

# ZIMBABWE CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS (ZCTU)

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## PRESS RELEASE

### PRESS STATEMENT ON CHOLERA OUTBREAK

Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) is seriously concerned by the latest cholera outbreak which has claimed more than 20 lives countrywide. This is the second outbreak with last one being in 2008 that claimed 4000 lives.

The ZCTU calls upon the Government to come up with robust programs that will help eradicate cholera and typhoid. The first port of call is to provide clean water. The outbreak of cholera and typhoid, which are medieval diseases, is clear indicator that both the Central Government and local authorities have failed to provide better sanitation to the people.

There is also a serious lax in enforcement of various bylaws and everyone has been left selling food stuffs and handling of such without getting clearance from health inspectors. The Public Health Act, (which is critical) if properly administered, can also help in ensuring that no one should handle food without undergoing medical examinations.

It is high time communities come up with **community health clubs** whose roles would be to monitor the environment and report any sewer bursts and indiscriminate dumping of waste and also ensure that local authorities provide services.

It is disturbing, however, to note that the Task force set up by Government has left out key Civic Organisations like Organised Labour which can also play a critical role in educating and mentoring the communities on how to prevent water borne diseases.

The long arm of the Law should quickly catch up with land barons who continue to parcel out land and allowing for the construction of illegal settlements without proper servicing and sanitary facilities. The authorities should prosecute those found on the wrong side of the law.

Government must seriously channel resources towards mitigation and treatment as well as proper town planning and service provision to avert such disasters in the future.

  
Japhet Moyo  
**SECRETARY-GENERAL**