

IBA

Human Rights Institute

Former Constitutional Court Justice Richard Goldstone has joined the Council of the International Bar Association's (IBA) Human Rights Institute (HRI).

The recipient of numerous human rights awards from many international organisations, and the holder of a number of honorary doctorates, Justice Goldstone has a distinguished reputation as a commit-

ted advocate of human rights. He was the first Chief Prosecutor for the International Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, which was the first truly international war crimes tribunal. He co-chairs the IBA's International Task Force on Terrorism, and chaired the International Independent Inquiry on Kosovo between August 1999 and December 2001.

In April 2004, Justice Goldstone was appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Independent International Committee, chaired by Paul Volcker, to investigate the Iraq Oil-for-Food Programme.

In 1995, the IBA established the HRI under the honorary presidency of Nelson Mandela. The HRI is now a leading voice in the promotion of the rule of law worldwide.

The HRI works across the IBA, helping to promote, protect and enforce human rights under a just rule of law, and to preserve the independence of the judiciary and the legal profession worldwide. Address: International Bar Association, Human Rights Institute, 271 Regent Street, London W1B 2AQ, United Kingdom; Tel: +44 (0)20 7629 1206; Fax: +44 (0)20 7409 0456; E-mail: mahmuda.ali@int-bar.org; website: www.ibanet.org

Zimbabwe situation

Press release by Brian Spilg SC, chair, Human Rights Committee of the GCB

The General Council of the Bar of South Africa notes that the labour movements both in Zimbabwe and in South Africa have played significant roles in the democratisation process. In South Africa, the labour movement was a key player in securing a peaceful transition.

The neighbouring trade union organisa-

tions of Cosatu and their Zimbabwean counterparts, the ZCTU, have a legitimate concern to ensure that polling in Zimbabwe should only take place if the climate is conducive to free and fair elections. If freedom of speech is alive in Zimbabwe, then its government should have no concerns about the findings of the Cosatu mission. However, if freedom of speech has been silenced or if the Zimbabwean government has taken other actions that inhibit its population from voting in an informed and free way, then there is little point in sending people of integrity, whether by SADC or the UN, to act as observers on election day. Nothing that happens on polling day can legitimise a process if, objectively, it may already have been corrupted.

The GCB therefore deplores the fact that Cosatu, as a labour movement with impeccable credentials, should be unable to undertake its fact-finding mission despite complying with Zimbabwean immigration requirements. There can be no justification for a professed democratic government to throw out people it dislikes. Against a backdrop of barring human rights organisations from entering Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwean government's ejection of the Cosatu delegation, on the grounds that Cosatu is a movement lacking integrity, and is partial to that government, must diminish the prospects of a free and fair election in March.

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