



NPRCWATCH

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STAKEHOLDERS, FRIENDS AND PARTNERS

Welcome to our first newsletter of the year 2020. January has been a month of planning for the National Transitional Justice Working Group (NTJWG) and we have taken this month to forecast how we will roll out our activities for this year to enable us to further the transitional justice agenda in Zimbabwe. The NTJWG has some exciting activities planned for the first quarter of 2020 that it hopes will play a crucial role in shaping transitional justice conversations in the future.

There have been some exciting international developments in the United Nations with the Security Council taking a direct look at transitional justice for the first time. On the other hand, Nepal seems to be retrogressing in the transitional justice sphere with the government of Nepal ignoring the voices of victims in Nepal's transitional justice processes. In this newsletter, we will focus on highlighting some of the activities that the NTJWG will implement during the first quarter of the year. We will also cover the international transitional justice developments, the plans of the NTJWG for 2020, the activities carried out by the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) and its plans for the year. As always we welcome your feedback.

AROUND THE WORLD

UN Security Council Zeros in on Transitional Justice

On the 31st of January, the UN Security Council released its monthly forecast in which it indicated its intention to hold an open debate on transitional justice in February 2020. Although the Security Council has in the past considered transitional justice indirectly, this event will mark the first time that the Security Council has held a meeting on transitional justice as a thematic issue. The debate is going to focus on how the Security Council can enhance its work in respect of transitional justice initiatives in country-specific contexts. The debate will serve as a platform for member states with experience in dealing with transitional justice initiatives to share their views and possible lessons for other states. The NTJWG looks forward to more opportunities to engage the Security Council on pertinent transitional justice issues in Zimbabwe.



Victims' Voices Ignored in Nepal's Transitional Justice Processes

On the 25th of January, the International Commission of Jurists, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and TRIAL International released a statement condemning the decision of the government of Nepal to appoint commissioners to the two transitional justice commissions without adequate consultants, and without amending the legal framework to make it consistent with international human rights law and Supreme Court of Nepal rulings. The statement indicated that victims' groups and human rights organizations have rejected these appointments as

the process of their appointment was not done on a consultative basis which undermines the victims' right to truth, justice, and reparations. To access this statement you can visit:

<https://www.hrs.org/news/2020/01/25/nepal-recent-steps-undermine-transitional-justice>.

The NTJWG wishes to reiterate its position that transitional justice processes must be victim-centred if they are to be effective and facilitate reconciliation and lasting peace.

NPRC ACTIVITIES

NPRC Plans for 2020

On the 7th of January, the NPRC publicized its plans for the first quarter of 2020. The NPRC reported that it plans to capacitate the Provincial Peace Committees, set up and institutionalize a Conflict Early Warning and Early Response system. The NPRC also said that it aims to set up the National Peace Committee and mobilize for the induction of District Peace Committees. The NPRC indicated its plans to have a National Peace Committees and District Peace Committees during the NTJWG's NPRC briefing session in October 2019 and we are happy to see that these plans are going to be set in motion this year. The NTJWG wishes to remind the NPRC to ensure that these peace committees are inclusive and victim-centred. The NPRC has already reported that it intends to roll out a complaints receiving program in select districts across Zimbabwe in 2020. While the NTJWG welcomes the roll-out of such a program we request that the NPRC publicizes which districts it will visit and the dates for those visits in time so that the communities concerned may be made aware and capacitated on how to effectively participate in the process.

Prevention and Non-Recurrence Upcoming Programs

On the 13th of January, the NPRC released a press release in which it reported that the Prevention and Non-Recurrence Committee has set up

Provincial Peace Committees [PPCs] in the ten provinces of Zimbabwe. The Commission also reported that it has trainings lined up for the PPCs



to help build strong teams that understand their work better. The NPRC invited members of the public to interact with the PPCs and the Commission and share their feedback on prevention and non-recurrence programs by reaching out to the following:

Commissioner Ms. Patience Chiradza

Email: pczchiradza@nprc.org.zw

Phone: +263 712 845 517

Mr. Joseph Mashingaidze, the Manager of the Committee on Prevention and Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution and Transformation Department.

Email: jnmashingaidze@nprc.org.zw

Phone: +263 712 906 839

The NTJWG implores the NPRC to publicize the names and contact information of the contact persons for each PPC. This will be of great use to survivors who will be able to engage with official representatives of the NPRC in their provinces and not need to go to the head office in Harare.

Switzerland Capacitates the NPRC

On the 16th of January, the NewsDay newspaper reported that Switzerland which is known for its expertise in dealing with the past has taken steps to capacitate the NPRC. The NewsDay reported that on the 15th of January the Swiss ambassador to Zimbabwe, Niculin Jager expressed his country's readiness to capacitate the government's peace and reconciliation initiatives. The Swiss Ambassador also handed over a motor vehicle, GPS equipment, and a video camera to the Commission. The NTJWG hopes that this capacitation will go a long way in assisting the NPRC to carry out its activities in fulfillment of its constitutionally enshrined mandate.

Strategic Review and Planning

On the 20th of January, the NPRC held its Strategic Review and Planning Workshop during which the Commission indicated its readiness to implement the 2020 Work plan. The NTJWG implores the NPRC to share its work plan to enable its stakeholders to identify opportunities to collaborate with the NPRC and compliment the work of the NPRC when engaging with survivors.

Community Engagement

On the 24th of January, the NPRC engaged the community of Chikwira Village in the Uzumba District in Murehwa in collaboration with the Better Life Foundation. This engagement sought to promote peace and reconciliation for inclusive development and empowerment. The participants acknowledged that violence has been instigated by several factors in our country which include resource shortages, partisan distribution of aid, conflicts over gender roles and land disputes.

NTJWG ACTIVITIES

Policy Dialogues

On the 6th of February, the NTJWG is going to be hosting a policy dialogue on reparations and rehabilitation in Harare. This important event will bring together an international expert on the subject Paula Gaviria, the former Director of the Special Administrative Unit for the Comprehensive Reparation of Victims in Colombia, and a local expert. Dr. Frances Lovemore who is the Executive Director of the Counselling Services Unit. The



two experts will present research papers on their recommendations for a national reparations and rehabilitation policy for Zimbabwe before stakeholders of the NTJWG, Parliamentarians, Senators, and Independent Commissions, government official, civil society organisations, the media, survivors and members of the general citizenry.

The NTJWG aims to influence and shape transitional justice processes in Zimbabwe and one way of doing that is through norm-setting and policy modeling. It is, therefore, the NTJWG's hope that this dialogue and the discussions that will flow from it will influence conversations about reparations and rehabilitation in Zimbabwe and initiate the formulation of a policy on these issues as they are critical to national transitional justice processes.

In March, the NTJWG plans to host another policy dialogue on section 9 of the NPRC Act which speaks to gender issues. The choice to focus on gender is a deliberate effort to ensure that transitional justice processes in Zimbabwe are inclusive and gender-sensitive. Our country's history is marred with violence and atrocities and there can be no doubt that in some cases the violence was directed at women whose bodies were violated either through sexual assault or other means. In other cases, women were indirect victims of violence and they must not be forgotten. Section 9 of the NPRC Act focuses on women and during the policy dialogue, the NTJWG aims to discuss how women may be included in the national healing and reconciliation processes right from the onset. The NTJWG will also bring in local and international experts on this subject to shed more light on the issues at play.

Radio Programs

The NTJWG acknowledges that transitional justice issues affect many Zimbabweans most of whom may not fully comprehend how transitional justice processes may affect them. As the NTJWG continues in its efforts to raise awareness on transitional justice issues the NTJWG has identified radio as an ideal medium for information dissemination.

The NTJWG, therefore, plans to host two radio programs in the first quarter of 2020 after the policy dialogues highlighted above. The first radio program which will be done on the 7th of February will focus on reparations and rehabilitation and the panel that will be discussing this topic will consist of the two experts in the field and the NPRC. The second radio program will focus on section 9 of the NPRC Act and how the provision can be operationalised to ensure that transitional justice in Zimbabwe is gender-sensitive.

Community Dialogues

During 2019, the NTJWG carried out thirteen community dialogues with the aim of capacitating survivors of past human rights violations to effectively engage with the NPRC when it visits their communities. The community dialogues were essentially trainings in communities at ward level on the mandate and functions of the NPRC. The NTJWG plans to continue in this vein in 2020 and has community dialogues scheduled for the first

quarter of 2020 in Nkayi on the 12th of February, in Chinhoyi on the 14th of February, in Hwange on the 17th of February, in Balagwe on the 19th of February, in Mazowe on the 26th of February, and in Zaka on the 11th of March. These community dialogues are essential for awareness-raising among survivors of past human rights violations and are aimed at ensuring that when the NPRC eventually visits these communities the survivors will be able to engage effectively with the Commission and articulate their issues well.

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**NATIONAL
TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE
WORKING GROUP
ZIMBABWE**

Suite 4, Number 1 Raleigh Street, Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263 242 770177/8. Email: info@ntjwg.org.zw

www.ntjwg.org.zw

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