

responsibility is particularly incumbent upon those States which are in a position to assist others in this regard. The 1986 Declaration on the Right to Development emphasizes that in the absence of an active programme of international, technical and financial assistance and cooperation, the full realization of economic, social and cultural rights will remain an unfulfilled aspiration in many countries.

- 3.9 And there are many of those in this world that could assist Zimbabwe achieve its goal for adequate housing for its population, but who have deliberately refrained from doing so for unjustifiable political reasons. The United States passed a sanctions law called the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act in December 2001. This illegal and unjust law provides for the cutting of all lines of credit to Zimbabwe from the multilateral lending institutions. These institutions have been advised to release aid or credit to Zimbabwe only if President George Bush authorizes it. On its part, the EU has placed overt and covert sanctions on Zimbabwe because of a bilateral dispute between Harare and London. The actions by the US and the EU have worsened the plight of all Zimbabweans.

4. POLICE INVOLVEMENT

- 4.1 On 18th May 2005 the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) launched Operation Restore Order and the factors and rationale that prompted this nationwide operation as explained in section 2 above, were based on a number of social, economic and security shortcomings that confronted the policing environment with astounding ramifications on the country's economic turnaround programme and its citizens. "**Operation Restore Order**" is consistent with the ZRP's Strategic Plan and Vision 2008, "Policing for National Economic Revival" and is arguably the biggest operation the ZRP has undertaken since the country's independence in 1980. When the operation kicked off on May 18, 2005, the objectives of the operation were clearly spelt out and teams put in place to carry out the operation. Police officers involved

in the operation were briefed on the need to respect human rights and dignity. No complaints were officially registered of untoward actions by the police officers. No structures were burnt other than rubbish which accumulated as a result of the clean up. Both the print and electronic media were used to warn the people that they should demolish their illegal structures before the police could move in to supervise the removal of such structures.

- 4.2 The Zimbabwe Republic Police is under spotlight from our detractors who ironically in the past have criticized the force for failing to restore the rule of law by allowing Zimbabwean citizens to settle indiscriminately. The legitimacy and justification of this operation by the police draws from its constitutional obligation as espoused in section 93(1) of the supreme law of the country.
- 4.3 Contrary to media and western criticism that the operation amounted to retributive measures against the urban electorate following the outcome of the 31st March 2005 legislative polls, the effort by the Police to suffocate illegal activities, weed out criminal elements, restore law and order and paralyze illegal markets serves no political party, but is meant to decongest Central Business Districts in most cities. Indications on the ground confirm that the exercise was not only necessary and logical but that it was also long overdue.
- 4.4 Allegations of police brutality and inhuman treatment are unfounded and attempt to create mischief, confusion, hostility and to gain illicit political mileage. The Z.R.P. respects the dignity of human life, observes human rights and has a duty to protect peace-loving citizens from criminals.
- 4.5 During the course of this operation, the Police raided and arrested various criminals including foreign nationals at the popular points such as Mereki in Warren Park, Pamuzinda, the Gulf Shopping Mall and the Ximex Mall, which had become havens of criminal activities.

- 4.6 Illegal gold panning and dealings have since diminished following the launch of the operation. Since its inception, gold inflows to Fidelity Printers have significantly increased.
- 4.7 Ready markets for meat from cattle rustlers were destroyed and significant amounts of revenue have accrued from deposit and other fines. Enforcement of traffic laws by the police during the operation has resulted in impounding of road unworthy vehicles.
- 4.8 The recent report by *The Standard* headlined "**Child killed in Clean Up**" is a deliberate and mischievous attempt by the opposition media fraternity to paint the operation as inhuman and provoke hostility against Police and the Government. The deceased, Charmaine NYIKA died after a wall of an illegal structure that was being demolished by her mother collapsed on the unfortunate child. The police was nowhere near the scene and the sudden death matter is currently under investigations.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Operation is not yet complete but it is prudent to take stock of some notable achievements registered by this exercise. Among many others, the following are the major successes of the Operation: -
- (i) Most of the Central Business Districts throughout the country are clean and peaceful following the removal of menacing street kids, touts and kombis, illegal vendors and unroadworthy vehicles. The exercise has resulted in significant decongestion of CBD's in the cities in general.
 - (ii) Crime has significantly gone down following the destruction of illegal structures, which served as rendezvous for criminal activities.