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Farm Evictions in Masvingo Anger Zimbabwe's War Veterans

More than 1,500 people face eviction in Zimbabwe's Masvingo province from farms they occupied by force in the country's chaotic land reform starting in 2000.

Most of those facing eviction are said to be war veterans who took part in Zimbabwe's independence struggle in the 1970s and subsequently served as shock troops for the government-led land invasions that displaced thousands of white farmers.

Occupancy of such farms in Masvingo is being challenged by senior officials, sources said. Land reform has left many farms in the hands of top government officials.

Sources close to the situation said officials pressing ahead with the evictions include Higher Education Minister Stan Mudenge, Masvingo Provincial Governor Willard Chiwewe and traditional chief Fortune Charumbira.

Zimbabwe Liberators Peace Initiative President Max Mkandla told reporter Carole Gombakomba of VOA's Studio 7 for Zimbabwe that his group's members, as veterans of the liberation war, feel betrayed and are in sympathy with those evicted.

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