

MONTHLY UPDATE

IN TRANSFORMATION
INITIATIVE

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ZIMBABWE



MAIN STORIES

MDC-T Congress

Chin'ono Arrested
Again

Coronavirus

Beitbridge Chaos

HIGHLIGHTS

- Douglas Mwonzora won the internal MDC-T leadership election, receiving 883 votes to beat interim president Thokozani Khupe, who received 118 votes.
- As of 11 January 2021, Zimbabwe had registered 21 477 coronavirus cases, 507 deaths and 12 582 recoveries. There has been a sudden surge in infections and deaths, with cases recorded in December 2020 accounting for nearly half of the cumulative caseload, while the health system has been overwhelmed. A hard lockdown came into effect on 5 January 2021. A ban on all non-essential business and social gatherings, intercity travel and one of the strictest curfews in the world are expected to last until at least 5 February 2021.
- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report (HDR) shows that Zimbabwe's Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2019 is 0.571 – which put the country in the medium human development category – positioning it at 150 out of 189 countries and territories.
- Zimbabwe plans to use profits from a mining venture to help settle a \$3.5 billion compensation claim from white farmers and settle a two-decade dispute that has soured the country's relations with Western nations and global lenders. Kuvimba Mining House, of which the government owns 65%, intends to raise \$1 billion for acquisitions and capital expenditure.
- At least 15 people died in December on the South African side of the Beitbridge border with Zimbabwe in lengthy queues that have been slowed by coronavirus screening. Road Freight Association (RFA) chief executive officer Gavin Kelly said it was the worst congestion in the history of Beitbridge ever.

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- In December, the Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) recorded 181 cases of human rights violations. The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) contributed to 27.57 percent of cases.
- Prominent journalist Hopewell Chin'ono has been re-arrested, for the third time in five months. Police are accusing him of communicating falsehoods. Chin'ono is alleged to have tweeted a claim that a police officer had beaten a baby on its mother's back.
- Russia-Zimbabwe joint venture Great Dyke Investments (GDI) says it will invest US\$650m in its platinum project in Zimbabwe with the African Export and Import Bank (Afreximbank) set to be the lead financier.
- Britain is keen to increase trade with Zimbabwe now that it is free of the European Union (EU) and can make deals around the world outside the framework of the bloc, according to UK Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Melanie Robinson.
- Zimbabwe has been red-flagged as one of the world's 10 worst countries regarding workers' welfare by the International Trade Union Confederation.
- President Cyril Ramaphosa has waded into a potentially explosive diplomatic tiff between Zanu-PF and the ANC over threats by Zanu-PF to 'leak a bombshell' that would expose and embarrass South Africa's ruling party. Ramaphosa dared Zanu-PF's director of information Tafadzwa Mugwadi to come out with his 'bombshell' and reveal the 'real reason' which he claimed was behind the ANC's visit to Zimbabwe last year.
- President Emmerson Mnangagwa condemned the storming of Capitol Hill by pro-Trump protesters, adding that Washington was failing to uphold the democracy it demands of other nations and that it had lost the high moral ground to punish others.

