



Non-Citizens in a Democratic Space: Perspectives on Human Security in Zimbabwe's Large-Scale Commercial Agriculture under the Land Reform Programme: 1980-2002

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Abstract

This article is conceived in the context of the controversial and ambiguous 'fast-track' land reform programme orchestrated by the ZANU (PF) government

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since 2000. It discusses human security as a way of redressing an imbalance in mainstream security discourse that has put disproportionate emphasis on the security of the state, with little regard for the safety of persons within the borders of that state. Far from emphasising personal security over state security, the article makes human safety the measure of state security. Thus, the extent to which the people of a particular state live in freedom and safety, under just laws, and with their essential needs met, is the extent to which that state is secure. The article argues that the land reform programme was contradictory in that it aggravated the socio-economic status of farm workers, thereby making them even more vulnerable to security threats. For many 'foreign' farm workers, who lack ethnic and nationality rights to own land, prospects of ever returning to countries of origin have waned over the years, and yet the elderly workers were probably the most affected by the government's land reform programme. Human security values identify the safety and welfare of people as the central objectives of state security.

1. Preamble

In his opening devotion to the Land Conference held on 19-22 November 2001, at the Great Zimbabwe Hotel, Masvingo, Reverend Murombedzi Kuchera of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches called for justice and fair play in the land reform programme in Zimbabwe. Quoting from the Bible, he chanted thus, 'Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream' (Magaramombe 2001). This appeal is quite in tandem with the notion of democracy, respect for human rights, and the quest for peace and security. It should be emphasised from the outset that human rights are an essential element in peace-making and peace-building, and that the deprivation of human security within states definitely endangers regional and inevitably international peace and security. This, therefore, calls for a paradigm shift from a tradition that has tended to subordinate human security to national security. While national security emphasises military protection of the state's territorial integrity and of governmental structures and functions, human security has as its hallmark the protection of the worth, dignity and safety of the individual as integral parts of humanity. According to Davies Hubert (1999:3):

Human security means safety for people from both violent and non-violent threats. It is a condition or state of being characterized by freedom from

pervasive threats to people's rights, their safety or even their lives ... It is an alternative way of seeing the world, taking people as its point of reference, rather than focusing exclusively on security of territory or government. Like other security concepts ... it is about protection. Human security entails preventive measures to reduce vulnerability and minimize risk, and taking remedial action where prevention fails.

Thus, real national security does not entail a formidable military equipped to keep foreign powers at bay. Instead, it is defined by favourable social, political, and economic conditions for the promotion of human development, human rights, and democracy. Therefore, the primary threats to the safety and welfare of individuals are not external military forces bent on imposing their will on an otherwise safe and stable national order. Rather, the primary threats to people are internal and manifest in conditions of economic failure, violation of basic rights, and political marginalisation.

The implementation of the concept of human security has, however, remained controversial and slow. While human security has internationally been recognized as the true measure of state security, hundreds of millions of people still had no experience of safety by the turn of the century. This is in spite of the reality that entrenched economic, social, and political marginalisation can perpetrate a structural violence that threatens personal safety, well-being, and security, and lead to widespread overt violence. Naidu (2001:9) insists that:

While the security and behaviour of states are obviously central to the security of persons, the inordinate focus on sovereignty, state structures, the military defence of territory, and, in too many cases, straightforward regime survival, frequently comes at the expense of, and with little regard for, the security welfare, or safety of persons.

Thus, deprivation of human security within states endangers people's fundamental human rights – and international peace and security in general. True security arises from 'alleviation of stress-related conditions in the individual and society, breaking a vicious cycle of poverty and desperation, maladaptive behaviour, and resultant entrenched societal problems' (Naidu 2001:9).

It is in this context that this article seeks to expose threats to the security of farm workers in Zimbabwe as a result of the ambiguous and

which they saw as a monument of colonial oppression and exploitation. Furthermore, due to a lot of red tape involved in the issuing of these documents upon migrating, many prospective workers were often delayed or even denied entry into Southern Rhodesia. They often protested by faking loss of such particulars; or they destroyed them and migrated clandestinely. Most of the farm workers in the colonial period did not, therefore, place much value on identity particulars. In any case, the particulars hardly played any role in getting and keeping a job on a farm. Southern Rhodesian employers were generally not strict with identity requirements of the law because of their dire need for a steady supply of ultra-cheap labour. Furthermore, current national boundaries were an artificial colonial creation and a majority of people living along these boundaries placed little or no relevance to their existence. Boundaries often cut across families, and movement across them remained common with or without identity particulars.

At independence, the Zimbabwean citizenship became important to farm workers who could no longer afford to lead the isolated life of the colonial period. Promises made by the new majority government for improvement of the socio-economic welfare of farm workers, among other sections of the new Zimbabwean society, dictated possession of Zimbabwean citizenship. Zimbabwean identity particulars, as proof of citizenship, became critical to many aspects of life. However, while the new independent government extended civil rights to all non-Zimbabwean residents who had been living in the country 'for a number of years', it became difficult in practice to obtain identity particulars. For a number of reasons, including the seasonality and mobility of farm labour it was difficult to prove to registry officials that one qualified for citizenship. To get Zimbabwean citizenship, 'foreign' workers should meet the qualifications.

Those who have a long history of employment in this country must have had work permits when they first arrived in the country. They should also have been registered somewhere, for instance, with the African Workers' Bureau. When they apply for citizenship now, their fingerprints are first vetted and then the state will consider whether to grant citizenship or not (Muchenenyi, Interview).

The above criteria unfortunately disregarded a large number of those with a long history of employment and stay in Zimbabwe, who for many reasons did not have the documents. Illiteracy and ignorance over issues involved in

acquiring citizenship or civil documents (birth certificates, national identity cards and passports), as well as the prohibitive labour regime and lack of co-operation from farmers, saw a majority losing out. A study in the Makoni district of Manicaland in 1999, carried out by SNV Netherlands Development Organisation¹, revealed that 75 per cent of the children of school going age did not have birth certificates (SNV 1999).

It should further be stressed that the citizenship which government promised 'foreigners' was civic only, but it was only through ethnic citizenship that one could inherit one's father's identity. Only when the line of the father was highlighted and that of the mother obscured could children be born as Zimbabwean or aliens, as their fathers were. Individuals would be issued with identity particulars classifying them as Zimbabwean or alien. However, 'alien' has not been an identity that signifies access and proximity to economic and social rights. While all blacks in Zimbabwe, including farm workers, were once colonised subjects without civic rights, at independence farm workers in general, and those of foreign descent in particular, continued to be subjects in a political space that had witnessed 'democratic' forces of liberation struggle remove the unjust and exploitative colonial regime.

Thus, reminiscent of the western liberal citizenship, the type of citizenship promised to farm workers in Zimbabwe was flawed. The exclusionary practices of liberal citizenship saw class, cultural or ethnic 'foreigners', especially immigrants, being condemned and often criminalised and denied the rights and services of incorporation. Millions of the legal immigrants and criminalised illegal immigrants continued to face exclusions from the rights and services that their labour and humanity should have entitled them to. More often than not, 'foreign' farm workers have been treated as refugees, largely considered a liability and not an asset, or as miserable destitutes who should be grateful just for being let in. Ironically, while 'foreign' migrant labour has largely remained trapped in what Zeleza (1997:375) calls 'the exclusionary fictions of nationalism', with their rights to the possibilities of citizenship being 'spurned by the stubborn narratives of immigration and otherness', the movement of capital across national boundaries has often been followed by the formation of transnational legal regimes that accord corporate citizenship rights. Thus, a growing xenophobia towards 'foreigners' has witnessed the suppression of the civil rights as well as economic and social

1 Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (Foundation of Netherlands Volunteers).

rights of migrant farm workers, at a time when the concept of human rights has evolved to emphasise the extension of these rights to all persons *simply for being human* (my emphasis), regardless of country and citizenship. In fact, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights categorically states in its preamble that 'recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world'. Article 1 of the Declaration proceeds to say that 'all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights', while Article 3 emphasises that 'everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of the person' (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948). In Zimbabwe, the xenophobia against 'foreigners' has continued to direct policy and attitude towards farm workers. As a result, these workers have been exposed, with shocking consistency, to widespread human rights abuse that has threatened their very humanity.

Under the Citizenship Act, one can be a citizen of Zimbabwe by birth, origin, or marriage. However, the bulk of children, born of 'alien' parents on Zimbabwe's commercial farms, have also been considered aliens even under the Constitutional Amendment (No. 14) Act of 1996, which was an attempt towards a remedy of this situation. Section 5 (3) of this Act states that:

A person born in Zimbabwe on or after the date of commencement of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 14) Act, 1996, shall be a citizen by birth if at the time of this birth his father or mother is a citizen of Zimbabwe (Government of Zimbabwe 1996).

Although this Amendment helped those children with at least one parent as Zimbabwean citizen, it only catered for children born on or after the date of this particular Amendment. This dispensation could have been widened in scope to include any person that could prove that at least one parent was Zimbabwean. In 1999, the government recognised that those who entered the country as indentured labour during the Federal period from 1953 to 1963, and their children, were entitled to Zimbabwean citizenship. However, while this was a positive move on the part of government, farm workers who fit this category found it difficult to prove that they in fact met the criteria. Those who could prove that they entered the country during the period of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland joined the band wagon of all those that had since qualified for citizenship, but found it difficult to acquire Zimbabwean civil documents. The Citizenship Amendment Act (2001) worsened the fate of farm

workers, for people born of a foreign parentage were required to renounce their right to their parents' nationality and failure to do so resulted in their losing Zimbabwean citizenship. Interviews established that many farm workers, especially women and children, did not have documents establishing Zimbabwean citizenship, either lacking papers altogether or carrying national identification cards bearing the designation 'alien', which have brought little benefit to these workers. Farmers have also been unwilling to assist their workers in obtaining identity particulars because, among other reasons,

an unregistered worker is easier to exploit. Without any form of identification, the worker can easily succumb to the fear that the farmer instils in him, and ... fear is the basic tool of management on commercial farms (Mupinda, Interview).

3. Land Reform and Farm Workers' Security

The disadvantages faced by farm workers in their living and working conditions, and with respect to their political and social rights, largely derive from their lack of land rights in Zimbabwe (Loewenson 1992, Amanor-Wilks 1995, Moyo et al 2000). At independence, the government declared itself to be socialist in ideological orientation, implying that it was committed to principles of equitable distribution of resources for the benefit of the disadvantaged social groups such as women, children, peasants, and workers. Steps were accordingly taken towards addressing the severely unequal and intolerable differences between the economically privileged minority and the impoverished black majority. Thus, the coming of independence heralded optimum opportunity to build democratic institutions intended to promote the much-awaited human security. The ordinary majority looked forward to the emergence of expanded democratic spaces, as well as commitment to protection of human rights and basic tangible material benefits, once majority rule had been achieved.

In the early 1980s, the post-colonial state adopted land reform policy criteria driven by the imperative of resettling the landless that had been dispossessed of land by discriminatory laws of the racist colonial government. The war of liberation had largely been fought over land. In fact, supporters of the liberation struggle had been christened *vana vevhu* in Shona, or *abantwana benhlabathi* in Ndebele, or 'children of the soil' in English. (Tshuma 1997, Martin & Johnson 1981).

Literature on land alienation in colonial Zimbabwe abounds. Africans were dispossessed of their fertile land and driven into remote, dry areas known as reserves, where they lived in crowded conditions. Before 1980, it was illegal for 'alien' Africans, male or female, to own land in rural areas. This resulted from the colonial conception of citizenship. If men were born or patrilineally descended from outside the country they could not own land even if they married local women. African women, local or not, could only get land through their spouses (if the latter were indigenous) or as widows with dependent children who would have been living on the land. A significant proportion of farm workers fits this category and hardly had a local rural home in the colonial period. Their ethnic identity failed to qualify them for land ownership since their ancestors and customary rights were located outside the country. Thus, independence brought high hopes for a better future for the marginalised farm workers.

When the post-colonial government gave citizenship to non-Zimbabwean residents in the early 1980s, it promised that this would enable them to get land rights on farms acquired for resettlement. In practice, however, this remained a dream to the intended beneficiaries due to the inadequacies of the universal citizenship, which denied them economic rights in rural areas. Most farm workers failed to acquire Zimbabwean identity particulars, thereby making it extremely difficult for them to be considered for resettlement. The inscription 'alien' on national identity documents of the few who could show proof of 'Zimbabwean citizenship' also disqualified them from land ownership. It should further be noted that the land resettlement policy criteria adopted by the Mugabe government at independence gave priority to the landless people who were married with dependants, or divorced or widowed, again with dependants. Refugees, with dependants, returning from the war of liberation, were also considered for resettlement. All groups of people had to show proof of Zimbabwean citizenship, which the bulk of farm workers could not provide, even if they qualified by virtue of landlessness. Some farm workers, however, managed to resettle themselves on abandoned farms and state land in different parts of the country, and were officially recognised as resettlement farmers ex post independence (Herbst 1990, Alexander 1994). A shift in land policy in the mid-1980s into the 1990s, towards more 'efficient' and 'productive' farmers resulted in a negative official policy towards farm workers, who were now characterised as foreigners, unproductive and *persona non grata* on resettlement farms.

In fact, in 1982, the then Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Kumbirai Kangai, had revealed the official attitude of government when he said:

Nobody can expect government ... to say that these people, who are of Malawi, Zambian and Mozambican extraction, should be accommodated elsewhere. You know as much as I do that they cannot even be accommodated in the TTLs² (Commercial Farmers' Union 1982).

Under the 1992 Land Acquisition Act, government combined the need to solve the problems of landlessness with the necessity of having an economically viable farming sector. Thus, to qualify for resettlement the state considered physical fitness to make productive use of the land allocated to them, plus economic competency to ensure effective use of land. Thus, a system of awarding points based on factors measuring farming competence and need was introduced. Under this system, the maximum number of points an applicant could score was 100. In order to qualify, they should score at least 50 per cent of the maximum possible score. 80 per cent of the total marks were attached to 'competence' factors while 20 per cent were attached to 'need' factors. Landlessness, being unemployed, and having dependants were some of the 'need' factors that constituted 20 per cent of the total. 'Competence' factors included level of education (with full marks being awarded for secondary education), farming skills (with full marks being awarded for possession of a Master Farmer Certificate), and age and health condition (with persons of the age-group 36-48 being considered of prime age (Ncube 1997:23, Kinsey 1999).

It is clear that the new regulations were meant to enrich the already rich, particularly male adults. Furthermore, no specific recognition was given to farm workers as the policy was lopsided in favour of 'competence' factors, opposed to 'need' factors on which farm workers could be assumed to be able to score more marks. For farm workers, qualification for competence factors entailed citizenship status. While the Land Acquisition Act empowered the state to acquire farms for purposes of resettlement, it was silent on the fate of farm workers on the farms to be so acquired, in clear contradiction with the Labour Relations Act (1985, 1996) which obliged the new owner of any

2 Tribal Trust Lands.

acquired/purchased enterprise, including a farm, to be responsible for their workers (Government of Zimbabwe 1985, 1996).

It was only in the late 1990s, due to advocacy efforts by the General Agriculture and Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ), non-governmental organisations, and academics, that farm workers were accepted as a category to be resettled. Thus, great strides were made within the policy framework for the provision of farm workers in the land reform and resettlement programme. Thus, the 1998 Land Reform and Resettlement Phase II framework plan acknowledged the need to provide for farm workers. This resulted in the incorporation of issues of land rights by farm workers under the draft 1999 Land Policy Document (Government of Zimbabwe 1999). All these efforts were, however, rendered irrelevant by events under the government-sponsored 'fast-track' land reform model since 2000. After the results of the February 2000 Constitutional Referendum, a wave of farm 'invasions' by 'war veterans' gripped the country into the June 2000 parliamentary elections and the March 2002 presidential poll. The 'invasions', no doubt a response to the unfolding political developments, were subsequently followed by the introduction of the 'fast-track' land resettlement programme, which unfortunately negated all the gains achieved by farm worker advocacy in terms of farm workers' rights to land. In fact, the revised Land Reform and Resettlement Programme Phase II document of April 2001 shows that government had reneged on its earlier commitment to the issue of land rights for farm workers. Even though these workers were not precluded from applying for land under the 'fast-track' land reform programme, they were automatically disqualified by their ethnic identity. The process of registering for land formally involved registration with rural authorities, including the Rural District Council of the communal area from which they came. No mechanisms were in place to enable the workers to access the new allocations easily. Moreover, farm workers of foreign descent were more vulnerable than their 'local' counterparts in having no other place to go to. Stix Machacha of Tanagula Farm in Norton commented, 'I am an alien. My roots are in Zambia. I have nowhere to go. My whole family is here. My father is a pensioner'. (Interview).

In fact, as early as June 2000, the National Employment Council (NEC) for the agricultural industry (a tripartite body of government, employers and the labour union), published a report noting that, as a result of farm occupations, at least 3 000 farm workers had been displaced from their homes, 26 killed, 16 000 assaulted, and eleven raped (National Employment Council 2000).

In the hey-day of the polarised political environment during the period between the 2000 Constitutional Referendum and the presidential poll in March 2002, violence against farm workers was linked to the support given to the labour-driven opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) by white commercial farmers and, by perceived implication, their workers too. In particular, during the Referendum, GAPWUZ had participated in voter education among farm workers and were believed to be campaigning against the government-sponsored proposed constitution. Government, thus, associated GAPWUZ and its labour constituency with the opposition MDC. Consequently, 'war veterans' sealed off the farming community against GAPWUZ and non-governmental organisations that had been working with farm workers. GAPWUZ alleges that the newly formed government-backed union, the Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions (ZFTU) deliberately undermined its efforts to organise in large-scale farming areas. Meanwhile, terror and mayhem ruled the day in the large-scale commercial farm sector.

There was a welter of recriminations against the farm community. There were vitriolic attacks on white farmers and their workers. One 21 year old male farm security worker described how he was threatened and assaulted:

They came to my house on 27 February this year (2001). The first thing they wanted was for me to get out of my house. They came at twelve at night. They were six, one war veteran who was acting as the leader, the others were even younger than me. They told me to move out. They told me to shift everything by the morning so that they could come. During the night when they came they said, 'We know that all of you people who belong to that farm are MDC'. I came here for work (the next morning). They followed me here. I was standing outside here close to the window. They grabbed me by the hand and then they hit my hand off the window bar. Whoever felt like they wanted to hit me was hitting. They forced me to go to the house ... Whoever felt like it was clapping (hitting) me. I was clapped at least seven or eight times (Human Rights Watch 2002).

There were also cases in which farm workers attacked and beat those occupying a farm. Such incidents often resulted in reprisals in which the worst victims became women, children and the elderly, and yet these cases received the least media coverage.

As politicians stormed workers' farm compounds and ejected families from their homes, women, particularly those with siblings, and the elderly

became easy targets. They could hardly escape the beatings and tear gas, while huts were set ablaze and women were allegedly raped (*Daily News* 2000). Even more, a person could be so physically disabled that the very meaning of being human is lost. Amputation and torture in pursuit of punishment or revenge are obvious deprivations of the human right to physical well-being. When women are raped and children beaten up and abused, human security is violated, and there can be no human rights without human security. Major publicity was given to farmers who fell victim to political violence, while workers generally remained 'invisible'. Many workers were forcibly removed from the acquired farms since they would not have been on the list of those earmarked for resettlement.

Alleging government involvement in the whole scheme of violence on large-scale farms, Jerry Grant, then vice-president of the Commercial Farmers' Union, which represents the largely white commercial farmers, expressed shock at what he called deliberate action by government to cause chaos on farms. He insisted that the 'invasions' were orchestrated by the government, which blamed whites for its referendum defeat, and yet government claimed that the 'invasions' were a spontaneous manifestation by the people of desperate land hunger and a peaceful protest against the rejection of a constitution that contained a provision allowing government to acquire white farms without compensation. Meanwhile, despite court orders issued to evict farm occupiers, President Mugabe declared on several occasions that government would not drive the farm 'invaders' off the farms until the land issue was resolved. He perceived the 'invasions' as the vanguard of a land revolution, necessary for the completion of the goals of the liberation war (*The Herald* 2000a).

By October 2001, 2 041 farms had been acquired under the 'Fast-Track' Land Resettlement Programme since 2000, and a total of 123 979 households were resettled. In the northern parts of the country, for instance, the three provinces of Mashonaland West, Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland East had a total of 46 868 households resettled of which only 793 were farm worker households. Given an average figure of 40 households per farm in the three provinces, this translates to 38 360 farm worker households, meaning that 37 567 households were not catered for. Considering that each farm worker household had an average of five members, it means that a total of 187 835 people were not catered for (Government of Zimbabwe 2001).

Two key problems emerged from the manner in which the whole land redistribution exercise was handled under the 'fast-track' land reform programme. The first relates to party-political channels used to access forms

for applying for land, and the discrimination in the allocation of plots. The second relates to the key role of the 'war veterans' in distributing and allocating land, the same people that farm workers claimed were responsible for violence and intimidation. Thus, the official structure for allocating land through civil servants and elected rural district council officials was often superseded by informal processes governed by war veterans and their associated ruling party functionaries. Since these processes were effectively unregulated, beneficiary selection could be highly politicised. Thus, the overlap between the ruling party and government in the structures responsible for allocating land under the 'fast-track' land reform programme posed problems. One senior government official, in fact, expressed the observation that there was a thin line between government and ZANU (PF). He emphasised, 'I don't separate the government from ZANU (PF). ZANU (PF) is the ruling party. It is the party that is in power. ZANU (PF) is the one that is driving the manifesto and championing the resettlement programme' (Human Rights Watch 2002:8). From the above, it is clear that land allocation was tied to support for the ruling party.

At any rate, high-ranking government officials, including a minister and a governor, publicly stated that only ZANU (PF) supporters would be settled on the land that had been acquired (*The Herald* 2000b). The absence of a holistic approach to land reform, however, brought serious repercussions on marginalised groups such as farm workers who were the most vulnerable, experiencing displacement, destitution and loss of employment. For those white farmers who remained on the land, uncertainty affected their workers in that farmers had difficulties in accessing credit from financial institutions since they could not guarantee harvest of their crops. Others, however, chose to vent their anger on their workers by retrenchment, purportedly because their farms were earmarked for acquisition. Thus, some workers were laid off or had their working time reduced severely, which meant a reduction in monthly wages, that stood in 2001 at Z\$4 181 for the lowest paid full-time worker (Statutory Instrument 335 2001). The Land Acquisition Amendment Act (2001) witnessed retrenchments of workers when farmers were served with notices of acquisition and immediately ceased operations. In many cases lack of compensation led to loss of income meaning serious impacts on food security and livelihood, inability to plan ahead, and homelessness.

Low levels of education made it difficult for farm workers to secure any other form of employment outside the farms. Some, therefore, settled illegally on private property or in prohibited areas, while others joined their

counterparts in established informal settlements scattered around farming and peri-urban areas. This happened because a large number had cut ties with relations in communal areas (where such ties had existed) and, therefore, have had nowhere else to go. At Chihwiti and Gambuli informal settlements in Makonde district of Mashonaland West, over 60 per cent of the residents were found to be former farm workers (Magaramombe 2001:21).

The aged farm workers have had probably the worst experience. Elderly workers in the agricultural sector include those workers who, despite having reached retirement age, have continued to provide services to the employers, usually under 'special' conditions. These workers constitute a special group of workers who also include those with physical or mental disabilities, employed to do some of the work normally done by able-bodied employees (Chadya & Mayavo 2002). Under the Labour Relations Act (1985), retirement age in the agricultural sector has been sixty years. Some farmers allowed their elderly workers to stay on farms doing 'lighter' chores or engaging in their own self-sustaining activities as a form of 'pension'. However, the 'fast-track' land reform programme made many of them destitute and extremely impoverished as they were stripped of all these benefits. The absence of social safety nets to cushion them from these problems made life difficult for them. The compulsory pension scheme introduced at independence did not benefit farm workers. Proof of identification has always been required on claiming benefits, and many have lost out on this technicality due to lack of identity particulars. Worse still for 'foreign' elderly workers, hopes of ever owning a piece of land or decent accommodation have faded like prospects of tracing their roots. Interviews established that several factors militate against the 'foreigners' going back to their countries of origin. Some have lost contacts with families and relatives back home. For Mozambicans, for instance, civil war has been cited as a deterrent. Meagre wages and inadequate savings have made prospects of accomplishing the journey back home more remote as the years passed by. Some have generally been ashamed of going back with absolutely nothing but bother for their families.

Thus, despite having lived in Zimbabwe for generations, farm workers lack the ethnic and nationality rights needed to own land. As a result, upon retirement, many 'alien' farm workers have either sought refuge in old people's homes or, if lucky, lived with their children or those few relatives who would have, somehow, obtained land in communal areas. The rest have become 'squatters'. By 2000, the 'squatter' population had, indeed, become formidable. As Moyo (1999) estimates, 'squatters' amounted to over 200 000

families in various locations within communal areas, private commercial farms and on state land. As at 2002, the problem of resettling farm workers had not yet been resolved.

4. Conclusions: The Way Forward

From the above, it is clear that the life of a farm worker in Zimbabwe, like that of a slave, does not accord with human dignity, and, therefore, fails to meet the standards required by human rights. It is in this context that human rights have often been called 'inalienable', meaning that if they are alienated the life left is not fully human life. Thus, the appeal of human rights is to the 'good' side of the human nature.

When certain groups of people are driven out of their homes and become 'displaced persons', it constitutes human rights abuse and a violation of human security in particular. The United Nations High Commissioner for refugees, Sadako Ogota warned that 'today's human rights abuses are tomorrow's refugee movements' (Naidu 2001:7), which, therefore, calls for a permanent solution to the farm worker crisis. This involves establishing permanent settlement, with legal tenure, for farm workers (and ex-farm workers) either on acquired farms or elsewhere, in order to enable the farm worker community to be completely integrated into the national economy.

Lack of Zimbabwean citizenship has perpetuated a vicious cycle of poverty among farm workers because of little or no prospects for better jobs elsewhere. Debates over the constitutional reform process in Zimbabwe could see an incorporation of labour rights, particularly citizenship rights, in the Bill of Rights. Furthermore, citizenship rights would guarantee that farm workers are considered for resettlement. Adoption of the SADC draft protocol on the free movement of persons within the community could go a long way towards addressing human rights concerns of farm workers (and other workers in similar positions) in the sub-region. Key provisions of this draft protocol of 1996 relate to entry into member states, residence, and citizenship rights of peoples. Among other things, the draft protocol emphasises the need to formulate policies on free movement of persons as well as extension of citizenship rights to those who seek it from within the region. It also seeks to remove all restrictions on the freedom of establishment for citizens of other member states in a given territory, as well as the right to participate in all such human activities as citizens of the host state. This could go a long way

towards respecting the inviolable human rights of farm workers in Zimbabwe. This requires, among other things, a clear government policy on farm workers. Workers on acquired farms should be given priority to be resettled on that land, and should be given adequate compensation.

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