

Zimbabwe uncertainty as state TV remains under control of military



By [Louise Marsland](#)

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Zimbabwe remains on a knife edge as political uncertainty reigns and state television is under the control of the military after troops moved into the capital Harare overnight to secure key installations. A "coup" has been denied by military leaders in Zimbabwe, although there are reports that 93-year-old President Robert Mugabe and his wife Grace, who was lobbying to be the next Presidential-candidate, are both under house arrest.



Mugabe has been in power in Zimbabwe since it achieved democracy 37 years ago.

Media reports point to the arrests of high-profile politicians and cabinet members loyal to Grace Mugabe's political campaign. The firing of Emmerson Mnangagwa, by Mugabe recently as his deputy, is believed to have precipitated the crisis.

This was the statement by military leaders in Zimbabwe a few hours after the crisis began and gunshots and explosions were reportedly heard in the nation's capital and when they took over state television networks:

Despite a virtual media blackout on state television, social media is of course going wild with speculation under various hashtags: #Zimbabwe; #RobertMugabe, #Mnangagwa, #GraceMugabe and also, #PrayforZimbabwe.

“ Breaking News: Zimbabwe's military said it had taken custody of President Robert Mugabe in what appeared to be a coup <https://t.co/PtsRtBzFYn>— The New York Times (@nytimes) [November 15, 2017](#) ”

Political analyst and economist Moeletsi Mbeki described developments as a “coup” in a live interview with [eNCA](#) in South Africa at midday. He also said that he believed the army had stepped in to avoid potential civil war after the removal of Mnangagwa.

“ This morning I am praying for peace in my beloved [#Zimbabwe](#). I am praying for reflection, introspection and Gods hands of blessing upon our nation. Not the time for vengeance or retribution. Our country needs all of us. — Trevor Ncube (@TrevorNcube) [November 15, 2017](#) ”

In a security message for US citizens on the “political uncertainty in Zimbabwe”, the US Embassy encouraged them to shelter in place until further notice. US government personnel had been instructed to shelter in their residences overnight and work remotely from home on November 15. The embassy is minimally staffed and closed to the public today, Wednesday, November 15.

“Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and escalate into violence. Avoid areas where demonstrations are taking place and exercise caution when in the vicinity of any large gatherings, protests, or demonstrations,” read a statement from the US Embassy in Zimbabwe.

The following tweet best sums up sentiment across southern Africa right now at the sudden developments in Zimbabwe...

“ To rephrase Vladimir Lenin “There are decades where nothing happens; and there are days where decades happen” [#Zimbabwe](#)— talent danga (@tdanga77) [November 15, 2017](#) ”

ABOUT LOUISE MARSLAND

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