

MDC CALLS FOR RESIGNATION

Legal bid to oust Mugabe begins

Kevin Sieff

A DAY after Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe defied the nation's calls to resign, lawmakers frantically searched yesterday for a legal path to dismiss the long-ruling leader.

Parliamentarians met in the afternoon to begin impeachment proceedings, even as questions were raised about the viability of the process.

Impeaching Mugabe could take weeks, and would require forming a broad coalition from the country's fragmented opposition.

"We are going to take the impeachment route," said Lovemore Matuke, parliament's chief whip.

The country is still in shock as a widely expected resignation did not take place during a speech on Sunday night. Instead Mugabe delivered a mumbling, rambling address promising to address economic problems at a party congress he said he would lead next month.

A noon deadline for his resignation set by the ruling party passed yesterday, and lawmakers looked to start the process.

But one of the key opposition parties yesterday said they wanted Mugabe to resign instead. The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) said resignation would be "one of several key landmarks on our road map to the establishment of a democratic dispensation".

The MDC has a crucial minority in parliament that would be necessary for the impeachment process to move forward. It appears the party is looking to leverage its position to guarantee a prominent role in the next government.

Although Zimbabwe's military placed Mugabe under house arrest and detained several of his key allies, it has so far refused to push the president out by force, perhaps concerned that a full-blown military coup would lead to a loss of legitimacy in both domestic and international eyes.

The military commanders are probably looking to preserve the veneer of legitimacy that would sustain their relationship with the international community. In its by-laws, the regional bloc of southern African nations includes strong language against coups.

It remains unclear whether negotiations between the military and Mugabe are continuing after his speech. That means a process that began by military force is now being determined through complex legal channels that are unlikely to result in his immediate dismissal.

In the latest regional effort to break the stalemate, former Zambia president Kenneth Kaunda became the latest envoy to Harare. At 93 years old, he is the same age as Mugabe.

Unimaginable

Over the weekend, a string of events, unimaginable only a week ago, added to the groundswell of public support for the ejection of the world's oldest head of state.

On Saturday there were huge protests in Harare and on Sunday, Zanu-PF's central committee voted to replace him with former vice-president Emmerson Mnangagwa and expelled Mugabe's once-powerful wife, Grace, from its ranks.

It seemed by Sunday evening that events would finally bring about Mugabe's resignation. But he did not resign. His speech prompted the same questions that Zimbabweans have asked for years. Was he showing signs of senility – or was he displaying the same shrewd, stubborn ability to defy his critics that has kept him afloat for decades?

Britain, the country's former colonial ruler, also weighed in yesterday, with Prime Minister Theresa May's spokesperson, James Slack, saying: "We don't yet know how developments in Zimbabwe are going to play out. What does appear clear is that Mugabe has lost the support of the people and of his party." – The Washington Post



Oil tanker Pretty Scene is set to be auctioned next month.

11-year-old Korean oil tanker Pretty Scene up for auction

AN OIL tanker valued at approximately \$15 million (R211m), seized in June last year in Durban, will be sold on auction next month.

The Korean vessel, built in 2006 and named Pretty Scene, currently belongs to the Parakou Group in Asia.

The auction, set to take place on December 5, comes following a court order.

Measuring 183m in length, 32.2m in breadth and with a gross tonnage of 30 068, the oil tanker is the fourth vessel

of similar scale and nature to make its way to a South African auction floor in the last 18 months.

Last year, the Sadan K and Zeynep K were successfully disposed for a combined \$20m in Durban on behalf of Uni-

Credit in Germany. In November last year the Mv Maverick Guardian, anchored in Namibia, was successfully auctioned for \$14.94m on behalf of Credit Suisse.

The auction will be conducted by online auctioneering

company Clear Asset. Managing director Ariella Kuper, of Clear Asset, said: "A decision was taken by the applicants not to conduct dry dock repairs prior to sale, which means her special survey is overdue and she will require a re-classifica-

tion before the successful purchaser is able to trade with her. Despite this, her overall condition is strong."

The auction will be at 10am at Unit 3, The Crescent West, Westway Office Park, Westville. – Mercury Reporter

Accolade for city's Aids researcher Platinum anniversary bells toll

Kamcilla Pillay

A LEADING Durban-based HIV/Aids researcher has been named a UNAids Special Ambassador for Adolescents and HIV.

Associate Scientific Director of the Centre for the Aids Programme of Research in South Africa (Caprisa), Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim, received her latest accolade at an event in Khayelitsha yesterday.

The Joint UN Programme on HIV/Aids (UNAids), according to a statement, leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero Aids-related deaths.

The body said Abdool Karim was one of the world's leading Aids researchers who had made pioneering contributions to understanding the HIV pandemic among young people, especially among young women, and was a strong advocate for the rights of people living with and affected by HIV. Abdool Karim is a professor

in Clinical Epidemiology at the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University in the US, and an Honorary Professor in Public Health at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

She is also a member of the UNAids Scientific Expert Panel and Scientific Adviser to the Executive Director of UNAids.

Honour

In 2013, Abdool Karim – who is no stranger to awards – was awarded South Africa's highest honour, the Order of Mapungubwe, for her contribution to the response to HIV.

In her new role, she will focus on adolescents and HIV, while also championing the involvement of young women in science.

"I am delighted that Quarraisha Abdool Karim has accepted this position," said executive director of UNAids Michel Sidibé. "A strong and consistent

champion of young people living with and affected by HIV, she will use her new role to continue to translate scientific research and knowledge into people-centred solutions and prevention programmes to reduce the factors making young people so vulnerable to HIV infection.

"UNAids looks forward to supporting her work."

The group pointed out that young people were particularly vulnerable to HIV.

They said there were an estimated 610 000 new HIV infections among young people aged 15 to 24 last year, with young women accounting for 59% of new infections among this age group.

"As we increase our understanding of the HIV epidemic, all sectors of society must work together to make sure that adolescents have access to the information and services that can keep them safe and well through a crucial period of their lives and into adulthood," said Abdool Karim.

LONDON: Bells rang for more than three hours in London yesterday to mark the 70th wedding anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Philip.

The queen and Philip, also known as the Duke of Edinburgh, were expected to celebrate their platinum anniversary with a private family dinner at Windsor Castle, a royal residence near London.

No public events were planned, but the royal family published a set of photographic portraits of the couple over the weekend, while the Royal Mint issued a commemorative £5 coin.

The queen, 91, and Prince Philip, 96, have four children, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, including Prince George and Princess Charlotte, born to Prince William and Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge.

Prince Charles, their eldest son, and his son, Prince William, were among those who congratulated the royal



Britain's Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip, who celebrated their platinum wedding anniversary yesterday.

PICTURE: MATT HOLYOAK/CAMERAPRESS

couple via their official Twitter accounts.

"They have devoted their lives to the service of the UK and the Commonwealth – my best wishes to them both on this special occasion," Prime Minister Theresa May said in a Twitter message.

At London's Westminster

Abbey, bell-ringers marked the anniversary with some 5000 peals lasting more than three hours.

The queen married Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten, a naval officer descended from Danish, Greek and German royalty, at the abbey on November 20, 1947. – dpa

I'm a reflection of every one of you – Manson

Linda Deutsch

LOS ANGELES: The first time I saw Charles Manson being led into a courtroom, in 1969 at the old Los Angeles Hall of Justice, I was shocked – not because of the mythology that preceded him, but because of how small he was.

The cult leader, accused of the most notorious murders in decades, arrived amid stories of mystical powers and hypnotic eyes. Now, he was shuffling down a hallway in handcuffs, wearing fringed buckskins, surrounded by deputies.

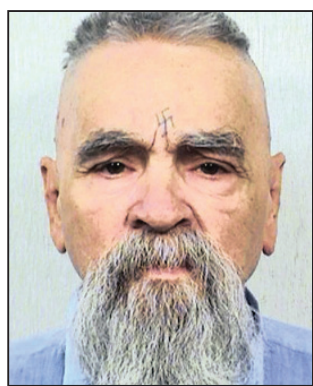
At 1.6m, Manson was not much taller than me. His shaggy brown hair hung across his face, and he appeared dazed by the hysteria surrounding him.

The gruesome murders of actress Sharon Tate and six others had stunned the world – a celebrity case like no other that plunged me into the world of high-profile trials that would become my professional calling.

The Manson case shadowed my life for nearly a half-century as I covered parole hearings and anniversaries.

To this day, the name Manson can make people shudder as they recall the cult leader who ordered the killings of a group of Hollywood's beautiful people, as well as husband and wife Leno and Rosemary LaBianca, who were slain across town from Tate's elegant home.

The trial of Manson and three female followers last-



CHARLES MANSON

ed from late 1969 into 1971, a surreal spectacle punctuated with grotesque images of death, bloody scrawlings and tales of a "family" of disaffected youths living in a backwater commune.

The aura of celebrity permeated the case. Tate's husband was the movie director Roman Polanski, and Manson had hung out on the fringes of the music business. The focus was squarely on "Charlie" and the extraordinary power he exerted over his followers, leading them into a world of sex, drugs, rock'n'roll and, ultimately, murder.

On the witness stand, his young followers spoke of orgies presided over by Manson and the use of hallucinogenic drugs to break down their resistance to his ersatz philosophy. He had delusions of being a rock star and a fascination with the Beatles song *Helter Skelter*, which the killers scrawled in blood on the walls of Tate's home. Manson was an ex-con

who had spent most of his life in prison. He held sway over his mostly teenage devotees with a promise of acceptance they had not found at home or in the counter-culture havens that dotted 1960s America. They were special, he told them.

As a short man in prison, he said he learnt to survive by telling people what they wanted to hear about themselves – the same technique he used with his followers.

Inside the courtroom, spectators sometimes had LSD flashbacks and were dragged out shouting. Outside, a ragtag band of women camped on the pavement.

They were Manson's "family," who worshipped him.

As I watched from my front-row seat, Manson took the stand outside the jury's presence to explain himself in a riveting monologue.

"These children that come at you with knives, they are your children," he said. "You taught them. I didn't teach them. I just tried to help them stand up... I am just a reflection of every one of you."

In court, Manson choreographed a spectacle that included his three co-defendants jumping to their feet and singing songs mocking the judge. At one point, he propelled himself across the counsel table, brandishing a pencil and shouting at the judge: "Someone should cut your head off, old man." He and the three women were so disruptive that they

sometimes were exiled to an adjoining room, where they listened to an audio feed of the trial.

Manson's power over the women was obvious. When he showed up with an "X" carved in his forehead saying he was "Xed out of society", the women mutilated their own foreheads. He later changed his carving to a swastika.

When the women eventually confessed to murder, they absolved Manson of any blame. Their lawyers said they had been brainwashed.

All four were convicted of multiple murders and

sentenced to die in the gas chamber, but their sentences were commuted to life when the death penalty was briefly outlawed in California.

That was the prelude to years of parole hearings for the four. Manson rarely appeared, sending word that prison was his home and he didn't want to get out. For the band of journalists who covered the Manson trial, those 10 months felt like a plunge into horror beyond comparison.

Deutsch covered high-profile trials for The Associated Press for 46 years

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