not just the question that the
uh organized criminals capture the state
it's also the fact that the state
engages in relationships with organized
criminals
and there have been reports about this
there was reports in the herald about a
whole smuggling ring that goes out
through the eastern districts into
mozambique bringing things backwards and
forwards with the connivance of state
officials or actually
uh ex-state officials in this case who
would be described as a no longer
serving people they would be a criminal
group criminal cartel perhaps
so
that becomes very important
think about in this overall context of
when you hear
that serious crime is rising
what's it all about where's it's located
what's its context
so with this background in mind we then
decided to go and look
at what was going on
and
what we did was to then begin to look at
the crime statistics now
one of the useful things in zimbabwe is

generally we have very good public data
and that very good public data is
provided by
zimbabwe national statistical agency
some stats
and in their quarterly digests
they do report on crime they get the the
crime statistics from the zimbabwean
republic police from the courts and they
produce tables to tell you what's going
on
so
if you look at selected crime statistics
uh these were taken from uh
the uh
zoom stats quarterly door digests
statistics in the fourth quarter 2019
and they summarize in those tables
what has been going on
for not all crime and we're not
reporting on all
we're reporting on
a specific range of things that they
report on murder rape assault salt would
intend to do grievous harm or aggravated
assault
offenses involving firearms armed
robbery robberies and all drugs
and they provided data on 2017 2018 and
2019.
unfortunately the quarterly digests for
2020 are not available
but what you can see
and particularly
if you look at the gross numbers
you can see that uh
there's a pattern it's not changing very
very dramatically over the years
okay
uh about 90 000 100 000 fences of all of
these are reported but what you can see
in it
is a very dramatic increase
in

three possibly four sets of statistics
there's a big increase
in firearms offenses and that's not just
useful firearms these are
uh people dealing in guns selling guns
etc etc in armed robberies armed
robberies basically double between 2018
and 2019
and robberies
go up by
a third at least
and drug offences have gone up as well
so if you look at the percentages and
these the percentages at the bottom are
there are the percentages of those
crimes in 2019
and what you can see
is assault
massively uh
is the massive
contributor to to all of those crimes if
you add them all together 73 of those
deal with assault
but you also see that robbery
is is
12
that's a fair statistic it's the next
biggest category and you will see that
armed robberies are very very small
percentage in 2019 of the total number
of offenses
but you do see that they have increased
and they have doubled
from 2018 to 2019 but without the 2020
statistics it's not possible to say
was this trending increase
continuing now
one of the things that did happen in
2020 was of course the pandemic the
coveted pandemic
and in many countries south africa in
particular they saw a dramatic drop in
crime during 2021 2020
mainly because of lockdowns there was

greater policing on the streets
and
and soldiers too
so
these sorts of crimes very serious
crimes dropped pretty dramatically in
south africa
the anecdotal data reported by the zebra
republic police is we had the same
phenomena in zimbabwe
everything dropped and that was one of
the if you want the byproducts of this
strange life we were living under under
under undercover and the lockdowns
now
what we then did was we decided we would
try to see what happened in 2021
and the way we did that was to look at
exactly those crimes that we reported
before murder rape salt etc etc etc and
the way we did that
was we looked at the public domain
information what was available in the
newspapers
and actually some of our newspapers do a
pretty good job of reporting on crime
particularly newsday and the herald they
have crime reporters there
and they report on
a range of these things we were looking
in the newspapers to see whether these
figures whether these kinds of crimes
were being reported in the newspaper and
with what frequency
so
the first thing we found was that
what was very interesting and we
surveyed the newspapers every day
collated all the reports analyzed all
those reports and then produced these in
this particular table now what you can
see
of those
reports

what you can see is a very different pattern completely differently now this may not and and we say this quite clearly in the report this is the function of the attention that newspapers and journalists are giving to particular crimes and may not actually be the actual statistics that are correlated by the police but mind you the police are also saying very publicly and ministers are saying the president's saying we are concerned about armed robbery what you can see there is an enormous increase in robbery in armed robbery and robberies in fact they they reverse you have a much lower reporting of robberies and a much higher increase in reporting on armed robbery firearms not so high raped very high they do report rape and rape if we go back to previous table rape was quite low but rape as they reported seems to have increased and murders have increased and i want to make a comment about murders murders are are a difficult thing to to deconstruct because some of the murders involve intentional murders people in an armed robbery you shoot someone right but there are also murders that take place where a person is unlawfully killed and many of those are domestic disputes and in reading those reports it did strike me

that
a lot of those
those murders seem to be related to
stress the kind of stress that people
were
living in
that couples would get into terrible
fights
uh and somebody would be killed um
i think the most
poignant one was a woman who's in her
80s
who got upset with her husband who was
shouting at her and she hit him with a
brick and he died well
she hit him with a brick and therefore
it's a murder
but she obviously was at the end of her
tether and there were a lot of those
domestic murders so
when you say murder is increasing it's
not murder necessarily related to
to
to crimes armed armed robberies
but it's also domestic and
fights
just out of interest uh to try and get
some comparison between what is really
not good data the stuff coming from the
newspaper is not good data what we then
did was try to compare 2019
and 2020. now it's a little bit of a
statistical
game here so bear with me
if you look at it what you've got are
the percentages
of each of those crimes and you've also
got their rank which was the
point
now what you can see and this is a way
in which you can compare
i and we won't put our hands on our
heart and say this is uh hardcore
science but it's indicative what you can

see
is that in 2019
assault
was number one
okay
and murder was number one
in 2021
but armed robbery had gone from sixth to
second
now what this is saying is is
there big changes taking place and we
would need the hard statistics to be
able to deal with that
now
one of the points was to
what's happening here i'm not going down
right sorry
now if you go and look at it one of the
points here was
are
what do the crime statistics say
about the involvement of security forces
in it in all of this stuff
now frankly it's very difficult to do
that because court reporting reports a
whole lot of people being arrested but
they don't
always tell you who that person is
okay
so that person
may well turn out to be a policeman
later on or soldier later on and
sometimes they tell you straight up so
you've got to track these things over
time to find out what's happening but
for the cases in which it was clearly
reported that security force personnel
were involved in crime
you can see the pattern there okay
low murders
rapes
assaults very high number of assaults no
reports of gbh
a lot of offenses involving firearms and

some of these offences were people
dealing in arms
buying and selling arms which is quite
serious
uh armed robberies they were nine
percent of it
uh and robberies uh 16 percent involved
in robberies and 18 percent of them
involved in in
other kinds of things
so the evidence quite clearly says
that there is a pattern now you can't
put your hand on your heart and say that
pattern is
what's the extent of it but you can say
there is enough to get very very worried
about
just as the minister and the president
have said and this requires a deep
investigation of what's going on
in order to do that
we may
we we drew us a series of conclusions
okay
okay
but crime and serious crime is
increasing
security force are involved
but the extent is not clear
it is impossible to draw links from this
data
that
these are linked to transnational
organized crime
although some of the reports suggest
that people are doing naughty activities
across the border and the one report
that comes from mutari about all sorts
of stuff moving backwards and forwards
and there are also reports from the
southern border where these things are
happening
an additional point that came out of
this and this was very seriously uh uh

we
we thought and that was there were a
whole series of cases
in which people
including security force people
were arrested for armed robberies and
very serious crimes and they were
granted bail
and in several of these cases
immediately were involved
in
crimes again
which which is a very serious issue
and this issue of granting bail
to
people who are clearly perpetrators of
very serious crimes must be looked at by
the courts um
and they must be looked at by the courts
because one of the consequences of those
things in some of those crimes when the
release and other armed robberies took
place members of the barbie republic
police were shot and wounded and some of
them died so you're releasing people out
there who have no compunction
in violence so this is very important
and there must be a much stronger effort
at gun control
so we made a series of recommendations
the first is
we need data
you know 2020 we needed to know from
zoomstat
what the statistics are it's not enough
to have generalized statements from the
police to say
a lot of people or 10 000 people
arrested for this
we need those statistics provided so
that we can analyze and understand
what the implications are for public
safety and what the implications are for
wider kind of criminal networks

the the important
second point is that there must be very
frank disclosure
of all crimes involving security
personnel
when when the minister says all these
armed robberies
involve
members of the security force this is
frankly alarming
right it means you say to the public
be very frightened
of the police they're the guards they're
looking after us so don't make blanket
statements if you don't have the data to
back it up
if the police
or the army or other people are involved
in crime we need to know what the extent
is it may well be a case
of a very
small number
of
personnel and in fact it's not
uh a big problem
okay and finally the comments about bail
i think something is happening there
i i saw that's that's my final point
i've made my point so the point is we
need the statistics we need frank
disclosure and we need to be seriously
involved in the non-granting of back
bail to serious criminals thank you
justina
thank you very much uh tony um
i think with what we saw there we might
have been hacked
we might have uh trolls
on the core
i'm not sure how we can
deal with that but we're going to
proceed with um
with our discussion
and uh thank you tony for that uh

presentation

tony speaks about uh the features of fragility and also uh brings in a lot of statistics

uh in terms of armed robberies but maybe tony i might want to find out if you guys were able to find out where these guns are coming from are they safe service rifles of uh the security personnel or there is

people are able to get guns from somewhere where are these guns coming from well

if you look at the reports that were available and there were a number of cases in which people were involved in smuggling guns smuggling in and out

so

you know the region is rife with with guns you can buy guns so they're smuggling and bringing them in it also appeared that um some of them were emerging from probably other armed robberies you know it's it's a classic pattern rob a house person's got a gun then you've got it done yourself it's not very clear from all of this what it does mean you know for public safety

is there must be much stricter government

and understanding and one of those must be in order to to protect the police police stations and the um

the checking out of weapons and bringing them back in and the register of weapons and suffocate there needs to be very high security on that if you now got security force personnel involved in in serious crimes

the provenance of those weapons becomes

really critical
are they coming out of uh state agencies
or are they coming out of criminal gangs
um you you'll note there was a report in
south africa where members of the south
african police were taking guns over
confiscated and then selling them to
members of the gangs

so

gun control becomes extremely important
in this thing it's difficult to say that
without the general statistics but the
crime statistics need to be compiled to
find out exactly where in each of those
cases where did the guns come from it's
critical to find that out thanks justine
thank you very much uh tony and we're
going to move on to godfrey maringera
who is a professor of social
anthropology at the seoul plucky
university godfrey are you in the house
over to you

god free

oh thank you justina thank you very much
tony can you hear me
we can hear you now
okay thank you very much

so

i'm going to
make a response to
to tony's presentation with regards not
the whole of the document because i
think that i would leave to others but
of the finalists as well
but uh what i wanted to respond to is
mainly the idea that is to deal with the
security sector involvement in crime
and use of guns and the perpetuations of
guns in
the doing of crime itself
so what i would like to
annotate is the idea of
gun use
that seems to be a trend from tony's

consolidated report
and what is quite fascinating is a
something that is not coming out
strongly from the report but it is there
but it's not coming out strongly
which he has to do with why is it that
security personnel including the army
police and other security organizations
and state security organizations
continues to be involved in crime
and one of the issues
is to do with
the issue that we may call the
militarized mind
and if one conceptualized a militarized
mind what it does
in a particular context
that can help to unravel
particular issues that has to do with
the perpetuation of crime by
the security personnel themselves it
might be the military or the police as
well
so
what the military does is that it
actually trains
and legitimizes the use of violence for
the use of crime
it is actually a vibrant idea in which
the military itself is legitimized to
use violence and in some cases the dream
of crime is regarded as an individual
initiative
which then sustains the state itself
so in this regard
what then happens in a context which
tony is referred to
his background
as a way in which
people themselves
particularly the military or the police
when they leave the barracks in a
context of fragile or fragility
when they leave the barracks what then

happens is that they do not leave behind
the legitimized crime
they do not leave behind the legitimized
violence in the barracks
so the very effect that they leave the
barracks the very fact that they may
leave their uniforms
behind the bar
does not entail that they have left
behind the skill of doing that
legitimized violence
and this is one of the problems when
tony was talking about the idea of
trying to limit
the use of guns gun possession use of
guns and access to guns
it is not all about accessing the gun as
an object in this regard
but
trying to deeply
demilitarize the skill that has been
embedded in a particular soldier through
an embodied experience in this regard
so how do we do that to demilitarize a
militarized mind a militarized mind in
this case which is being in this regard
being embodied
to do that justified
violence that legitimized violence and
this is a
question which many of the countries
like even the u.s uh
the the british and even in south africa
have failed to deal with that part of
demilitarized skill that can
kill so
in actual effect what we often think is
that
that particular ideology can easily be
taken away the ideology of doing crime
because oftentimes when soldiers are
serving when the police are serving what
they do is criminal but that criminal
is justified by the state it is

legitimized by the state itself
so how do they take away
that ideology that subjective experience
that is objectivity of doing violence
that subjectivity of doing crime that is
celebrated by state institutions at the
time when they are saving so there is
actually a thin line
between what is justified in the
barracks and what is unjustified outside
the barracks and there's also actually a
thin line
between leaving the bags and going into
the civilian community
that pathway of leaving the barrage that
the pathway of leaving a police came
going into the civilian community where
the expectation of doing crime is no
longer celebrated becomes very difficult
and that is actually difficult to deal
with in terms of intervention by ngos
and even the government itself in trying
to demonstrate this that is actually
leaving the buttocks to go into the
civilian setting where the codes and
ethics are that of an innocuous human
being so the inauguration being doesn't
exist
for a military person personnel the
innocuous human being doesn't exist for
aesthetic security
who is
celebrated within the bar but that
celebration
of doing violence that celebration of
doing crime is actually what sustains
the state because it is celebrated and
it sustains the state in particular ways
so it makes the state survive so when it
makes the state survive that skill is
carried on to a civilian community where
it is no longer celebrated so how do we
deal with this conundrum
so the conundrum that we are facing now

is to try to take away that subjective
experience of doing violence
so how do we do that and that becomes
quite a key problem
when tony was talking about
the intervention in terms of can use
gun position and gun violence as well as
doing crime
by using uh violence because these are
the legacies of the military these are
legacies of the police these are the
legacies of the state security these
legacies are celebrated legacies and are
embodied and embedded into the minds so
that question i think is one of the
question
which we can engage with how do we then
demilitarized
a mind that is celebrated by this kid
thank you justin
thank you very much
godfrey for that input
and i'm intrigued by the
militarized mind
and i think you specifically say
it's
a difficult thing to take up as
government even as ngos for us to be
able to
de-militarize
um this skill that is celebrated
but how do we then
balance this act is it possible for this
act to be balanced
uh thank you justina for that question
i think the idea of balancing
is a never ending a
practice that will getting
trying to balance because
if we read sometimes we'll find out that
state security agencies or the state
security
institutions
are great institutions they are quite

greedy to the extent that they do not
want to shape what they have or they do
not want to balance what they have
why is it that state security
institutions are so greedy
uh to the extent that they wanted to
maintain
their survival is a state in this regard
so trying to balance that idea of an
individual who does and surviving crimes
of violence becomes problematic for the
state because if you try to take away
that militarized the mind that
celebrates the violence and the crime
that celebrates gun ownership and can
access and use and to include the
killing itself
in this regard the state will not allow
that why the state doesn't allow that is
because the state thrives on and
sustained by violence
through individuals whom they train to
do that violence so often times it is
often easier
to become a steady security agent or to
become a soldier to become a police it's
easier to become one but it's very
difficult to leave behind what you meant
and to survive and thrive on that
violent crime in a context of fragility
estonia has put it right
so
it's quite problematic
thank you so much
godfrey and now we move on to dewama
winga
my brother who is the director of human
rights watch in southern africa they
were over to you
thank you so much
uh my sister justina can you hear me
we can hear you
okay we can hear you
all right thank you

so
i i really want to
appreciate this report that uh
tony
has presented on
uh crimes by the security forces who
will guard the guards it's really
a
a great piece of work and in my view
a tip of the iceberg
when you look at um
you know the situation in zimbabwe and i
i will
in some ways uh agree with the comments
made by by godfrey and say that no from
where i i sit i wanted to look at the
political context
you know of
uh let's
start more recently uh
from the military coup of 2017
now you have a group of people with a
political ideology that says
zimbabwe this space is our space and
these are armed people
who
believe that they hold a position
elevated above the law so there is a
sense of
operating outside of the framework of
the rule of law
and for the military particularly if you
look at the military within the security
sector uh there is a sense of an
elevation or a rank which says the
police um a much weaker uh force that
cannot challenge you know what happens
uh with this
with the military so that contributes in
a big way uh to this
pattern that we now see of the
security forces being increasingly
involved in crime uh in
armed robberies

and they do that because they can number
one but they also do that
because
they
know or they believe
that they can get away with it so there
is a sense of impunity that says
you know
we have the power
we are in charge
we control the political spaces and
therefore
there will be no accountability that
will come to us and this actually
fuels
and emboldens these actors
and when you then look at the police
there is
a difference to
the soldiers to the military
almost always there is a reluctance to
investigate or to pursue so it's not
just about you know the capacity of the
police to investigate but it's an
unwillingness and standing aside you
know where the police would literally
fold their hands behind their backs and
say
we will not look into these things and
this environment then encourages those
that commit abuses because they believe
they are literally they are the law
that's what they believe and so
they commit all kinds of abuses and at
the level again at the political level
we see that the authorities are not
taking the appropriate steps to have
in place
accountability mechanisms and there is
the
complaints uh mechanism uh for members
of the public to complain about the
conduct of the security services but
that still is being delayed

uh there is no progress towards um operationalizing it although it was uh framed in the uh 2013 constitution section uh 2 10. so that again shows that you know uh there is an idea that we should not talk about accountability i have started in 2017 but this pattern has been owned since 1980 since the massacres if you look at how you know those crimes were committed you know and i i do agree with with godfrey that when people are you know contracted by the state to commit crime you know serious human rights abuses they can also then do the assigned jobs of their own of their own crimes and abuses with the same weapons because they know that there is no accountability and of course they are suffering because of the economic conditions they have nothing some of them think that this is actually a way to uh uh to make money we have seen this with reports about you know security forces involved in illegal mining uh security forces involved in in poaching security forces involved in armed robberies in zimbabwe and across the border in south africa and and so it's because they have the weapons they have the ammunition and they can abuse it will because the mechanisms to hold them accountable do not exist but they are just too weak and there is no political leadership that says uh that enough is enough and of course given the coup you know the military coup there is also a sense that the political leadership is deferring and is reluctant to

decisively
deal with crimes from the security
forces because they owe their power
you know to these same people so they
will they want to they don't want to
rock the boat
and so they treat uh softly around
issues that involve the security forces
and uh and try and pretend that those
things will be resolved so there is no
transparency so when these crimes are
committed and tony did mention this the
problem of tracking and ex finding out
identifying those that commit the crimes
there is
a brick wall that you reach as a
researcher as activists because
they you will not be able to access what
happens uh within the barracks in terms
of the systems that that are whether
they are there or they are not there so
these are some of the things that we
really need to look at to say
if something is to be done about these
crimes it's not just about you know
tabulation and having a clearer picture
but it's also about political will it's
about the authorities
saying
there is no one who is above the law
uh about saying that everyone should be
held accountable if they commit crimes
and of course this should include
crimes that relates to human rights
abuses like abductions no like torture
so when when you know state agents
abduct people in broad daylight we have
seen this with this is what happened and
in our case my sister justina we have
seen this with italian zamara and these
people are um
others these people are armed
and clearly working for the state
but there is no one who can trust them

the same with the the case of joanna
mumma she see
so accountability should be brought to
include all crimes including those
that supposedly you know sort of uh
prolong the states you know
the regimes hold on power because those
are some of the the crimes that they
want to say they are being committed in
the name of of the regime and therefore
should
be ignored or should be forgiven but if
we don't address those crimes it means
that we will not have a path forward in
terms of dealing with all these other
crimes that we see and the mechanisms
are simply not there uh
civilian arms that are there the
judiciary
they are really afraid of the security
forces they cannot hold them accountable
so really i think in short
the short answer to the question who
will guard the guards is that at the
moment it seems in zimbabwe that there
is a fear from the authorities
to ensure that there is someone to guard
the guards the complaints
mechanism that was supposed to be there
is not there and therefore
no one is empowered at law at the moment
to guard the guards and this is something
that
uh presumably the security forces would
be enjoying thank you so much uh
back to you thank you
thank you very much uh dewa and as you
as speaking there i was just thinking
that
it's um
probably about 22 months
to the elections and what we have seen
from 2020 is that we have seen security
forces actually topping the list

of uh perpetrators
what do you see happening considering
what uh godfrey has said in terms of
that these criminal acts and the
violence is actually justified and
celebrated in the barracks and at the
end of the day they are not able to
leave that mind in the in the barracks
what do we see happening as we head
towards the 2023 elections
hello
hello so sorry i was struggling to
unmute so can you hear me okay yes okay
okay
okay thank you
i am afraid that no things might get
worse
because
you know this is not gratuitous violence
this is not just mindless crime it is
a validation and a source of power you
know a source of political power a
source of economic power
and control
so as we approach the 2023 elections
if there is a significant threat
to
the political purpose
we are definitely going to see an
escalation in these crimes in
violence because
you know
this kind of violence these crimes are
you know a political tool to retain to
maintain political authority in zimbabwe
there you know they are
strategically deployed
to ensure
that those in power remain in power so
what needs to happen is that i think
there needs to be no higher levels of
exposing these abuses uh the connections
the networks and including the economic
and financial benefits

and beneficiaries of this system so that
when we talk of
pushing to expose the leadership must be
held accountable that is the only way
that we can remove you know the military
from this
place of violence so we need to do much
more to expose
and to coordinate in ways and to push
for accountability mechanisms not just
in zimbabwe not just in terms of the
constitution but beyond zimbabwe what
would be the accountability mechanisms
that are there i know that in south
africa
the authorities there including the
special
branch of the police are investigating
abuses that have taken place in zimbabwe
by the security force because there is
also concern of a spillover and
of these abuses and this violence and
this crime into the region so that is
concerning botswana in in namibia and
especially in south africa so we need to
look at uh mechanisms in those spaces as
well that can be used thank you
thank you very much dewa and at this
stage
we would want to give people the
opportunity to ask
the panelists questions
and you will indicate
your intention to ask a question
by raising your hand
and then i'll be able to
identify you and
that way we will then be able to proceed
if anyone sees any hands please let me
i don't see any hands at the at the
moment
okay um
right i recognize simba rashe
uh simba russia you can go ahead let's

keep our
questions brief
as much as possible
uh thank you thank you um justina for
for
the opportunity um no my question is
directed to um to godfrey
i think he talks of um
the violence that is embedded in
uh the soldiers and and i think it's
it's uh midwest because of
um the crisis that um
the soldiers and other zimbabweans are
facing what are the possibilities
of
demilitarizing
that mind especially with the ongoing
crisis with regards to salaries
and other things within the military
sector what are the prospects
of demilitarizing
thank you
thank you very much simbarashi i will
take a question from
rikim konza and then yassin and then i
will have the panelists respond to those
three and then we will take another
round
uh thank you very much uh yesterday
thank you to the presenters i think they
were quite insightful presentation
my name is rakim konzer
i am a senior lecturer i found investor
of technology in the department of
public management
my question is i don't know who take it
but my question is
has to do with the historical context
to this
use of
violence and use of guns
i think
just to give context to my question
justina i i i think the zimbabwean state

was
always believed to have been created
through the waging of the liberation
struggle
and the celebration
of
the use of guns
um in fact when we were growing up i
remember we used to listen to songs like
zimbabwe
and
you know
to what extent do that does that history
you know influence you know the use of
guns that we we seem to see
as being prevalent
in in in in in zimbabwe so so i wanted i
wanted our presenters to to
to look at this historical uh basis that
i think has an influence uh in the in in
this problem that we face
i'm struggling to i was struggling to
unmute thank you very much for that
question maybe now i need to have
responses from the technical people it
tells me we have a minute 13 seconds
left
what do we do we still have uh
questions coming coming up should we
rejoin
what should we do
yes we will rejoin
okay so can i ask everyone to rejoin
please and when we regroup we will begin
with yes
thank you thank you um i think yes and
is in the room at the moment yes sin can
we hear from you before i give the
panelist to respond but i think i will
also take
a
question from will betts we had
indicated you wanted to ask a question
thank you for that chair um i think my

question for the panelists
in general is we're talking about
um holding
um our people accountable and for me the
question is
what does that look like
when we say we want to hold
those who should be guarding us
accountable as you know just an ordinary
citizen what does accountability look
like what does that mean
on a practical level thank you
will bet are you back
will bet
if he is not back then i will ask the
panelists to respond to the questions
that have been tabled
i am back i was waiting to ban muted
yesterday thank you very much okay all
right that's fine
yeah my question
while tony addressed the issues i saw
open for any of the panelists to take uh
and possibly they were i can also assist
in this question my question relates to
the issues which are tony raised
especially in terms of his
recommendations one of the worrying
issues being the fact that
these are
criminals are being granted there uh we
notice that they go to court they are
granted bail and they are released on
there
and tony's recommendation is that there
is need for a requested direction of
this but the challenge that we have at
the moment is that there is a right
which is prescribed in terms of the
contribution and one of the things that
we have been clamoring for is
constitutionalism respect for the
constitution and this particular issue
to say if we really have to respect the

constitution then
we have this challenge that because
there is a right uh ideally and the
constitution says any person who is
brought before the court he has a right
to bail how do we balance insofar as
these videos are concerned because
we always see them you will hope the
last time i think with the
uh database criminals with one of them
said you have been on the run for
the last 20 years 19 years 20 years uh
or so and suddenly uh
he was granted there i think the only
thing which kept him in custody was
another pending uh case that was there
but he had been granted there so how the
question is how do we balance on this
particular issue so that we are protect
the citizens and maybe the other issue
is that we also seem to take a note of
the fact that the uh security forces in
police in particular are taking
advantage of these uh state criminals we
have we had a number
are reports of our people being guarded
ostensibly because they were criminals
there was an exchange of gunfire or that
they were running away and they are shot
by the police and which looks more like
elimination how
can we safe guards the rights to life in
the constantly such as those because
even criminals have the right to life
that that will be those will be my
talkers
thank you very much
oh sorry
thank you very much will bet i will ask
dewa to go fest then god free and then
last will be tony
hello hello dad thank you so much uh
justina and uh
wilbur for that question i i think

uh more broadly and to the uh earlier questions by uh yasin
i think
what needs to happen
is to have effective
accountability mechanisms
and this includes
the
implementation of the constitutional
section 210
mechanism complaints mechanism that
receives complaints from the public
and ensures that
the appropriate limit is in place
i think the problem is that the law is
not working as it should
people are operating outside the
framework of the rule of law so we need
to have a way in which uh there is
strict adherence to the rule of law
where everyone is
equal before the law
and uh the justice system uh confirms
such
which means that the police must be
empowered
and there must be political will to do
that to ensure that they can have
thorough investigations in accordance
with the law and the constitution and
which would lead to
successful prosecutions
if
we deal with the issue of
removing the politicization of the
military and security sector and we
ensure that the security sector is
subjected to the rule of law and to law
uh including the cio having a regulatory
law that governs it properly
then
perhaps we could have
a significant chunk of these challenges
resolved and to answer

uh wilbur's question on uh on on the
right to bail
yes it
it it should be guaranteed but if there
is transparency if there is
accountability if there are mechanisms
to decisively deal with the security
forces
and
in in matters of crime then
we may not
uh perhaps need to consider the aspect
of um blanket denial of bail because at
the moment the systems are not working
the laws are not working um and this has
been the problem historically my brother
ricky has raised this question about the
historical aspects of these things
impunity
has been a running thread historically
in terms of the
crimes committed by the security forces
so if it becomes
public and clear
that the security forces are removed
from politics
and political interference and are
subjected to the law
it will not really be about the
militarized minds that is the issue the
issue is
the lack of
punishment and accountability because if
people are subjected to the law then
they will have
clear
deterrent measures that will be applied
to them but at the moment
they are actually emboldened by the
absence of any deterrent measures it's a
world wide west they do as they please
many times they get away with that so
those will be my interventions thank you
maybe now we can hear from godfrey in

terms of uh the questions that have been posed
godfrey over to you
thank you
uh godfrey i think your network is struggling
for the questions
22 questions one of the question which was
asked by simba on the prospects of generally arising
in the context of crisis uh can you know
can you hear me now
you can hear you
can hear me now just enough yes godfrey
we can hear you please go ahead
and sorry for the network
so i will respond to the two questions one released by simba and the other one by another
participant so the one that has to do with the prospects of demilitarizing in the context of crisis in zimbabwe
a response to that is that uh i responded at least in twofold
one of the four days that people have to understand that the militarization
of the military itself or of military personnel or of state security agencies
is a resource it is a resource
it is a political resource for the state to survive
and in a context like zimbabwe where the whereby the state is struggling to survive itself
it will not allow in any circumstances to de-militarize its personnel
in this regard so
there are some prospects of demilitarizing and
there should be a lot of investment in

which should be resolved around the demilitarization of that particular subjective experience because it is one question to deal with people who are leaving the barracks but also it's another question to deal with their subjective experience so the subjective experience of what they've been taught to do is the problem and dealing with that issue which is always been celebrated by the states and is a source of recognition of military personnel and state security agencies of that militarization process so to demilitarize it it becomes problematic it becomes problematic also in two ways what are the ways one of the ways is that i will respond to this in questions what does the crisis do to the barack and what does the barack do to the crisis and these are betting any questions if we are to understand the military personnel in the context of committing violence and crime because the objectification of a crisis to the bronx becomes a problem and whereby the barrack is objectifying a crisis so we have two objects which are in in a conundrum in this case a crisis in the back a back in the crisis and one day due to each other in the objectification process it becomes a problematic simulator demilitarizing that mind so it is never an a never ending process and civil societies ngos should be able to engage these military personnel in order to deal with the subjective experience so uh so the second question which one

of the participants asked about
the perpetuation of
a
of
zimbabwe there over
by gorillas or by ex-combatants in this
regard that perpetuation
people should also understand that after
1980 a bit of history and i understand
all of us will understand this history
whereby gorillas or ex-combatants now
they've been allowed to serve in this
national army
so what is it that they are doing is not
only to save the state
but to save their self
is individual so within the bags in the
context of the military
so what do they teach and
how they carry that gorilla mentality in
the so-called professional population
army imposed 1980 independence becomes a
problem
it becomes a problem in the sense that
the gorilla mentality continued to exist
in the so-called professional army in
1st 1980
and what is it doing this mentality in
an already militarized profession
so these are some of the issues that we
need to really problematize and
i would like these issues to be very
edgy but also at a practical level in
terms of intervention people have to sit
down thinking through what is it that is
needed to undo a subjective experience
that has been embedded with a gun
mentality
so i think those are some of the issues
in which we can engage it's an open
debate and we have different
issues to say thank you justin
thank you very much uh godfrey over to
you tony

thank you thank you derwen thank you
godfrey and thank you for the questions
i'd like to unpack this and answer the
questions in the same way
the report says we have concerns that
security first personnel
are becoming involved in crime
if you read the report you will see that
it's
serious crime that we're worried about
violent crime armed robberies and those
kinds of things
but a range of other kinds of activities
now that's uh
just an event but
or are there a series of crimes
but they have to be linked and they have
to be seen in the context so what the
report tries to do
is to
link
these kinds of
crimes
with the notion of a state that is
fragile and i encourage people to to
look at what the notion of fragility
means
because what fragility really talks
about
is how the state is losing control
of the country
and i think that if you look carefully
at all the indicators of this you would
see
a country in which the state is losing
control these are the conditions that
eventually lead
from fragility to failed
but in the context of that process what
then begins to happen is opportunities
for crime begin to happen at all sorts
of levels
and that's why we raise the issue of
transnational organized crime and the

notion of illicit financial flows
and obliquely to the reports that have
come out about serious cartels and the
way in which money is being moved out of
the country
but then it drops to lower levels
in which
other levels of the state become
involved in criminal activity and now
we're starting to talk about the guards
who are becoming involved in this and
this is all in the context of a fragile
state of
of a very very damaged economy
livelihoods
that are
not livelihoods anymore for any people
and so the opportunities for crime and
self-financing become very important
so when you begin to look at the
holistic picture
it is critical that some kind of
serious control begins to happen in the
situation now some of that is exactly
what they were
talking about there needs to be a major
political shift in which
the state is able to control its
coercive power but not only that to
provide the population
with legitimate livelihoods where
they're not reliant on crime
and where perhaps members of the
security forces don't feel that they
have to self-finance
and don't get linked to other kind of
criminal groups within and without the
country and within and without the state
so this is the big problem that we
actually face
the question then that i think will be
raised and and so did did there
is the absolute adherence to
constitutionalism and i couldn't agree

with them more
but there must be a process in which the
constitutional right to bail
is balanced against the crime
i mean i find it
incredible that a man who is arrested
for an armed robbery is granted bail and
three days later is shot dead
in another armed robbery by the police
and you know we can be very down on the
police and everyone else but the police
themselves also deserve a measure of
safety
from
armed criminals and do not have to feel
that threat
by armed criminals all over the place
and you look at the south african
statistics from the number of policemen
who die in armed robberies and things it
is clear that we are in a major chaotic
situation and that chaotic situation is
described by fragility
and the fragility requires political
solution
of a major kind
and
and then we can address the kinds of
problems of the militarized mind and
getting the police to have a more
civilian policing mentality
not have the army involved in civilian
affairs and proper investigative
procedures but we must see this thing as
holistically
holistic
armed armed robberies in the view of
this report and it is very partial
evidence and it certainly requires much
much much more detailed analysis
and available statistics in order for us
to understand what kind of threat there
is to the citizens from the guards
thank you

thank you very much tony dewa and
godfrey for those um really compelling
discussions that we have had on this
matter
and i'm also looking at my clock we just
have a few minutes
left before we
end this um
dialogue
um and i think on behalf of the zimbabwe
human rights ngo forum
i would like to thank all the
participants as well
and at this stage i think i would want
to then
launch the report and also thank
supper's trust
for allowing us to do this on this uh
platform
i think the
uh report is going to be shared just now
and there is a link that has also been
shared in the um
in the chat
fortune please put the cover on
fortune
we might be facing a bit of a glitch
technically we had hoped that you'd be
able to see the
cover of the report are we able to do
that fortune yes che i'm just working
with the technical so that i'm able to
share my skills
okay
if i can ask for your
patience as the technical people are
sorting it out
yes there you are the report that
we have been discussing and
i think it is now
officially launched
who guards the gods monitoring crime and
security forces involvement in crime
and those who have been involved in the

production of this report
uh the zimbabwe human rights and duo
forum yields zimbabwe trust
members of the forum being the research
and advocacy unit and also the
counseling services unit
so now i
just want to thank everyone for being
part of this
policy dialogue thank you for coming
around
thank you doc
thank you very much uh
for the usual good performance and thank
you
thank you tony for
the brilliant presentation as usual
and i'm sure we will
release the report and we will
hopefully follow up the report
but thank you very much to the panelists
and thank you for choosing surface
policy dialogue as a forum
look forward to the next occasion thanks
justina okay bye-bye
is