

Lift the sanctions on Zimbabwe!

written by Stephen Millies
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Photo: December 12th Movement

More than a hundred people demonstrated in Washington, D.C., on May 25 — African Liberation Day — to demand justice for Zimbabwe. They marched from the African American Civil War Memorial to the White House, which was built by enslaved Africans.

Their message to Donald Trump was “Lift the sanctions on Zimbabwe!”

As Omowale Clay, a member of the International Secretariat of the December 12th Movement, noted at an earlier news conference: “Nearly two decades ago, the U.S. passed the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 [ZIDERA] to punish Zimbabwe for having had the audacity to return to the people the land stolen by white colonial settlers.

“The goals of the sanctions imposed by ZIDERA were to make the Zimbabwean economy ‘scream’ — to make conditions so bad for the masses of the people that they would overthrow the ZANU-PF-led government and stop the confiscation of land from white settlers. President Trump has just renewed the sanctions for another year.”



SLL photo: Sharon Black

‘Sanctions are an act of war’

The December 12th Movement and the Friends of Zimbabwe initiated this action. As people marched down 14th Street in military order, drivers honked their horns in support.

Viola Plummer, chairperson of the December 12th Movement, chaired the rally in front of Trump’s White House. Dr. James McIntosh from the Committee to Eliminate Media Offensive to African People (CEMOTAP) opened the speakout.

Dr. Frenk Guni, chairperson of ZANU-PF (Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front) USA, described how neighboring African countries also suffer from the sanctions on Zimbabwe.

Dr. Guni also paid tribute to Coltrane Chimurenga, field marshal of the December 12th Movement, who passed away on May 13. Field Marshall Chimurenga was considered a national hero in Zimbabwe because of his support of the liberation struggle there.

Tohouri Toutoukpeu, from African Diaspora for Democracy and Development, voiced support for Zimbabwe and described how his country — Côte d'Ivoire — was still a French colony despite formal independence.

Pam Africa and Razakhan Shaheed from the MOVE organization and the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal came to support Zimbabwe.

Spokespeople from the National Black United Front and the United Negro Improvement Association, which was founded by the Honorable Marcus Garvey, denounced the sanctions on Zimbabwe. So did Monica Moorehead from Workers World Party.

Andre Powell, from Struggle-La Lucha and the Socialist Unity Party, declared that "Sanctions are an act of war. ... The United States and European imperialists have committed acts of war against so many governments in the continent of Africa. ...

"When you sanction a country, you interfere with that country's ability to give food and medicine to its people so that they die," continued Powell.

In just the last 13 years, sanctions have cost Zimbabwe \$42 billion. The struggle against the HIV-AIDS pandemic has been harmed.

Powell pointed out that Venezuela, Iran and Cuba were also victimized by U.S. sanctions but refuse to surrender their sovereignty. He declared, “We stand with Zimbabwe! To hell with Trump!”

