

## **Dimensions of Violence in Zimbabwe: Unpacking the Triggers and Effects of Machete Violence in Zimbabwe.**

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### **Abstract**

This article illustrates that machete gangs in Zimbabwe are foot soldiers of the political elites with the Second Republic ventilating their dramatic proliferation. The paper interrogates the concept of state capture and the concept of natural resource curse in an endeavour to demystify the nature and scope of machete violence in Zimbabwe. The paper also noted that machete gangs are more active in mining communities like Kwekwe, Mazowe, Bubi, Mashava, Kadoma and Patchway. Machete gangs are largely connected to powerful politicians who are members of the gold cartels. Factors that trigger machete violence in Zimbabwe include but are not limited to the rapid increase in artisanal mining, climate change and escalating unemployment. The adverse effect of machete gangs is the pauperisation of the general population. The paper also examined the impact of the proliferation of machete gangs on women in the mining sector. Machete violence has aggravated an illicit economy, fuelled unjustified socio-economic deprivation and led to environmental degradation. The paper also unearthed that machete violence underpins and perpetuates the political culture of fear and repression in Zimbabwe. The study recommends a cocktail of reforms that need to be initiated to end machete violence, this includes the need to regularise and formalise the mining sector as well as comprehensive security sector reforms. The study is mainly ethnographic in scope as most of the data was collected through interaction with some members of the machete gangs and victims of machete violence. Documentary search was also used to augment ethnographies. The researcher interviewed machete gangs located in the aforementioned mining communities in Zimbabwe, in an endeavour to generalise how machete gangs are impacting the social, economic and political fabric.