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Dear Friends and Colleagues:

I recommend the attached report to you, and urge you to read it with care.

I have been greatly saddened to watch the developments in Zimbabwe over the past months, and indeed over the past two years. This report brings even greater concern. The hard facts on the ground in Zimbabwe, so well compiled in this report, suggest an alarming array of policies and practices that may be leading the country to a catastrophic future.

Zimbabwe has been a country of great promise over the past two decades. But Zimbabweans are now suffering the brunt of policies that could soon spill over into the entire region. The ongoing political violence in the country is unacceptable, and must be brought to an end. The threatening famine, caused in part by the government lands policy, will make things even worse.

It is now clear that the resolution to the Zimbabwe crisis can only be found in recapturing the legitimacy of government and returning the country to a fair and just rule of law. Sadly, evidence shows that the presidential elections in March were not fair – these facts are well detailed here and in many previous reports – and thus the current government cannot regain this legitimacy. A new vote, with guarantees of fairness and free expression, will undoubtedly be necessary.

As a concerned member of the Southern African region and a neighbor to Zimbabwe, I pray that bold steps be taken to resolve this worsening situation. The broad coalition of Zimbabwean organizations that has authored this report has done a great service in making the facts known. The international community must do its part by holding firm to international principles, and expecting that Zimbabwe do the same.

God bless you

+ Desmond M. Tutu Archbishop Emeritus