

“Let’s talk human rights”

FNF Human Rights Podcast episode II – Zimbabwe Transcript

Moderator: Nangamso Kwinana

Guests: Senator David Coltart and Dumisani Muleya

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Thank you for joining us today on our audio journey through Africa. My name is Nangamso Kwinana and I am delighted that you have tuned in again. In our last episode, we started the journey in South Africa and talked to Constitutional Court Judge Edwin Cameron. If you missed the first episode, listen in. You will find the link in this podcast’s show notes.

Today, we travel to Zimbabwe. About a year ago, the former president, Robert Mugabe, passed away at the age of 95. After 37 years in power, he was overthrown in a military coup only two years earlier, in 2017. Now, three years after his defenestration, we would like to shed light on how Zimbabwe has fared after his infamous departure.

Mugabe was probably one of the most controversial leaders in Africa: many remember him as that head of state, who liberated Zimbabwe in 1980 from its colonial occupier, the British Empire. However, during his almost 40 years in office, this perception held by many Africans changed. Since the beginning of the millennium, many began to see him as a dictator who led his country to ruin. During his reign, he was accused of human rights violations, electoral fraud and restrictions on the freedom of the press. Consequently, the USA and Europe, among others, imposed entry bans or targeted travel restrictions on Mugabe and most members of his government. In 2008, the economy collapsed with inflation rates skyrocketing into unprecedented trillions.

***Youtube clip insert**

As is often the case with authoritarian leaders, Mugabe blamed others except himself for his country’s economic down spin, specifically the Western powers and their sanctions on Zimbabwe. He accused his fellow countrymen of being puppets of the West and as detractors with a regime change agenda. While the majority of the population suffered under drastic inflation and food shortages, Mugabe celebrated his 88th birthday spending roughly \$1 million on the festivities.

Mugabe's successor Emmerson Mnangagwa spoke of reforms for the country in that he now affectionately refers to as a new dispensation and second republic. Today, we shall take a closer look at the situation on the ground and try to unpack some of the critical and relevant questions regarding Zimbabwe.

- Have the promised reforms yet been implemented or at least been initiated?
- Compared to pre-independence times, did the people's economic and social situation take a turn for the better? Some argue, Zimbabwe is worse off now.
- If not, does the current government have the capacity and political will to reform for the betterment of Zimbabweans?

Today, two very interesting guests from Zimbabwe are joining us. Please welcome Senator David Coltart, opposition politician, human rights lawyer and current MDC Alliance Treasurer General, and Dumisani Muleya, international award winning investigative journalist, who is also a strong critic of the Mnangagwa regime.

Thank you so much, Senator Coltart and Dumisani Muleya, for taking the time to be our guests today!

Interview

As briefly mentioned earlier, former president Mugabe, polarized and divided the Zimbabwean society. They are those who considered and still consider him a hero. For bringing independence and freedom to the country. [00:06:00] Others regard him as a tyrant, a ruthless leader who presided over human rights violations and torture of those with dissenting views, a man who killed more than 22,000 people in Medallia land under the project who miss appropriated huge amounts of money.

[00:06:22] And who thrived through sophisticated election fraud. Please note that Mercado is not alone on this trail of destruction. The current president who has promised Zimbabweans a better future was his henchman Senator coltart. Can you please briefly explain what happened during the many years of Mugabe's reign?

[00:06:47] The situation in Zimbabwe seems to have worsened continuously during his term of office, as Zimbabwe moved from one deep end to another Britain, Robert McCovey and ZANU PF took [00:07:00] power from the white minority regime in 1980. Um, president your area of Tanzania to sit in the calf doesn't opera because you've inherited the Juul of Africa.

[00:07:13] And unfortunately in the. Uh, 37 years of my Garvey's rule, he transformed some away from the stool into a country, which has seen a massive number of its

citizens. Uh, leave the country going to economic or political exile. Uh, we now face a situation where, um, millions of Zimbabweans face starvation. Uh, we have one of the highest inflation rates in the world.

[00:07:45] Uh, one of the highest rates of unemployment in the world and, uh, that all happened, uh, under McGarvey is watched between 1980 and his removal in the COO of [00:08:00] November, 2017. Uh, but as you've said in your introduction, uh, this cannot just be laid at Robert McGarvey store, uh, because. Uh, he was the leader of Sarno PF.

[00:08:14] He was president of the country country, and he was assisted in these policies, which have led to the destruction of , uh, by the current president, uh, and, and many of the current leaders of, of ZANU PF. Senator co-taught, uh, you've introduced us to a brief summary of the transition period that took place during the 37 years of Mugabe's reign, how the jewel of Africa was transformed.

[00:08:47] Into the political exile. Um, you've also mentioned starvation of the population of Zimbabwe. You've mentioned the high inflation rates that Zimbabwe has earned [00:09:00] during that 37 years. And also you've mentioned the high unemployment rate I'd like to please find out regarding security in Zimbabwe. Have there been situations in which you, as a member of the opposition?

[00:09:15] Have feared for your life or have been threatened in any way?

[00:09:20] **Senator David Coltart** : [00:09:20] Just explain to the listeners of this program. Uh, I, I've been a human rights lawyer aside from a politician for 37 years. And when I returned to the country in 1983, as a young lawyer, I started representing the nationalist icon, Joshua Comos ZAPU party, which was then the main opposition party, and I'm always a bit embarrassed to speak about, uh, the, uh, the trials that I've suffered as an individual, because quite frankly, they pale into insignificance, uh, [00:10:00] compared to the trials that, uh, many black, some barbarian politicians, uh, have suffered, uh, since independence. Um, you mentioned in your opening remarks, Gukurahundi , which was a crime against humanity perpetrated by Robert Mugabe and Emmerson Mnangagwa. And there's on ZANUPF party, uh, against the people of, of Matabeleland. Um, this was a strategy to destroy in Como ZAPU party to create a de facto one party state. And it led at the time, as you've mentioned to thousands of supporters of ZAPU.

[00:10:41] Uh, being eliminated, killed in cold blood, uh, many disappeared and tortured, uh, detained for lengthy period periods of time. And that included the senior leadership of ZAPU. Um, but you've asked the question of, of what has happened to me. [00:11:00] So I have been detained, I've been charged with, uh, spirits, uh, spurious offense.

[00:11:08] I've survived four assassination attempts on my life in the last 20 years. Um, I've been subjected to all sorts of threats. Um, my family has had to on several occasions go into, into hiding. Uh, I've had very close, uh, close personal friends. Uh, Patrick Nabanyama , who was one of my, uh, Campaign workers.

[00:11:38] Uh, when I was first elected to parliament, I was inducted on the 19th of June, 2000 and he's never been seen again. He was disappeared permanently, uh, to this day. We did not know where he is. Another very close friend of mine, Paul Chezuse a, uh, a wonderful, uh, Catholic, [00:12:00] uh, human rights activist who helped me greatly in the 1990s in, uh, producing a human rights report, which exposed the Gukurahundi called breaking the silence. This was a report produced by the Catholic commission for justice and peace and the legal resources foundation and Paul Chezuse was a key investigator in the production of that report. In February, 2012, he was also disappeared and has never been seen again.

[00:12:32] And there are many others, uh, even this, uh, this past year, some 70, uh, activists, uh, have been, uh, detained, um, and brutally tortured, three of my colleagues and the MDC, uh, recently young women leaders were the time sexually assaulted, uh, disappeared for a period. Um, and subjected to all manner of [00:13:00] abuse. So there is a very brutal regime.

[00:13:04] And in fact, that brutality has increased since Emmerson Mnangagwa came to power in the back of the coup of November, 2017. Uh, we've seen a worst thing of the human rights situation.

[00:13:17] **Nangamso Kwinana**

: [00:13:17] Thank you. Senator Coltard, for giving us that reflection. Um, it is always an enlightening, um, to hear the accounts of Zimbabwe from someone of your stature who has experienced, uh, The the, the human rights violations in Zimbabwe.

[00:13:39] And also, I am aware that some of the, the, the, the names that you've mentioned you actually did assist those, um, uh, those, those persons with legal representation as between 1983 and 1987. I'm aware that you also [00:14:00] initiated the first legal aid project in Zimbabwe. So thank you very much for giving us those insights.

[00:14:06] And thank you very much for leading us into getting an understanding of. From your view after the fall of Mugabe mannerism, bub, wind hoped for reforms, the current president. Emerson Mnangagwa. We all are aware that he is a long time party friend of the former president. Where does Zimbabwe stand now, now that Mugabe has been deposed and now that Mugabe has passed on.

[00:14:36] **Senator David Coltart** : [00:14:36] When Managua came to power in late November, 2017, there were many people who. Uh, we're enthusiastic about this and, and felt that he would deliver a new era of peace and stability and respect for human rights and Zimbabwe I'm afraid I was one of those who was skeptical on the day [00:15:00] after the military.

[00:15:02] Um, helped citizens of right across the country, demonstrate against, uh, Mugabe. You may recall there were mass demonstrations in Harare and Bulawayo on the 18th of November, 2017. And the day after that I wrote a paper, um, which was posted on social media in which I said that optimism was misplaced. Uh, the reason I was skeptical was because, uh, I was in cabinet with Emmerson Mnangagwa. In the government of national unity between 2009 and 2013.

[00:15:40] And I got to see him up close. Of course, in my role as a lawyer, going way back to the 1980s, I understood the role that Emmerson Mnangagwa. Had played in the Gukurahundi that we've discussed. Um, much of the blame for that is laid [00:16:00] at Robert Mugabe's door. But the reality is that Emmerson Mnangagwa, uh, was one of his key leftenants responsible for actually executing, uh, those policies.

[00:16:10] In fact, there were three men, I think, who are primarily responsible for the crimes against humanity committed between 1983 and 1987. The first is Emmerson Mnangagwa who at that time was minister of state security responsible for our secret police who played a pivotal role in identifying, uh, political opponents of Mugabi at the time.

[00:16:34] And he worked very closely with the current vice president appointed by miss, uh, Mnangagwa quick Constantino Chiwenga, who at that time was the commander of one brigade and army brigade based in, in Matabeleland. And. Which provided all the logistical support, uh, to a third organization involved in the Gukurahundi and the North Korean trained [00:17:00] fifth brigade, uh, which was led by , who died recently of COVID, uh, and who was appointed by Mnangagwa's minister of agriculture in the current government since, uh, Mugabe's, um, Uh, removal.

[00:17:16] Uh, but the point I'm making is that these three men bear the primary responsibility for the crimes against humanity committed between 1983 and 1987. And for your listeners, you need to understand the gravity of what happened. Then the human rights abuses that we've seen in the last two years are minimal compared to what happened then.

[00:17:41] Uh, in, in those years, um, the, these three units, namely the CIO, the secret police, one brigade, soldiers, and fire brigade soldiers were deployed into the rural areas of Matabeleland. They were armed with lists [00:18:00] of ZAPU, uh, leaders from these villages. And they went through those villages systematically. So when we talk about 20,000 people killed, um, what we don't understand is how specific those killings were.

[00:18:15] And the second and third tier leadership of ZAPU at that time, uh, was decimated, uh, almost completely eliminated. Uh, and these three men have played a pivotal role in the governance of Zimbabwe since Robert Mugabe was, um, removed from power in November, 2017. And so they are responsible for the deployment of soldiers in the streets of Harare on the 1st of August, 2018.

[00:18:56] When civilians were shot down in cold [00:19:00] blood of the military, again in January, 2019, uh, where some 17, I think were 19 civilians were shot in cold blood. Uh, women were raped, uh, tens, if not, hundreds of people were detained and they are the same people responsible for the horrors that we've seen in the past year, where as I say, over 70 people have been abducted severely tortured. And by people, I mean, teachers, doctors, um, civic, activists, uh, church leaders. And these are the, the reasons why, for example, the Catholic church recently issued a pastoral

letter condemning what is going on. I hope like many people that he turned over a new leaf and that he would use the Goodwill.

[00:19:54] Uh, which was shown to him by many in the international community and by many [00:20:00] Zimbabweans for that matter, uh, we were many people were impressed by his statements that he was committed to constitutionalism, uh, to opening up the economy, to tackling corruption, uh, to ending the human rights abuses to respecting, as I say, the constitution, but the tragic reality of his rule.

[00:20:22] Uh, since November, 2017, is that arguably, uh, the human rights situation in this country is even worse than was in the darkest days of Robert Mugabi, his rule,

[00:20:35] **Nangamso Kwinana**

: [00:20:35] Senator Coltart, the devastating and horrific picture that you are painting for us today is that state institutions that are meant to protect society were basically used to harm the very same humans that they were meant to protect. You've shared with us about [00:21:00] the secret police. You've shared with us about the one brigade you've shared with us about the North Korean trained fifth brigade, which was a coalition of state institutions that would directly used to actually harm and murder the civilians of Zimbabwe. Looking at that situation, observing what has happened in the past and reflecting on present day. Corona has had an impact on the entire world. In many, especially the autocratic States, heads of state have abused Corona protection measures to silence their people and suppress unwelcome protests and demonstrations. Could you please relate to the situation to present days Zimbabwe,?

[00:21:54] **Senator David Coltart** : [00:21:54] Uh, Zimbabwe was, uh, first locked down by the government and they'd be [00:22:00] put this out so that you listeners are clear. I support the lockdown. I support the, the genuine measures which have been taken to combat. Uh, the COVID 19 pandemic, no one takes issue with that.

[00:22:15] The problem that we have is that since the lockdown, uh, measures were announced in March this year, they have been used as a cover by this regime, uh, to justify, uh, clamp down on the political opposition, the main political party, the MDC Alliance, and they'd been used to justify. Uh, the illegal detention of people, journalists, such as hopeful to know, um, and, and other, uh, civic leaders, uh, we've seen a dramatic, uh, deterioration in the human rights situation in this country.

[00:22:55] Uh, then we focused on Hopeful Chunono's case. Uh, Hopeful Chunono is [00:23:00] another, uh, award-winning journalists like, uh, my colleague Dumisani Muleya. Um, And he has been clearly fed, uh, interesting information in the course of this year. Uh, Hopeful Chunono to know having revealed this very sensitive information, exposing corruption, uh, was detained, uh, by this regime.

[00:23:24] And part of the justification for his detention was that he was alleged to be in breach of COVID regulations. That is one example, but they'd be using another example. Uh, as you know, I'm treasurer general of the MDC Alliance party. Uh, our presidential candidates narrowly lost to Emerson and a Gaga in the July, 2018, uh, elections.

[00:23:50] When I say narrowly lost, according to the government figures, we don't accept that he lost, but even if you take the government figures, uh, Nelson Chumisa, uh, [00:24:00] got 2.2 million votes. Um, and last to, uh, to Mnangagwa by some 28,000 votes in that election. The point I'm simply making is that the, the government figures themselves demonstrate that the MDC Alliance is the principle opposition party.

[00:24:19] Well, two days after the COVID, uh, locked, um, was announced in March, uh, the Supreme court issued a judgment. Um, against another political party in tally, the MDC tea party, it gets very confusing for your listeners, but they're two separate political parties, the MBCT and the MDC Alliance. And this judgment has been used by these surrogates, uh, of ZANU PF together with ZANU PF, uh, to remove MPS elected on an MDC Alliance.

[00:24:56] Tickets in the July, 2018, we've had some [00:25:00] 31 MP's removed from parliament illegally and replaced by ZANU PF surrogates. Uh, the same surrogate party. The NBCT has violently taken over our headquarter building with the support of the military and the police. And finally, uh, money's due to us in terms of the national budget.

[00:25:23] Because of the percentage of seats that we won in parliament has been illegally directed away from our party to pay for the ZANUPF of surrogate party. The MTCT, all of this has been done under the cover of COVID 19. Um, so the, the pandemic has been used very cynically and of course.

[00:25:45] Having removed our parliamentarians uh, from parliament, uh, by elections have been created they're they're vacant seats and by-election should be, should take place. Uh, surprisingly, well, [00:26:00] I suppose not surprisingly, uh, the ZANU PF government has announced that they will be no by elections because of COVID-19. So they've removed our MPS from parliament and they've now used COVID-19 as an excuse, not to hold by-elections.

[00:26:16] Uh, w when Zanopia to political party itself has been conducting primary elections and, uh, the surrogate party, the MDCT is about to have an entire extraordinary Congress. They allow those things to take place. Uh, and yet they do not, uh, uh, allow by elections.

[00:26:39] **Nangamso Kwinana**

: [00:26:39] I'm confident our listeners will appreciate the enlightenment that you've shared with us. And so far, what I'm hearing is a hostile government towards its citizens, a hostile government toward multi-party democracy, meaning that a contest of ideas. [00:27:00] Is not very much encouraged in the situation that you've just described to us. Recently, Zimbabwe made worldwide headlines again in July opposition members, cold for protests against the decline of the economy.

[00:27:18] And of course you, you related to us earlier, Senator Coltart of how the inflation rate is one of the highest in the world in Zimbabwe today. Before the protests had even begun, countless journalists and politicians were arrested similar to former president Mugabe, president Mnangagwa blames, the Western forces.

[00:27:44] For wanting to destabilize them bub way. And that's for all negative developments, mr. Muleya, I'd like to bring you in as a very experienced journalist Senator Colar has [00:28:00] shared with us of how international journalists have been blocked from entering Zimbabwe. Could you please describe the situation in your view as an experienced and seasoned journalist, what is happening on the ground?

[00:28:17] **Dumisani Muleya:** [00:28:17] Well, thanks so much for letting me in to contribute and Senator Coltart has done a great job in explaining the situation on the ground, especially the political situation. Uh, connected to what the Senator was saying, uh, is what you've just asked, eh, the environment in which journalists and the media operates right from day one.

[00:28:45] And by that, I mean from 1880, it has been an authoritarian, uh, environment in which the media operates right now. Is we here generalists? They are not free at all.

[00:29:04] [00:29:00] who recently spent 46 days, uh, in prison for merely having, eh, eh, eh, one of the journalist who had investigated and exposed corruption in relation to. And the looting and abuse of, uh, uh, COVID funds. Eh, one of the precedent cronies, if I can call it that you got a contract to supply some COVID material and that that contract was obtained corruptly.

[00:29:45] And when that was exposed, By journalists among them. And the another generalist called the regime, decided to do what it knows best, which is to crack down on them [00:30:00] if all up. Well, it just went for the jugular, just got him arrested, threw him into prison, and then they raided that was in Harrare.

[00:30:08] And then they went down to Bulewayo around the same time. They're rated mr. Matutu's and they do do the nephews sister, eh, they were grabbed by the police by the intelligence. It seems something called a ferrets. Is a team that combines security agencies, police, uh, the intelligence that is sent usually to ferrit out as the name itself suggests, eh, dissenters or critiques of the state.

[00:30:40] So they grabbed the, eh, the sista, the nephews, one of them, a quality to power them was, uh, taken away to some unknown destination where for three days he was tortured. He came back, eh, uh, [00:31:00] brutally battered, uh, disoriented. And up to now, he's still recovering has been doing quite a lot of interviews. Recently did one with the Sky News is still, you can still tell that he's disoriented.

[00:31:14] **Nangamso Kwinana**
: [00:31:14] Dumisani Muleya Uh, I've heard both you and Senator Coltart giving us a reflection of what has been experienced both by journalists on the ground in Zimbabwe. And by journalist from the international community who are attempting to visit Zimbabwe. In your experience, are there any personal protection measures that journalists and other government critics can take in order to protect themselves?

[00:31:45] **Dumisani Muleya:** [00:31:45] Yes. Starting with the last part of it? Yeah. There isn't a lot protection measures that people can take just to make sure that you

have cyber security. Just protecting your data, your, uh, your phone [00:32:00] and making sure that sometimes you don't expose yourself. I do a lot. A lot of people would be against that.

[00:32:07] That's like remaining in the office late night alone. I always do, because I'll be doing some stuff, but most people always say, no, don't do that. So there are quite a lot of things that people can do, a measures that people can take to protect themselves.

[00:32:25] **Nangamso Kwinana**

: [00:32:25] And earlier you shared with us the kind of environment that the media operates in, in Zimbabwe from 1980 to present day, you've shared with us of how the authoritarian regime in Zimbabwe suffocates the media and also suffocates the journalists that are operating in Zimbabwe and from abroad.

[00:32:52] Would you please recount for us during the lockdown in particular, during the outbreak of [00:33:00] COVID 19 regarding the looting of funds that were meant to offer relief to citizens in particular to the most vulnerable, would you say that the government has honored what it was meant to do with those relief funds?

[00:33:14] **Dumisani Muleya:** [00:33:14] Um, eh, partly government, is it too? Tacitly acknowledge, uh, the misappropriation of funds, for instance, in this case, in which one of the president is the associates or the family of the president's associates, a got a contract for \$60 million, eh, because of what generalist expose the president was forced to fire is a minister of health.

[00:33:41] He was forced to arrest one of his cronies, but some people say, well, it was just the reaction to the repose. Nothing much will happen, but all the same, he was arrested is out on remand. Um, there were a number of senior health officials that were fired directors. [00:34:00] So the media is caused actually the government is actually knowledge.

[00:34:04] They're all doing by doing some of those things, but he is the problem. As we see to you while they've done all these things we actually understand right now, the guy that has been arrested over this contract is actually demanding the money. And we're just trying to assist them to get paid because. During the course of the implementation of us paid \$2 million, the United States dollars, eh, the matter was paid outside in Hungary.

[00:34:36] Then Interpol got involved. They froze those funds and eventually he didn't actually receive the money. So now he's come back to government to demand the money today, as we sit here just an hour or two ago, one of the independent MP's here actually the only independent MP who is close to the [00:35:00] president. He called a press conference today.

[00:35:03] To denounce people around the president who are corrupt a, eh, this gentleman called is one of the corrupted people. And then he named one of the

ministers of local government. Some gentleman called...hing is corrupt. So basically say the president is surrounded by a corrupted people, but. Uh, the court has built that this MP, the independent MP is close to the president.

[00:35:28] So he will accuse all these people are out of the prison, but you will not be president directly, but all the same, it sheds light on what is happening there. And this is in relation to COVID.

[00:35:41] Another example, just last week at deputy to minister of health, eh, was accused of fraudulently corruptly. In fact, eh, getting a quote for \$5.6 [00:36:00] billion and nothing has happened.

[00:36:01] The anti-corruption commission they've investigated. They've established the fact that this deputy minister, eh, was doing a bidding for a particular company in which he had a vested interest. He would call meetings during the night in order to prevail upon the adjudication process and the officials involved to give a tender to a company and initiate the personal vested interest, but it's still going to office.

[00:36:29] Nothing has been done. So there are all these things generally say exposing them, but what do you see? You see hostility. Eh, more anger and aggression directed at the people exposing corruption, none of that, the corrupt ones.

[00:36:45] **Nangamso Kwinana**

: [00:36:45] It is indeed sad and quite devastating to hear that the aggression, the hostility, the oppression of Zimbabwe, when people dates back to [00:37:00] the colonial rulers, right up to present date, certainly devastating to him. And in wrapping up that session, uh, Senator Coltart, may I please find out from you in your view as a legal expert, what could possibly be the way forward that legal experts together with advocates of the rule of law together with the respecters of democracy? How may they all correlate to try and advise Zimbabwe moving forward in a manner that is respectful towards its citizens, respectful towards the law and in particular, respectful towards all the legal, the human rights, the bill of rights and the constitutional guidelines of [00:38:00] Zimbabwe.

[00:38:01] **Senator David Coltart** : [00:38:01] Nangamso Um, so to answer your question, not going to take people back to the dark days of the end of apartheid in South Africa, I can remember, you know, 1989, thinking about, uh, feeling very depressed about the future of South Africa.

[00:38:21] Um, it appear to be heading towards a complete bloodbath. There seemed to be no solution. Nelson Mandela was still in detention. Uh, and, and what, uh, occurred in the five years that followed that was of course the release of Nelson Mandela and the agreement on a new constitution for South Africa and that stabilize South Africa ushered in democracy and a new era for South African, of course, South Africa has had its own problems, but it was, uh, a major turning point in South Africa's history.

[00:38:58] Now Zimbabwe [00:39:00] is at a similar, um, dark chapter of its history, but in many respects, it's not as bad as that, that time for, for one simple reason. And,

and it's this that we have a democratic constitution. There is a national consensus in our country about how this country should be governed. We went through an elaborate process between 2009 and 2013, uh, where we reached out to all the citizens of Zimbabwe.

[00:39:33] And we agreed on a new constitution for Zimbabwe, we had went to a referendum. There was a massive turnout of some baboons and by a landslide, majority, something like 95% of those who voted, voted in favor of this new democratic constitution. And whilst it's not a perfect document. It is a very good constitution.

[00:39:55] It's got its flaws, but, uh, overwhelmingly it is a good [00:40:00] constitution and it lays out a very solid foundation for how Zimbabwe should be governed in future. The problem is that since that was agreed to in the referendum of March, 2013, it has never been. Implemented by ZANU PF. The solution to the crisis that in is facing now is found in that constitution.

[00:40:24] We have to return to it. We have to respect it, uh, and we have to respect it in its fullness. So for example, in the run-up to the next election, uh, we need to ensure that we have a genuinely independent electoral commission as is mandated by the constitution. Uh, to touch on Dumisani's turf again, uh, all States allow a diversity of views to be experienced.

[00:40:51] That is set out very clearly in the constitution. The office of the prosecutor general should be independent. The [00:41:00] judiciary should be independent. We should not have so-called law fair here where laws are used. Uh, selectively against opponents and not use the tool against the supporters of the government.

[00:41:15] If we do that, if we return Zimbabwe to constitutionalism, we can then get to a general election, which results in the genuine will of the people being respected, but of course there's some Zimbabweans we can't do that on our own. And this is where the international community, particularly South Africa.

[00:41:38] Uh, and our neighbors is so important. They need to insist that that constitution is respected by Emmerson Mnangagwa, by ZANU PF. They must synth allow these sham elections to take place. They should not be, uh, uh, staying quiet about the, uh, wholesale detention and torture of journalists and other [00:42:00] activists. They must be speaking out and hold ZANU PF toes to this fire.

[00:42:06] Uh, and then collectively, if they do that, we can resolve the crisis in this, in this country and return it to a democratic state. And that in turn will stabilize the economy. We'll get those in the diaspora. Uh, to return to the country and the great potential of this country can be realized.

[00:42:28] **Nangamso Kwinana**

: [00:42:28] The task is up to Africa as a whole continent to unite and support to Zimbabwe towards democracy. Thank you very much. Senator David Coltart. Thank you very much, mr. Dumisani Muleya, it has been insightful engaging you today. Today's conversation with Senator David Coltart and Dumisani Muleyanavigated

peace and stability. In Zimbabwe, we explored their reflections about the protection of human rights.

[00:42:59] And we [00:43:00] also heard about some misplaced optimism in Zimbabwe. My reflection is that from the colonial oppression to present day independence, bubbly, we seem to be hearing of hostile and aggressive government force toward the Zimbabwean citizens, towards a multi-party democracy and definitely towards the independent media, all of this taking place in what was fondly referred to as the Jewel of Africa.

[00:43:32] This was the second episode of let's talk, human rights. The FNF Africa podcast, exploring human rights issues. If you enjoyed the podcast, join us for our next episode. The Friedrich Naumann foundation, Subsaharan Africa is an independent German organization that is committed to promote liberal ideals and politics in Africa, such as human rights, the rule of law.

[00:44:00] [00:43:59] Democracy innovation, digitalization and free trade. I conducting campaigns, media events, seminars, workshops, study tours, cultural happenings, and training courses. The foundation promotes human rights, including freedom of expression, freedom of the press. Children's rights as well as LGBTQ plus rights and engages against violence.

[00:44:26] Against women and capital punishment. If you are interested in I activities, follow us on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Simply search freedom foundation Africa. .