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## MOZAMBIQUE: Zimbabweans jump border to buy land

Machipanda, February 3, 1995 (AIA/Brian Latham)—Many Zimbabwean peasants have quietly found the solution to land shortages by crossing into neighbouring Mozambique where it is plentiful.

For as little as US\$10 a field, they are acquiring land and a place to live — probably illegally — from chiefs and headmen across the border. Information on how to get land is easily accessible in Machipanda, the Mozambique border town at the head of the Beira Corridor from Zimbabwe to the Indian Ocean.

Confusion reigns in Mozambique in the aftermath of the devastating civil war. And in a country reputed to be the poorest on earth, the government can do little to control the flood of border jumpers in both directions: Mozambicans enter Zimbabwe to sell everything from guns to clothes donated by aid agencies and Zimbabweans enter Mozambique in search of land to till.

While there are more Mozambicans entering Zimbabwe than there are Zimbabweans going the other way, the issue could, in time, cause diplomatic tension. Mozambique's ambassador to Zimbabwe says Zimbabweans farming in his country are there illegally. In theory he is correct; most simply, cross the border at arbitrary points, ignoring official border posts and avoiding Mozambique's tedious and often corrupt bureaucracy.

However, the issue is not as that easy. The border is some 800 km long and traverses some of the most mountainous and heavily wooded country in Southern Africa. A wealthy industrialised nation would find it impossible to police; for impoverished Mozambique, it is not worth even considering. In addition to the purely geographical problem of difficult terrain, there is the social problem of language and tribe. The border was a colonial invention and it takes no cognisance of pre-colonial territories.

The Korekore, Manica and Shangaan peoples are split by a border imposed without thought to chieftainships or wards. Like the inhabitants of the formerly split Germany, the people must cross the border to visit friends and families, consult spiritual leaders and chiefs and to attend tribal functions. However, unlike the people of Germany, neither Mozambicans nor Zimbabweans have ever made much use of government border posts.

As the governor of Mozambique's Manica province, Artur Hussene Canana, admits, this makes it impossible to control.

A family divided by a border will live where it chooses. If members of the family have work in the more prosperous Zimbabwe, they will live there; if they have no work but want land, they will choose Mozambique. Nevertheless, not all the Zimbabweans crossing into Mozambique are Korekore, Manicas or Shangaans. Some have come from as far afield as Masvingo, mainly Karangas with no tribal affiliation with the people of Mozambique, bar that of being part of the greater Mashona people.

People who have crossed the border from deep within Zimbabwe speak a different dialect of the Shona language, fall under different chieftainships and are, as a result, wary of Mozambican officialdom catching up with them.

Farai Majoso worked in Zimbabwe's second city, Bulawayo. He lost his job and, with his wife, tried to settle with his extended family relations on a commercial farm in the eastern districts. There was no room for them in the farm village and they were moved on.

Majoso walked across the border into Mozambique and claims he was allocated a field by a local council. His uncle, now in his sixties, says he fought for the Frelimo government. However, when questioned about what he would do if

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confronted by officials from the district administrator's office, Majoso shrugs and says he will deal with that if it happens.

Mozambican peasants, without bitterness, point to where Zimbabweans are living, perhaps because they see the border as an inconvenience and not as a genuine divide. However, if Mozambique returns to normality now the war has ended, peasant farmers may begin to move away from the towns and roadside areas where most people live.

Many may want to return to their old homes, only to find usurpers have built huts and tended fields where they once lived. This can only confuse the situation further and it might well cause problems.

However, that will happen only when the country returns to normality, and there is little sign that it is going to happen soon, not with the prospect of failed crops and banditry replacing war.

950203.MOZ (704 words)

## **SWAZILAND:** **University plagued by political bickering**

Mbabane, February 8, 1995 (AIA/Samuel Malale) — Professor Lydia Makhubu was in her kitchen preparing supper as a man hid outside waiting to throw a petrol bomb at her home. But he was foiled by a night watchman.

Makhubu is vice-chancellor of the University of Swaziland which is once again a focal point of political agitation, so much so that it was "indefinitely" closed by the authorities last November.

Opposition groups accuse Makhubu of bowing to the interests of the monarch, King Mswati, and the conservative government. But she has issued a barrage of counter criticism at her accusers, alleging that radicals want to use the university as a springboard for their political agendas.

In the middle is the 2,500-strong student body. Many of its members are not new to the culture of confrontation with the authorities. The closure has itself become an annual event since the brutal handling of striking students by armed police and paramilitary units on November 14 1990,

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dubbed Black Wednesday. Students were hauled out of the library and beaten, some were allegedly raped and others had their radios and watches stolen. Hundreds went to nearby hospitals, bleeding profusely.

There was a press and public outcry which forced the establishment of a commission of inquiry. But, like most such commissions in Swaziland, neither its report nor recommendations were made public. One student, who lost an eye, was given more than US\$7,000 in an out-of-court settlement because the minister of education would not release the report for purposes of litigation.

Even now the minister is adamant he cannot release it without damaging state security.

Students and parents are incensed. Even the press, traditionally soft on the university administration, suggests that the frequent closures are a consequence of the vice-chancellor's high-handedness.

A feminist and leading political activist, Glenrose Dlamini, says: "The king is chancellor of the university, Prince Khuzulwandle is minister of education, Prince Phinda is chairman of the university council and Prof Makhubu, their appointee, is vice-chancellor. Is this not a family affair after all?"

Her concern is echoed by Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions leader Jan Sithole who says: "She (Makhubu) is running the institution as if it were personal property. As a taxpayer and parent I have a right to demand an explanation. Workers and parents cannot bury their heads in the sand."

Makhubu was appointed about 10 years ago since when there have been repeated class boycotts and closures. Her unpopularity grew when the high court reinstated the current Students Representative Council (SRC) which she had declared ineligible for election. The same court rejected her expulsion of 1993 SRC president Armstrong Simelane for insubordination.

SRC president Silwayiphi Sithole says closures have led to a 50 percent failure rate, adding that while the university is closed "the administrators continue to draw fat cheques for doing nothing".

Human rights lobbyists have also voiced concern. Several protests and demonstrations have been made in vain. The minister of education refused to meet the demonstrators, issuing the now all-too-familiar response that the university administration is working on a lasting solution to the problem. Some lobbyists say that what the minister calls a lasting solution is actually witch-hunt, headed by Makhubu.

Simon Noge, of the Human Rights Association of Swaziland, attacked Makhubu for interrogating students one by one about the disturbances. "How can she be judge in her own cause? Even worse, will victimising the supposed instigators solve the problem? No! Only an exposition of the Black Wednesday report can appease and bring a lasting solution," he says.

950206.SWA (587 words)

## **ZAMBIA:** **Grain shortages are artificial, says government**

Lusaka, February 7, 1995 (AIA/Jowie Mwiinga) — The headlines scream-out with depressing familiarity — "Hungerstalks Malambo", "South pleads for famine relief", "Villagers flee famine area".

Life has been reduced to a desperate and frequently futile daily search for food for hundreds of thousands. In some regions people have little more than fruit and wild roots to eat.

Maize stocks in many areas ran out months ago, prompting the government to declare a national food disaster last August.

The government claims, however, the shortages are "artificial", placing the blame on the private sector and government-appointed marketing agents. It says it plans to import three million bags of maize to meet the shortfall — but has yet to find the US\$9.4 million needed to buy it.

Donor-funded task forces are attempting to distribute food and a nationwide food-for-work programme is underway. Yet the shortages have actually worsened. Officials estimate some 300,000 families face starvation.

Now, the shortages have reached even the key urban centres. In northern Zambia, riot police deployed on the streets of the mining towns of Kitwe and Ndola to restrain angry consumers on panic buying sprees. The price of maize-meal, the staple food, has almost doubled in the urban centres, heightening anti-government feeling.

"The former government may have had its faults but at least it made sure the people did not starve," says Anthony Muzeche, a Lusaka taxi driver.

The government claims there are more than enough stocks to feed the people for several months but says maize buyers are hoarding stocks to force prices up. "We cannot allow government to be held at ransom. I want the names of all the agents involved and...I shall report this to the president," says deputy agriculture minister Gibson Nkausu.

Yet the government has no one but itself to blame for the behaviour of unscrupulous marketing agents whom it appointed in its attempts to bring free-marked reforms to the agricultural sector.

Three years ago the government of President Frederick Chiluba announced it was restricting its involvement in agriculture to pave the way for a more efficient private sector. Agricultural, it said, would be regulated by market forces alone.

It disbanded the state-run National Agricultural Marketing Board and allowed farmers to export maize without government approval. The results, to say the least, have been disastrous.

The private sector is unwilling to fetch maize from the far flung areas, with their impassable roads, the result being that tens of thousands of bags remain uncollected and are rotting away.

In addition, farmers continue to export maize to

neighbouring countries. In January, provincial minister Kangwa Nsuluka ordered a maize export ban on the northern Copperbelt region but it was revoked by commerce minister Dipak Patel who said it was contrary to the spirit of trade liberalisation.

After two disastrous marketing seasons, it seems the government is reverting to the old control system. Chiluba told parliament the government will once again be "the ultimate buyer" to ensure that artificial shortages do not recur.

The government, he says, will see that the crop is collected from remote areas. Farmers welcome his pronouncement but feel it is too late, at least for this season.

A severe drought will most probably mean that maize production, which soared to a record 18 million bags only three years ago, will drop markedly this year and food shortages will persist.

950205.ZAM (594 words)

## **ZAMBIA:** **Government mining conglomerate begins privatisation**

Lusaka, February 1, 1995 (AIA/Rosalyn Muchindu) — The government has taken the first step towards the privatisation of its huge copper mining company, with the full support the mine workers' union.

The company, Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM), has put up for sale the Chambishi Mine in the heart of the Copperbelt in the northern part of the country bordering Zaire.

The union has lent its support to the programme in the hope that it will slow down ZCCM retrenchment plans and eventually lead to an increase in jobs in the copper industry, which makes up 90 percent of Zambia's exports.

The Chambishi sale was approved by the ZCCM board and the Zambia Privatisation Agency which is supervising the sale of all parastatals under the economic recovery plan spelled out by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and donor nations.

Chambishi is still considered to be viable but tender terms specify that investors, local or foreign, must have US\$50 million behind them. It is estimated that Chambishi needs a capital input of US\$100 million to restore it to full productivity.

Union president Francis Kunda says the union and the ZCCM management agreed some time ago on the privatisation programme, even though it is expected to result in job losses for more than 8,000 miners. Five thousand have already been retrenched.

At first, the ZCCM wanted to retrench more than 10,000 but the union stood its ground, saying this was too many.

Kunda agrees with most Zambians that the key to the privatisation of the mines lies in caution. There has been acrimonious public debate ever since the issue was first raised.

An outspoken critic of the ZCCM management, Theo Bull, spokesman for the Zambia Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, has led a lobby which wants to see the sales of individual mines on the basis of viability.

This is opposed by the government which feels the ZCCM should be sold as an entity, thus possibly resulting in fewer job losses. But the Chambishi sale — as an individual mine — demonstrates that the government has no clear cut policy.

The sale of the ZCCM as an entity is viewed by many as a non-starter for the reason that many of its mines are dilapidated, unproductive and the copper content of the ore is beneath viability levels. There are exceptions, such as the Nchanga and Konkola mines, which would attract investors, but the overall picture is gloomy.

ZCCM sales were US\$1,040,800 million last year, much of which went to prop up the ailing national economy.

950201.ZAM (420 words)

## **TANZANIA: Nyerere resists privatisation**

Dar es Salaam, January 31, 1995 (AIA/Lawrence Kilimwiko) — In a move to underline his opposition to privatisation, ex-president Julius Nyerere has refused to buy shares in the newly privatised Cooperative and Rural Development Bank (CRDB).

Nyerere, who embraced socialism during his 24 years in power, says privatisation is the same as the looting of public resources and might even put control of Tanzanian institutions into foreign hands.

Nyerere says the country has no experience in privatisation. He refused to buy CRDB shares when a bank delegation, led by managing director John Rubambe, visited his village to try to persuade him to do so, believing share-purchases by Nyerere would boost the privatisation programme.

President Ali Hassan Mwinyi and his wife, Sitty, have already bought CRDB shares.

The government has decided to privatise — through joint ventures or outright sales — all loss-making public firms, about 400 of them, set up during Nyerere's era of Fabian socialism, the philosophy of which involves establishing socialism through gradual reform. All loss-making concerns are to be sold to foreign or local entrepreneurs on a willing-seller, willing-buyer basis.

There has been heated debate over the rationale of disposing of public corporations when indigenous entrepreneurs have no money to buy shares.

Bernard Mulokozi, a retired senior official of the civil service ministry, agrees with privatisation, given the mismanagement of public companies, but wonders if what is being done is not the "foreignisation" of assets. "How do you talk of indigenous entrepreneurs without capital in tandem with the privatisation process?" he asks.

Mulokozi says it is impossible to expect indigenous people who have been operating under a state-managed

economy to compete with foreigners. Likewise, he says, it is a waste of time to expect local people to buy and manage privatised concerns without proper training.

Many others question the handling of privatisation, saying that not only loss-making companies are being sold-off.

Examples are Tanzania Breweries Limited and the Mwadui Diamond Company which have forged agreements with South African companies. Another profit-maker, the Tanzania Cigarette Company, is also for sale, with more than four foreign companies displaying interest. The Mwadui Diamond Company reached an agreement with De Beers, the diamond dealing giant, and already all local managers have been retired and their places filled by De Beers personnel.

Dr Humphrey Moshi, of the economic research bureau of the University of Dar es Salaam, says privatisation is good but it is wrong to believe that a free market economy will solve all of Tanzania's economic ills without the involvement of the state.

He gives, as examples, Japan and India where the state is still a dominant actor in their economies.

950123.TAN (441 words)

## **NAMIBIA: Another drought begins to take grip**

Windhoek, February 2, 1995 (AIA/Joshua Amupadhi) — A patchy rainy season is deeply worrying subsistence-level and communal farmers, most of whom have harsh memories of the hunger and hardships of the 1992/3 Southern African drought.

Many have not yet recovered from the experience and now they are faced with yet another barren agricultural season.

And their fears appear to be well founded. The Early Warning and Food Information Unit says this year's grain crop yields are expected to be as much as 60 percent lower than last year's 34,500 tonnes.

The unit says about 16,500 tonnes of wheat and 21,800 tonnes of maize will be needed before the end of April to meet national requirements, of which probably 40 percent will have to be imported.

The government expects to spend US\$230,000 monthly on drought relief programmes and says it will appeal internationally for aid to assist vulnerable groups.

About 80,000 people were given food aid last year and the agriculture ministry says the amount will probably increase to more than 100,000 in the coming month or so.

In areas which had only a few drops of rain in early December, farmers helplessly watch their crops wither. Wild animals and livestock are already dying of thirst and starvation. Reports from the south say small-scale stock farmers are losing their goats and sheep.

Martha Witbeen, who raises goats, says despairingly that she can no longer cope with the hardships. "I lost animals to the cold weather in winter; now another drought

is knocking on our doors. What should I do?"

Says Tusnelde Josephat: "I lost a cow and calf in December when they were on the way to an area with drinking water and grazing. Most of the animals are already too weak to walk in search of grass and water."

Another farmer, Mukwanamba Mukandi, says what supplies she has left from last year's crop will last only until the middle of the year. "I hope the government can speed up its drought relief programme otherwise I will have to ask for mahangu (millet) or mealie meal from my neighbours."

The government has advised farmers to use fast-maturing seeds to try to get some yield before winter. Farmers have also been urged to sell their livestock if it is still in good enough condition. In the northern Caprivi region, where crops were destroyed by floods last year, only 20 percent of normal rainfall has been recorded. A commercial farmer in the area, Hans van Niekerk, says he has had only 90 mm compared to 230 mm last season.

"Irrigate my tobacco fields but the (communal) farmers out there cannot afford it. Something should be done for them."

The managing director of a farmers' cooperative, Matthias Semi, says if the government does not restructure its feeding programme many people could die. "Committees should be set up to quicken the pace at which drought food is distributed. The feeding programme is really slow, as the food which was meant for 1994 is being distributed this year."

In urban areas municipalities are preparing to impose water restrictions. Most dams are less than 50 percent full and some are as low as 15 percent.

Mika Johannes, who works in Windhoek, says he has to dig deeper into his pocket to send money to help rural relatives. "The previous drought might have looked bad but this one is going to be worse. In 1992 there were early heavy rains but this time we have not witnessed a drop of rain in most parts of the country."

Economists predict that another drought will mean that recovery periods for grazing areas will extend well into next year when the cumulative effects of the drought will only begin to manifest themselves.

950202.NAM (615 words)

## **BOTSWANA:** **Government considers iodizing salt**

Sowa, February 6, 1995 (AIA/Caitlin Davies) — The average person needs only a teaspoonful of iodine in a lifetime but without it the effects can be devastating, so the government is considering how to iodize salt supplies.

This won't be easy. "The problem is our multiple salt sources. Most of our retail salt comes from South Africa," says Dr E T Magunu, permanent secretary for health.

Yet the Soda Ash Botswana mine in the north-east, which can produce 600,000 tonnes of salt a year, began iodizing a few years ago. And although it is confident it can provide all Botswana's needs only a "very small percentage"

is sold domestically, the biggest buyer being Zimbabwe.

"Adding potassium iodate is very expensive," says Daryl Thysse, technical manager, "And we are still carrying the (financial) burden. The equipment costs money and we have to watch the process very carefully."

The United Nations says lack of iodine is the major cause of preventable mental retardation. Hundreds of thousands of babies are born brain-damaged because their mothers were iodine-deficient and more than 500 million people suffer from goitre, the swelling of the thyroid gland due to lack of iodine.

However, in areas where salt is iodised, cretinism — dwarfism and mental retardation caused by a thyroid deficiency — begins to disappear and goitres begin to shrink after about a year. Children develop more energy and perform better at school — a fact that no developing nation can afford to ignore.

By the beginning of last year, national iodization programmes had been set up in 24 countries. Tanzania, for example, should now be producing enough iodized salt to protect its entire population.

Iodine deficiency is not a significant problem in Botswana. Nevertheless, the government began working on legislation last year to ensure all salt for human consumption is iodized. But it could be some time before this passes into law and it is not yet clear if imported salt will also have to be iodized.

There is still not much information on iodine deficiency. In 1989 a survey in Ngamiland in the north-east and parts of the central district uncovered goitres in children and adults.

Last year UNICEF and the government undertook the first national survey of iodine, vitamin A and iron deficiencies and the findings are expected in the next month or so. The survey involved the analysis of urine samples from across the country for iodine content.

Says Segametsi Maruapla of the health ministry: "That's the indicator we are using. We also tested salt in about 400 households to see what people are using."

There has been no research into the coarse salt given to livestock. Hopefully, legislation will cover all salt, whether for animals or humans. "Coarse salt needs to be iodized or there will be a loophole in the legislation," warns Maruapla.

Many farmers don't believe it is necessary to iodize their animal salt despite a reminder by a local UNICEF representative, Krishna Belbase, that "it's good for animals. With severe deficiencies, animals do suffer."

In 1989 a book, *The Story of Iodine Deficiency*, by Basil S Hertzel, estimated there are 100-150 million people at risk of iodine deficiency diseases (IDD) in Africa. It has a map of IDD distribution, showing endemic areas, including north-western Botswana.

950204.BOT (580 words)

## **MALAWI: Race against time in constitutional debate**

Blantyre, February 10, 1995 (AIA/Felix Mponda) — Malawians are racing against time to put together a revised set of laws to cope with democracy before a national constitutional conference in March.

The conference hopes to weld a new constitution to be passed into law by parliament later this year. The existing constitution was provisionally adopted in the dying hours of the old Banda one-party government last May.

It was drawn-up by the now-defunct all-party National Consultative Council, formed during the transition to democracy, and enshrines political pluralism and a bill of rights, and substantially reduces the power of the president, a touchy subject after almost three decades of dictatorship under Banda.

Now, the new government of President Bakili Muluzi wants to put its own stamp, and see that of its political opposition, on the provisional constitution, with various amendments which will give it the effect of a new democratic constitution.

A parliamentary committee, headed by Rodwell Munyenjembe, speaker of the first multi-party national assembly, says he is trying to ensure that as many people as possible are brought into the debate.

“Our committee is mandated to receive and consider proposals, compile and lay reports before parliament and prepare bills for amendment and replacement,” says Munyenjembe. Since September, the committee has organised public meetings across the country to solicit views in advance of the national conference.

It has distributed 30,000 copies of constitutional proposals in three local languages to ensure grassroots circulation. But millions of people have yet to see it.

“Vast sections of Malawians have not had sight of it or known its contents,” says the Legal Resource Centre, which provides free legal advice to ordinary people.

Human rights lawyer Modecai Msisha, representing a group of concerned citizens, has accused the Muluzi government of grossly violating the provisional constitution on several grounds, which include the appointment last year of a second vice-president. Muluzi says he created the post to bring in an opposition leader in an attempt to cement national unity.

“There are concrete legal grounds to take action. To create another vice-president violates the constitution,” says Msisha.

He also claims the constitution still puts the president above the law, despite reducing his powers.

“It is deeply flawed and Malawians will live to regret it if they do not remove or add certain provisions now,” he says, adding that the constitution threatens human rights, gives the police too much power and allows censorship and government interference in marital affairs.

He says the bill of rights is an illusion and a fraud in that

it severely weakens the rights of the individual because they are effectively subject to the whims of government, which can deprive citizens of those rights during states of emergency.

A state of emergency allows the government to detain people without trial and to restrict freedom of movement and expression.

Most people cannot understand the finer points of the constitutional debate but, says Raphael Phiri, a grocer: “At least we are being given a chance to comment on our constitution.”

950208.MAL (500 words)

## **ZIMBABWE: Burial societies offset high funeral charges**

Harare, February 9, 1995 (AIA/David Muzhuzha) — Ben Mandangu, an ageing Harare resident, strides to a busy beerhall near his home on a Sunday morning — not for the beer but to attend a burial society meeting.

Mandangu belongs to the Kubatana Burial Society (KBS), an organisation formed last June. It is one of many that have mushroomed in the past five years or so, collecting regular subscriptions, usually around US\$2,50 monthly, from members and investing them in banks or building societies to earn interest.

Previously, the concept of burial societies was unfashionable among Zimbabweans but was popular among those of Malawian and Mozambican descent.

But with the advent of national economic reforms in 1990, costs of almost everything have soared, including burials. Now, the low-income group has taken to the societies in a big way. The AIDS epidemic is another reason for their popularity.

The funeral industry has experienced a boom since independence in 1980, what with the population increase, rural-to-urban migration, AIDS and more road deaths. Established funeral parlours bury scores of bodies daily.

Coffin-makers are flourishing and hospital mortuaries are often congested, forcing city councils, such as Harare, to build more.

The Harare municipality makes US\$17,750 monthly from burial fees. Two of the capital’s cemeteries are full and the remaining three are filling rapidly.

Most blacks do not believe in cremation, mainly for traditional reasons, which places an extra strain on the demand for graves.

Last year, almost 15,000 bodies, mostly infants, were given pauper burials in Harare, largely because of high burial costs. The state pays out US\$15 to bury an adult pauper, US\$8 for a child and US\$4 for an infant. No pauper has been cremated since independence.

Normal funerals cost about US\$375, which covers the purchase of a coffin, burial plot, transport for mourners and food for those attending post-burial gatherings.

Mourners usually contribute to cash collections but, says Mishek Chidziva, chairman of the KBS: "The societies help more than the collections, which are often skimpy if the funeral takes place just before pay day."

Some societies, in addition to interest earned on savings, raise extra money through activities such as selling clothes bought at wholesale prices and through small-scale poultry farming.

The societies also work with established funeral parlours, especially if a member asks to be buried with the expertise of the latter.

An organisation such as the Malawi Catholic Burial Society (MCBS), which has branches in at least eight of Harare's high-density suburbs, gives the surviving spouse cash to meet immediate post-funeral expenses.

Subscription defaulters are given three months to pay up. "After that we fire them with no refund," says Rita Kuretu, chairwoman of a MCBS branch.

Because of ever-rising costs, the societies are now beginning to limit their membership to try to contain cash outflows. Chidziva says his society will not exceed 70 members. Kuretu's has just raised the entrance fee by a massive 150 percent to US\$62.

Her society also requires a waiting period of three months before new applicants are accepted. "We think three months is enough time to deter AIDS people who are about to die from benefitting from our resources. Though we haven't come across a single case, we won't accept anyone with AIDS," she declares.

But Chidziva says his society will accept AIDS sufferers "because they are people who also need decent burials".

As is normal, there are established places where people meet to socialise, and in a country in which the poor live in areas with few recreational facilities, beerhalls and other liquor outlets provide ready meeting points for burial societies.

For teetotaller Mandangu, going to a beerhall for a burial society meeting is merely an assurance that his family and himself will get decent burials. "It doesn't matter whether I am buried here or in the rural areas, the burial society will take care of everything," he says.

950207.ZIM (643 words)

Already, archaeologists digging where the last king of the Matabeles lived for about 11 years have found artefacts, such as beads, animal bones, cartridges and bottle and window glass fragments.

Two Ndebele elders are housed a stone's throw from the old town. They are quick to welcome visitors, asking gently if they want to explore the century-old remains. Nearby is the first Roman Catholic missionary church in Zimbabwe, built around 1878.

As visitors walk around with the senior elder they are told of how the king lived and why the town has "sparked off such rare interest, and why it deserves all the attention it is beginning to get now".

Kingsley Dube, a Zimbabwean historian, is proud of this historical development.

"The recreation of the old city is a major part of our culture. It is of great historical importance and interest. It will enable visitors to see the real thing. A tourist in Bulawayo does not get the feel of the real Bulawayo until he meets face to face with our culture."

"The tourist wants to know, to taste the real Bulawayo. He is interested in the link between the city and its past, its people's culture and how they lived."

The government feels the recreation is culturally important. Ndebele chiefs and national museums and monuments staff have visited South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal to trace the roots of the Ndebele who came from the region in the 19th century. They studied the structures of Zulu settlements and exchanged cultural knowledge with leading locals.

Gwilym Hughes, head of a British team at the old site, said: "It's likely to be the largest excavation to be undertaken in Zimbabwe for a long time."

Val Bell, Bulawayo Publicity Association's director, says: "Once it's underway, it's going to be fantastic. This will add beautifully to the historic monuments here in Bulawayo."

Says city councillor Joshua Malinga: "The time has come to put Bulawayo on the world map and allow the once-powerful giant to rise again and take its rightful cultural place. The future of the city is bright."

950122.ZIM (404 words)

## ZIMBABWE:

### Bulawayo plans to recreate its roots

Bulawayo, January 30, 1995 (AIA/Martin Chemhere) — Within the next year Bulawayo plans to display what it hopes will become a fascinating tourist drawcard — a recreated Old Bulawayo, home of the great Matabele King Lobengula.

Funded by the government and the British High Commission, it will be reconstructed as a theme park 20km southeast of the city and will have historic depictions of Ndebele people in politics, economics and society.

