

Zimbabwe: What Must be Done? Who Must Act? (Meeting Summary) Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

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Participants in the January 30 GCR2P panel discussion, Zimbabwe: What Must Be Done? Who Must Act? were unanimous in condemning the appalling abuses committed by the regime of President Robert Mugabe against civilians. Members of the opposition MDC party, their supporters, and human rights activists have been systematically arrested, beaten, tortured, and raped. In an attempt to crush the opposition, the regime has eliminated much of the state apparatus in opposition-controlled regions of the country, including the public health system and the schools. Zimbabwe is now enduring a cholera crisis with escalating mortality rates; starvation is rampant; child and maternal mortality rates have soared as obstetric care has disappeared; agriculture and the economy have been decimated to the point where only 6 percent of the population has jobs; life expectancy has been cut almost in half as a result of HIV/AIDS, the total breakdown of the health care system and the collapse of the economy. And whatever role may have been played by such outside factors as climate or the demands of international economic institutions, there was broad agreement that Zimbabwe catastrophe was directly traceable to reckless state policies and corruption. Zimbabwe is not anarchy, said one participant. It is a highly organized, hierarchical country run by a dictator whose control penetrates throughout the society. ( )

**Full Summary:**

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