



8 Rudd Road, Northend, Bulawayo

Tel: +263292888680 Mobile: 0774 610 311 / 0782 444 020 / 0784 240 585

[www.zapu.org](http://www.zapu.org)

## **UNITY DAY STATEMENT**

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Today marks 38 years since the momentous signing of the Unity Accord between ZAPU and ZANU which resulted in what was supposedly a united ZANU PF. Motivated by the need to end the bloodletting sponsored by the state, our founding President, Dr Joshua Nkomo, led ZAPU into the Unity Accord with a heavy heart. His message to ZAPU was very clear: “Enter into this Unity Accord – albeit under duress – but eventually come out without blemish.” We followed his wise counsel and stayed in the belly of the beast for 22 long years. In 2009 we actively pulled out of the Unity Accord without blemish, determined to revive our revolutionary party. Since then we have never looked back.

Today’s public holiday commemorating the Unity Accord of 1987, is a desperate attempt by the ZANU PF regime to hide behind the human shield of our disciplined party. The regime is desperate to sanitize its soiled name by aligning itself with our clean image as ZAPU. There was never any national unity established through the Unity Accord of 1987. It was simply a lifesaving move by our genuinely patriotic and humanitarian leader who prioritized the sanctity of people’s lives over personal glory. We must put it to the whole world that Zimbabweans are not united on the strength of the defunct Unity Accord. The nation remains divided along several fault lines. Tribalism, nepotism, cronyism and regionalism continue to plague Zimbabwe from Plumtree to Chimanimani.

To us, Unity Day is a self-serving ploy by the ZANU PF-led government to project a façade of national unity. Yet Zimbabweans are more divided than ever before. Disparities between Zimbabweans have only become more glaring. A small clique of connected elites now enjoys access to excess on the back of state capture, corruption and tenderpreneurship. The vast majority of Zimbabweans wallow in abject poverty. Polarizing figures continue to fan disunity to weaken opposition forces and silence dissenting voices. It remains our sustained argument that Unity Day is a central cog in the ruling party’s propaganda machine. There is nothing sincere about ZANU PF’s lip service to unity. As Zimbabweans, let us find each other within our communities, in order to unite in word and in action. Let us defeat the sowers of division once and for all.

Issued by:

Richard Gandari, ZAPU National Spokesperson