



Zimbabwe Diaspora Conference Call
Sunday May 16, 2010

4:00p Online: Dominic Muntanga Teresa Dangwa Chipo Dendere
 Escar Kusema Esau Mavindidze Joseph
 Dr. Tlou Mayur Patel Dr. Chikosi
 Dr. Maxwell Shumba Forest Melinda Betty Makoni

Copies of the minutes are available on the Council for Zimbabwe website: <http://www.zimcouncil.org/>

Introductory Remarks by Moderator - Dominic Muntanga:

- Founder of Council for Zimbabwe.
- **Agenda**
 - *Agenda: how we as the Diaspora can find ways to increase the impact of our resources to help Zimbabwe.*
 - *Introductions and Summary of Responses*
 - *Next Steps and Announcements*
 - *Closing Remarks*
- **Question 1:** Why are we here?
 - Here is what we know. We all represent a diverse set of political opinions, views, interests and agenda. There is a common thread that binds us all which is the love of our country, Zimbabwe. It is this thread that we would like to strengthen. How we can all play a meaningful role to create a better future for Zimbabwe. We asked you to join us because we want to find ways of working together so that we can be more effective in our efforts to use our skills, resources and social networks to respond to the challenges and opportunities in our country.
- **Question 2:** What is this call about?
 - How can individuals and institutions work together to increase the impact of our resources and skills to create economies of scale?
 - How can we build mechanisms to allow for all of us to tap into the skills, information and resources that exist abroad?
 - How can we sustain the various groups and Diaspora organizations, which focus on different aspects of development?
 - How we can come together and work effectively.
- **Question 3:** What is this call not about?
 - Politics or political agendas.
- *We are not trying to create a super structure and swallow other organizations. This is about forming partnerships, collaborations and sharing information.*

Introductions:

- Dominic Muntanga: Founder of Council for Zimbabwe
- Betty Makoni: Founder of Girl Child Network and currently furthering the cause of the girl child internationally.
- Dr. Tlou: Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Retired Professor in Education.
- Esau Mavindidze: Affiliated with Zim-Health and Chamber of Southern African Professionals Association.
- Chipo Dendere: Conducting research on the Diaspora through Syracuse University.

- Mayur Patel: Director of Strategic Assessment and Assistant to the President at the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. His experience include: project associate with the Global Economic Governance Program at the University of Oxford, worked with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Zimbabwe on issues of civic engagement and parliamentary support, a consultant to Oxfam's offices in the UK and in Nairobi, Kenya, and as a policy adviser on trade and investment to Realizing Rights, an NGO based in New York. Patel, a Rhodes Scholar, is completing a doctorate in international development at the University of Oxford, from which he also earned a masters degree.
- Dr Maxwell Zeb Shumba: MDC-USA Provincial Chairman. Environmental Scientist and Chemistry Professor (Miami University (OH). Education: MEd (Chemistry Education), Havana Cuba. MS (Chemistry) PhD (Chemistry)-University of Cincinnati. Passionate about the economic and political welfare of Zimbabwe.
- Dr Chikosi: a dentist in New York specializing in oral pathology. Board member and Secretary for Council for Zimbabwe
- Escar Kusema: Phillips Exeter Academy Teacher. Works on women's, girls', education and Diaspora issues.

We are thinking of creating a database or a way for all of us, including those who are not here, to communicate and share both knowledge and resources. We want to know who is out there, who is doing what so we can use that information to bring people interested in working on the education sector so we can collaborate.

Question 4: What kind of information would people like to know about other organizations or initiatives?

Summary of responses:

- Contact information to help establish links between other people doing similar activities
 - For those organizations with individuals in Zimbabwe, we hope they can share information about the current situation on the ground. This will help inform other organizations and help their concerns remain current and relevant.
 - What initiatives are they carrying out.
 - What resources do they need so we know what kind of help they need to help further their cause. E.g. volunteers? Donations?
- ⇒ This database will help us begin to share with other people in the world about what we are doing and what the situation is in Zimbabwe in order to help build links to further help our causes.
- ⇒ The International Office of Migration also has a template on type of information needed to create this database.

Next Steps:

Send out a brief questionnaire/survey on what kind of information about your group or other groups you would like to see on this database.

Each of us should help identify other groups in the Diaspora and inform them of this initiative.

Announcements

1. Government has been working on the Diaspora Policy with IOM. We conducted a survey and drafted a report that will be available on the Council's website. This stems from the bill that was introduced on May 4th. We can link you up with various people working on this. There is still a lot of work to be done to make sure that the views communicated in this report, materialize.
2. Maxwell Shumba: July 31st- Dallas conference on Zimbabwe: What can we do as the Diaspora to help improve the lives of people in Zimbabwe.
3. Betty Makoni: 1 June-10 June – Washington D.C, Toronto – June 22 events on women's issues.

Closing Remarks/Suggestions

Teresa Dangwa: Please send an agenda in advance so we can utilize our time effectively by preparing information to share during the call.

Dominic Muntanga: Thank you for joining us on this call. Please reach out to other groups and get more people to share information so we can better serve Zimbabwe.