

## Mugabe's Death: Not the End of Colonial Interference

### News:

World leaders mourned the death of former Zimbabwean President Robert Gabriel Mugabe who died in Singapore on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2019 aged 95. Mugabe's successor, President Emerson Mnangagwa, in announcing Mugabe's death, praised him as an "icon of liberation." Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta and former President Mwai Kibaki both described him as 'a visionary leader who fought for emancipation of Africans. Boris Johnson's spokeswoman said: 'We, of course, express our condolences to those who mourn but know that for many, he was a barrier to a better future.

### Comment:

The world is in torn apart over the legacy of a leader once lauded as a colonial-era liberation hero who later turned to be a bloodstained dictator whose autocratic 37-year rule ended in a coup in 2017. Imprisoned and tortured under Ian Smith's white-minority rule in what was then known as Rhodesia, Mugabe was seen by many Africans as an iconic liberator and his own colonial master the British once elevated him as a revolutionist. The 1979 Lancaster House agreement in London brought independence to Zimbabwe and Mugabe returned home as a hero.

Robert Mugabe's life span has exposed the fallacious concept of independence. The 'struggle for independence' by African 'heroes' who were branded as liberators who later came to be known as oppressors. Since coming to political power, the anticolonial movements in many African countries such as Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa have remained in control of the former settler colonial societies. European colonial masters worked effectively to replace their white coercive rule with the black indigenous rule just to continue colonization. African movements were backed and directed by the same colonial masters. Under the banner of self-rule, the African continent was now introduced into new models of governance and ideas such as multi-party democracy, which were born and developed in Western colonial powers. These new ideas however led Africa into the economic, political, and social stagnation and instability. Ironically the West blamed old African rulers 'Big man Syndrome' for the crises facing Africa which indeed were a result of their flawed governance system of democracy. Thus, they tuned a new tone - new dream of Africa dubbed as the African Renaissance defined as contrast to the old African rulers to deceive the naïve to believe that Africa has a vision.

Just after he came to power, Mugabe tightened his grip to remain in power and started to suppress his political challengers the likes of Joshua Nkomo; Mugabe's fellow 'freedom fighter' who later fell out with Mugabe. This fall-out turned violent when Mugabe deployed his North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade to crush an armed rebellion by fighters loyal to Nkomo in the province of Matabeleland when at least 20,000 people died in Matabeleland. Therefore, state- violence came emerged as a method to protect those who inherited power against those seen as opposition leaders. South Africa's Commission, institutionalized by the government, also talked about human rights violations committed by the ANC. President Nelson Mandela did not shy away from earlier offering a public apology to the victims of the ANC's failures to respect basic human rights. In 2008, the Kenyan Government formed commission known as Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission of Kenya (TJRC) to analyze the historical injustices and gross violations of human rights by the independent regimes.

No doubt, Zimbabwe's colonial master the UK facilitated the removal of Mugabe in a military takeover in 2017 and brought in the incumbent president Emmerson Mnangagwa through the regional bodies (SADC) and African Union (AU). UK still maintains the future of Zimbabwe since it lies through democracy, which has proved as a total failure. The people of Zimbabwe and Africa at large ought to understand that the death of any of their leader does not mean the end of colonial interference. The fact is Africa's political center is still associated with the West. Africa will be truly liberated from the shackles of neocolonialism by the great leader with clear and direct vision who will strive to seek Allah's pleasure through implementation of Islam in all spheres of life under the Khilafah reestablished upon the method of Prophethood.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by**

**Shabani Mwalimu**

**Media Representative of Hizb utTahrir in Kenya**