

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST ORGANISATION

ACTION AGAINST POVERTY - 08/11/05

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! JOIN THE MASSES OF ZIMBABWE IN THEIR STRUGGLE AGAINST POVERTY!

The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) has declared Tuesday 08 September, a day of 'Action Against Poverty'. This call comes at a time when the vast majority of Zimbabweans have been reduced to a life of desperate destitution as the economic crisis deepens to unprecedented levels. The economic crisis remains fundamentally a consequence of the disastrous failure of IMF structural adjustment programs officially implemented since 1990 under the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP). As such our struggle must as a matter of necessity clear reject IMF and World Bank neo-liberal policies. Mugabe made an opportunistic partial retreat from these policies in 1997 when his power was threatened by mass uprisings against the harsh effects of ESAP. However since May this year the government veered to the right embracing fully IMF world bank demands through the reserve bank governor Gideon Gono's economic turn around program. We are now full swing into a full-blooded neo-liberal program and the poor are paying through the nose. The last six months saw; a complete removal of price controls leading to price increases on almost a daily basis and basic commodities are now way out of reach. The cost of basic drugs and ARV's has skyrocketed. Gono has completely deregulated foreign exchange and the Zimbabwe dollar which was at 5000 to the American dollar beginning of the year is now around 100 000. The country has been without fuel since the and workers are suffering from a crippling public transport crisis. In the past two months Gono has paid a total of US\$135 million to the IMF, this money should have been used to buy drugs, fuel, import grain and pay for other basic necessities. Many townships have gone without water for four months now and there is no sign that things will get better. The whole system is grinding to a halt making daily survival a serious struggle. School fees went up by 1000% last term and is set to rise again next term.

This is the context in which the call to action comes. In terms of the potential for mass struggles we have gone back to 97 and 98, but this time around the crisis is much more acute. Like in 97 and 98 labour has been thrust into a position to lead not just organized workers but all the poor masses. The ISO calls out to all the working people of Zimbabwe and all progressive forces to come out in full support of the action. Those who can not make it to the action can express their solidarity by banging empty pots and pans outside their houses when the demonstration starts and motorists are urged to hoot in solidarity wherever they are.

The working people of Zimbabwe need support from working people and other progressive forces regionally and internationally. As such we are calling on international comrades to organize solidarity action either in the form of pickets at Zimbabwe's embassies or come up with other creative forms of action.

Shinga Mushandi Shinga!

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