

Harare demonstration broken up as SADC leaders meet – 27th October 2008

Below is a report from our partner organisation, Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe (ROHR), who held a demonstration in Harare today as the SADC leaders met.

23 Injured, 7 arrested, 4 Abducted after a ROHR Demonstration

23 men and women have been hospitalised and seven arrested after ROHR Zimbabwe demonstrated in Harare today. Four people are missing after having been reportedly abducted by Zanu PF operatives. The four are Moses Mutasa from Hatfield, Tinei Tinarwo from Glen Norah, Mr Ncube from Dzivarasekwa and Adam Muchiriri from Hatfield.

More than 200 ROHR activists participated in demonstrations that brought business to a standstill in Harare today between 1100hrs and 1200hrs. The protesters peacefully marched in the streets heading towards the Harare International Conference Centre (HICC), the venue for this week's SADC meeting that has been attended by SADC Heads of State. The SADC meeting marks yet another attempt by the regional body to push for the long awaited consensus on the current power sharing talks.

The peaceful protest was violently crashed by the Zimbabwe Republic Police, a few streets away from the venue, along Robert Mugabe road corner Kaguvi Street. Police in full riot gear fired teargas at the public causing stampedes and confusion in the crowded city. By 1200hrs 7 people had been arrested.

Around 1200hrs our members reported that 1 person was abducted by suspected Zanu PF operatives along Robert Mugabe Road who used an unmarked Zanu PF Nissan double cab truck. The other three people were abducted by youths in a Nissan single cab truck believed to be owned by Elliot Manyika, the Zanu PF political commissar. Eliot Manyika, who was driving the car, instructed the youths to beat up people.

On 10 October 2008 ROHR Zimbabwe launched the Demand for Democracy and Justice Campaign with a landmark protest in Harare. The main thrust of the campaign is to push for early free and fair elections to be held in a peaceful environment in Zimbabwe under United Nations supervision.