

The Troubled Electoral Contestation in Zimbabwe

Jephias Mapuva and Loveness Muyengwa-Mapuva

Abstract

Political events that have prevailed in Zimbabwe since 1980 have presented challenges for democracy, giving birth to a chequered electoral history. Successive electoral contests have produced contested results and this has been attributed to the defective electoral legislation. Successive constitutional amendments and the enactment of the attendant legislation guiding civil society participation in governance processes have also contributed to the inability of the voice of the people from being heard. The inheritance of colonial legislation tended to harden the stance of the leadership. Despite the fact that the SADC, and the AU, have facilitated the enactment of guidelines to enable free and fair electoral processes, this has not been binding on member states, leaving states to conduct elections under own conditions. In some cases, violence has characterized elections in Zimbabwe. The new Constitution in Zimbabwe has not helped improve the way elections have been held, as well as the authority of the election management body, the ZEC.

Key words: Elections, contestation, Zimbabwe, Constitution, colonial, legislation, violation, violence