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PRESS STATEMENT

4 JULY 2018

Counselling Services Unit statement on suspension of funding by USAID

THE Counselling Services Unit (CSU) is registered as a health clinic in Zimbabwe to provide non-partisan medical and rehabilitation services to all victims of organised violence and torture in Zimbabwe. Since 2003 CSU has provided services to more than 25 000 victims throughout Zimbabwe in often adverse conditions.

The current distressing situation created by a unilateral termination of funding by USAID on the United Nations International Day for Victims of Torture before investigations of fund usage are complete, and the subsequent lack of communication from USAID despite written requests, and the blanket Embassy statements, innuendo and allegations are deeply distressing to the Board, staff and survivors of torture in Zimbabwe. At no time have funds been misappropriated; diverted or put to misuse by CSU, all funds are entirely committed to promoting the treatment, rehabilitation, safety and re-integration back into communities for survivors of torture.

CSU has annual audits by internationally credible audit firms appointed by the Board in agreement with USAID and has at no time had any adverse audits or questionable use of funds been raised, either by the audit firm or USAID or the Office of the Inspector General.

In the interests of transparency to both the Zimbabwe public who are beneficiaries of the services offered by CSU, and the American Public who are the donors to this program, the Board and management have resolved to make all the financial accounting and management of the funds open to inspection by any Zimbabwean or American citizen by appointment from today 4 July 2018.

It is our sincere hope that USAID will carry out investigations urgently with a view to reinstating the funding for the sake of the many clients who sorely need the medical treatment and counselling services. In the meantime, CSU will endeavour to continue to provide the best possible services, in recognition of the needs of our clients.

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