

[Embargoed for public release until 24 October 2001]

ZIMBABWE

Appeal to the European Union and the Commonwealth

October 2001

AI INDEX: AFR 46/010/2001

DISTR:SC/CO/GR

Amnesty International appeals to the European Union (EU) and the Commonwealth, including its Ministerial Action Group (CMAG), to use the opportunity of their next meetings to exercise all possible influence on the Zimbabwe government to ensure it complies with its legal obligations under international human rights treaties.

Both international organizations have expressed concern at the reports of beatings, torture, political killings, forced evictions and arbitrary arrests in Zimbabwe. Both have clear human rights standards that apply to each member state. The partnership agreement between the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of States and the EU, reached on 23 June 2000 in Cotonou, Benin, calls for respect in any dialogue for “essential elements”: the respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law. The EU should insist that the Zimbabwean government demonstrate its respect for the core values of the Cotonou Agreement by cooperating with international efforts to monitor the human rights situation there, to help improve the lives of many thousands of Zimbabweans from all backgrounds and walks of life whose fundamental rights continue to be violated and abused.

In a similar manner, the Commonwealth’s Harare Declaration, agreed in Zimbabwe in 1991, demands from its signatories a commitment to work for “the protection and promotion of the fundamental political values of the Commonwealth”, including the rule of law and all fundamental human rights. The Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme on the Harare Declaration, adopted in 1995 in New Zealand, proposed, among other things, several practical measures for Commonwealth assistance, including establishing and strengthening independent electoral machinery and undertaking election observation. It was at Millbrook that the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group was first established as a mechanism to deal with serious and persistent violations of the principles of the Harare Declaration.

The human rights situation in Zimbabwe has remained serious and persistent -- and without expected improvement -- since two significant international declarations were made. On 6 September 2001 in Abuja, Nigeria, an agreement was reached between the Commonwealth and the Zimbabwean government in which the Zimbabwean authorities pledged renewed commitment to "the protection and promotion of the fundamental political values of the Commonwealth," as elaborated in the Harare Declaration. Also on 6 September, the European Parliament passed a resolution on the situation in Zimbabwe, urging the EU Council and Commission to initiate measures under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, and asking the European Council to identify and freeze the assets in Europe held by President Robert Mugabe, his family and his close associates, as well as place travel restrictions on them. "Zimbabwe is sliding into chaos with a dramatic deterioration in law and order and in the human rights situation in recent weeks as a direct result of actions inspired by President Mugabe, entrenching a climate of fear and despair which affects all parts of the population," according to the 6 September 2001 European Parliament resolution.

Amnesty International cautiously welcomed the Abuja agreement but noted that --- for it to be successful --- the Zimbabwe government had to provide an atmosphere in which all people, including opposition candidates and supporters, are free to express their political beliefs, peacefully assemble and campaign without the fear of violence. Amnesty International supports the European Parliament's aim to press President Mugabe and the government of Zimbabwe to improve the human rights situation, which has not improved since the Abuja agreement. In addressing both organizations, Amnesty International points out that, according to the evidence it has received so far, Zimbabwe has failed to honour its international human rights obligations, undertaken both in Abuja and through its ratification of human rights treaties such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as the Cotonou Agreement. Grave human rights abuses continue to be perpetrated with the Zimbabwean government authorities' acquiescence, complicity or active involvement.

Amnesty International believes that the EU should urgently support the efforts of Zimbabwe's civil society to protect human rights. The need for such intervention is particularly urgent in the months preceding presidential elections, which are due to be held sometime before the end of April 2002. One primary means of supporting the protection and promotion of human rights is to send international observers to Zimbabwe by as early as November 2001, as a preventative measure and as a strong signal that the world's attention is on the government's actions --- and inaction -- in the run up to the elections.

Additionally, Amnesty International was concerned that the focus of the Commonwealth's Abuja meeting was on land reform and had moved away from the previous emphasis on Zimbabwe's obligations to uphold the rule of law. These obligations include protecting all its citizens from gross human rights violations and ensuring that those

responsible are brought to justice. The Commonwealth Ministers have so far been unable to meet representatives of Zimbabwean civil society. Concerns about that failure were strongly articulated to Amnesty International by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the country. Amnesty International believes that it would be important and effective for the Commonwealth --- directly and through its various instruments such as CMAG --- to publicly condemn human rights violations in Zimbabwe. Amnesty International also recommends that it take urgent steps to investigate ongoing reports of violations, by immediately sending international observers into Zimbabwe and by CMAG members themselves visiting the country and meeting with NGOs and victims of violations.

Human rights violations in the context of elections

In June 2000 Amnesty International issued a report on the grave human rights situation in the run-up to Parliamentary elections that month. Since that time the organization has received evidence of continuing human rights violations in Zimbabwe, including political killings, physical assaults and acts of torture, as well as threats of violence and destruction of property, amounting to a deliberate, state-sponsored pattern of repression of any form of opposition. The violations are carried out predominantly by so-called "war veterans" and other supporters of the ruling party. These groups act with impunity and with the acquiescence of the authorities. Further, there is growing evidence of partiality and assaults by the police and of the police themselves acting alongside self-proclaimed "war veterans" and Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) supporters. Police inaction on, or active complicity in, human rights violations committed by ruling party supporters remains a pattern in eyewitness reports of several by-elections in Zimbabwe held before and since the 6 September Abuja agreement.

Since the elections of June 2000, when the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) made substantial gains, by-elections following the deaths of sitting members of parliament have been a catalyst for politically-motivated attacks, assaults and abductions. These have been directed at MDC candidates, activists and supporters as well as constituency residents of no apparent political affiliation. Journalists, lawyers, and others have been targeted for arbitrary arrest, beatings, torture and death threats because of the nature of their work, reporting political developments and human rights issues or representing victims of human rights violations. Civil servants such as teachers in rural areas have also been targeted because they were believed to be MDC supporters or other opposition parties. The purpose of the violence seems to be to instill fear into opposition party activists and supporters, and to deter the general population from supporting the opposition. Reports of human rights violations have been widespread across the country, but have intensified around each by-election.

Although some violent clashes have reportedly involved both ruling party and opposition supporters, eyewitness reports indicate that the great majority of victims of this

violence have been activists or supporters of the opposition party, or residents and communities which do not openly support either party. Amnesty International concludes from its research that armed activists and supporters of the ruling ZANU-PF party have instigated and carried out the violence in the majority of incidents, and that opposition supporters are acting primarily in self-defence.

Human rights violations in elections before the Abuja agreement

Reports from Zimbabwean human rights organizations indicate that there have been possibly as many as 50 politically-motivated or election-related killings since early 2000. The victims included MDC and United Parties activists and supporters and their relatives, commercial farmers and farm workers.

In one case, Mathew Pfebve was abducted on 29 April 2000 from his family's home village of Nyakatondo, Mashonaland Central, and killed, allegedly by ZANU-PF supporters armed with axes and iron bars. His elderly father was also abducted, had his fingers broken, then was knocked unconscious and dumped. It appeared that Mathew Pfebve may have been mistaken for his brother, Elliot Pfebve, the MDC candidate in Bindura in the June 2000 election as well as in the July 2001 by-election. To date the perpetrators have not been brought to justice. Elliot Pfebve and his family continue to be at risk of further human rights violations.

Amnesty International is concerned that systematic assaults, amounting to torture, continue to be inflicted with impunity on real or perceived opposition supporters -- often black farm workers -- detained illegally in different parts of the country by ruling party supporters, with the apparent acquiescence of state officials. There continues to be evidence of a pattern that emerged in the run-up to the June 2000 elections, in which ZANU-PF supporters reportedly set up bases in secret locations where assaults and torture occurred, and this pattern has continued since. Furthermore, there are reports that opposition supporters and others have been assaulted in police stations where they have been held after being arrested, and that many victims of human rights violations do not report incidents to the police out of fear of being arrested and assaulted in their custody.

In one such case a victim reported to a local human rights organization that in April 2001 he was abducted from his home in the Harare suburb of Dzivaresekwa, taken to a location on the outskirts of town, and tortured for having distributed MDC party cards. He stated that his assailants used red-hot chains from a fire to burn an "X" on his back, and burned MDC T-shirts they had seized from his home. He saw other victims suffer the same torture. He was threatened with death if he did not respect ZANU-PF. He stated that he had not reported the assault to the police out of fear of reprisals from his assailants.

In advance of the by-election on 28 and 29 July 2001 in Bindura constituency, Mashonaland Central province, Amnesty International appealed to the authorities in Zimbabwe to provide impartial policing and protection to all persons in the constituency, regardless of their real or perceived political affiliation, and called for all serious human rights abuses to be promptly, impartially and effectively investigated. Nonetheless, opposition party activists and supporters continued to be subjected to targeted assaults, harassment and apparently arbitrary detentions right up to and during the polling days. In the weeks prior to the by-election, villagers with no clear political affiliation were reported to be fleeing rural areas to hide in the bush, as a result of assaults by ruling party supporters. On 22 July, a group of more than 100 ZANU-PF youth supporters allegedly attacked the vehicle convoy of MDC President Morgan Tsvangirai while he was campaigning in Bindura. Five MDC supporters were reported to have been seriously injured. The MDC campaigners allegedly fired shots back in response. The police subsequently refused to protect or accompany the campaigners as they travelled on.

In another violation that took place during the Bindura polling, Joseph Mashinya, MDC Chairman in nearby Shamva district who was monitoring voter turnout, was attacked together with an MDC colleague after their vehicle had a flat tyre. At least six ZANU-PF supporters armed with sticks and iron bars surrounded their vehicle and assaulted them. After being hospitalized for treatment Joseph Mashinya went into hiding, fearing to return to his home in Shamva which had been extensively damaged in an attack by alleged ZANU-PF supporters in June.

Politically motivated violations in by-elections in September 2001

Amnesty International has previously publicly stated that the testing ground for the Abuja agreement would be the by-elections on 22 and 23 September 2001 in the Chikomba constituency of Mashonaland Central province, by-elections in Makoni West on 8 and 9 September and a mayoral election in Bulawayo also due on 8 and 9 September. During each of these elections, Amnesty International received reports of at least one political killing by government supporters, and continuing gross violations of human rights amounting to a systematic suppression of citizens' right to express their political beliefs and participate in choosing their government. The perpetrators of attacks against opposition activists appear to be able to operate with impunity and the authorities are not taking adequate steps to protect communities at risk.

In the Chikomba by-election in Central Zimbabwe, Amnesty International received reports of a political killing, abductions, beatings, torture, death threats and intimidation. On 14 September, Felix Mazava, the headmaster of a primary school, was abducted and beaten to death, allegedly by ZANU-PF supporters. A ZANU-PF official alleged Mazava had been a ZANU-PF convert and killed by MDC stalwarts, but his family denied the claim. Others were threatened with death. The MDC candidate in the election, Dr Oswald Ndanga,

remained in hiding from 8 September, after he was allegedly informed of an impending attempt on his life. ZANU-PF youths assaulted several other opposition supporters, in one instance allegedly abducting three men and forcing them to strip naked and beat each other with whips. Another victim of an abduction on 10 September later identified police officers and state intelligence agents who allegedly beat him with police batons and attempted to drown him in a river.

The earlier Makoni West by-election was also characterized by politically motivated attacks. Douglas Chapoterera, an MDC official in Makoni West, and his family narrowly escaped death on 17 August, after armed men believed to be ZANU-PF supporters surrounded their home during the night and set it on fire. The men assaulted Douglas Chapoterera's pregnant wife as she fled. After escaping from them, she reportedly ran back into the house to rescue her youngest child before the house was finally engulfed in flames. Although Douglas Chapoterera made a report to the police, the authorities gathered no evidence nor made any arrests, although there was information available about the attackers. Subsequent reports have stated that other MDC activists in the area have fled their homes after attacks by ZANU-PF supporters.

In the Bulawayo mayoral elections, described by a local human rights organization as the "least violent election in Zimbabwe this year", Amnesty International received reports of politically motivated attacks including beatings, abductions and attempted murder. For example, on 9 September 2001, four MDC party officials were allegedly summoned by an anonymous phone call to their Bulawayo office in the evening where bright lights were flashed on them and four shots fired. No one was injured in the incident. On that same night, police officers assaulted MDC supporters outside the office. By 10 September, when the elections results showed the opposition had won, eyewitnesses reported that several truckloads of ZANU-PF supporters beat people at a busy bus station with whips and threw stones at passing cars. At the same time, a nearby police station was said to have closed and locked its gates -- no police officers intervened to stop the assaults and rock-throwing.

Freedom of expression

Journalists attempting to carry out critical and independent reporting are subject to harassment, including violence and death threats, as well as the misuse of criminal charges to hamper their work. This has been an ongoing pattern since before the June 2000 parliamentary elections. Their movement around the country to research news reports is also made dangerous by the lack of impartial policing, particularly in the countryside, rendering journalists vulnerable to threats and assaults from ZANU-PF supporters. For example, on 22 August 2001, Basildon Peta, special projects editor of the *Financial Gazette* and Zimbabwe correspondent for the *London Independent*, publicized concerns that he and other prominent Zimbabwean journalists were on a "hit-list" compiled by the country's security service. Despite denials by the Zimbabwean authorities that such a "hit-list" exists, Amnesty International is extremely concerned for the safety of journalists who may be the

target of such threats and has called upon the authorities to undertake thorough investigation of the reports and ensure the safety of journalists and their families.

In another recent incident, on the night of 14-15 August 2001 Geoffrey Nyarota, editor-in-chief of the independent Daily News, was arrested in the early hours at his home and taken to Harare Central Police Station. His arrest followed publication on 14 August of an article alleging that police vehicles had been used by suspected ZANU-PF supporters and war veterans in the course of burning and looting property on commercial farms around the towns of Chinhoyi, Doma and Mhangura in Mashonaland West province. On 16 August he and three other Daily News staff were charged with contravening a provision of the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act that makes it an offence to distribute or circulate a subversive statement. They were released after being required to sign a "warned and cautioned" statement. In the following days, journalists from The Standard and the Zimbabwe Mirror were also questioned by police over stories in their newspapers. The work of journalists plays a vital role in giving a voice to the voiceless victims of human rights violations and thus helping to prevent future violations from occurring.

Violations in the context of farm occupations

Perhaps the greatest toll in human suffering has fallen upon tens of thousands of black farm workers who have been assaulted, their homes razed and then forced to leave the area by "war veterans", ruling party supporters and those who have taken over white-owned farms. By September, it was estimated up to 70,000 farm workers have been forced to leave their homes in the past 18 months. For example, during the run-up to the June 2000 elections, eyewitnesses told Amnesty International about ZANU-PF supporters who stripped and assaulted farm workers in the Mount Darwin area north of Harare. The workers were forced to dance and sing ZANU-PF songs while being beaten, and needed hospital treatment for their injuries. Their attackers threatened to return and assault their children if they went to the police.

This pattern of politically inspired human rights abuses has continued. A Zimbabwean human rights group reported that Zondiwa Dumukani, a farm worker in Waterfalls, near Harare, was beaten to death on 12 June 2001 by "war veterans". It appeared that nearby police officers and journalists with the state-controlled Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation television crew ignored the killing at the time. Other reports have detailed whippings and beatings of farm workers who refuse to vacate land.

On 23 August 2001, 10 foreign diplomats resident in Harare visited the Mashonaland West province, where the group investigated clashes between white farmers and those forcibly occupying their land. Provincial Governor Peter Chanetsa suggested that the disturbances involved connivance by Western countries and white farmers ordering their employees to loot the farms. By the end of August, in the space of one month, some 7,000

farm workers were said to have been forcibly evicted from the commercial farms in the areas where they had been working.

On 9 September, three days after the Abuja agreement, Zimbabwe's Foreign Minister Stan Mudenge condemned an invasion of a white-owned farm in the town of Beatrice in central Zimbabwe. Twelve farm workers were assaulted and 20 homes were burned down in that incident. Soon afterward, Vice President Joseph Msika also requested those people who were illegally squatting to vacate white farmlands. Yet as of 28 September, the Commercial Farmers Union estimates that there have been a total of 20 further occupations by "settlers" across Zimbabwe since the Abuja agreement was reached.

State complicity in these occupations is clear. At least three High Court orders in the month of August 2001 have sought to compel Police Commissioner Augustine Chihuri, as well as provincial and local authorities, to evict illegal settlers on farms in the Marondera and Hwedza areas in Eastern Zimbabwe. Yet Commissioner Chihuri and others have not acted, nor have they disputed eyewitness testimony, provided in recent court cases challenging the legality of farm occupations, that police vehicles were being used by "war veterans" coordinating the illegal occupations.

Although black Zimbabweans form the great majority of victims of human rights violations, white commercial farmers, white business people, expatriate aid workers and journalists have also become targets of politically-motivated attacks, including killings of commercial farmers, since the intensification of violence prior to the June 2000 elections.

On 15 April 2000 white farmer David Stevens, who had been active in helping finance the MDC and had allowed MDC rallies on his farm, was abducted from his farm and shot dead by war veterans. On 12 December 2000 Henry Elsworth was shot dead at the gate of his farm near Kwekwe. His son, himself injured, told journalists that he believed the attack was politically motivated and aimed at himself because of his links with the MDC.

In August 2001, in a case much publicized in the media, a group of 21 white commercial farmers were charged in Chinhoyi, Mashonaland West province, accused of assaulting a group of "settlers", that is, people who had moved onto one of the farms as part of the government's land redistribution program. The farmers, however, claimed that they went to the farm because the farmer there was being held hostage by "settlers". Some of those charged were arrested on 6 August immediately following the incident, while others were arrested the next day when they went to Chinhoyi police station to inquire after the first group. The 21 were released from custody on 21 August under bail restrictions, to return to court on a later date. At the time of their arrest and since, however, there were reports that lawlessness and looting were widespread in the Chinhoyi area. Reports in the state-owned media blamed black farm workers for the majority of the looting at the farms where they

worked or lived, and stated that in some cases farm workers had been arrested and charged. Other observers, however, have claimed that black farm workers were in most cases the victims of assaults, looting and other abuses committed by "settlers" and others assumed to be ZANU-PF supporters. Scores of black farm workers were reported to have fled the areas of violence to hide in the bush, including women with young children. Many were rendered destitute, particularly where their employers on the commercial farms had been unable to pay wages because they had been arrested or forced to flee.

Critical failures in policing

This pattern of human rights violations is perpetuated by the fact that members of the police, intelligence services and pro-government war veterans or other ruling party supporters escape accountability for political violence, human rights abuses and other criminal offences. Amnesty International believes that ending the culture of impunity that has been created in Zimbabwe over several decades should be the highest priority for the international community. The situation has grown more serious as the professionalism of the police has been undermined and gravely compromised. Not only are the police failing to take adequate steps to arrest perpetrators and prevent incidents of violence and intimidation, but they appear in some cases to have arrested opposition party activists in order to prevent them from campaigning. In the run-up to the September 2001 Chikomba poll, for example, opposition Member of Parliament Tichaona Munyanyi and 19 MDC supporters were arrested and detained overnight for "moving at night", although ZANU-PF supporters were allegedly allowed to campaign during evening hours. Some of those arrested were polling agents returning home from Harare, where they had undergone election monitoring training.

In another case prior to the Bindura by-election in July 2001, an MDC youth leader, Reason Chikono, and five other youth activists were abducted from the Musana area of the constituency and assaulted by a group of ZANU-PF supporters. After the group passed a police post, police officers intervened. Although the MDC youths were allegedly visibly injured, the police took no action against their abductors. On the contrary, they took Reason Chikono and the five other MDC youths into custody for questioning. They were brought before Bindura Magistrate's Court on 13 July on suspicion of involvement in clashes with ZANU-PF supporters, and were released on bail. It was alleged that they approached a ZANU-PF base in the Musana area on 11 July and attacked it using stones and other weapons, and that ZANU-PF supporters were thereby injured. As far as Amnesty International is aware, however, no-one has laid a complaint of assault against these youths.

Police have not only failed to maintain law and order but often have directly participated in the violation of human rights, such as beatings and torture. As just one example among many, Tawanda Hondora, the chairperson of the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights was assaulted in April 2001 by members of the ruling party in the full view --

and with the active participation -- of the Zimbabwe Republic Police. Far from protecting him, police officers instead took him to their station and took turns in continuing the beating. The arrival of a senior officer meant only further threats to call the "war veterans" and a political lecture on the evils of the opposition party. In the words of another witness of official abuse: "If you can be heard speaking about the government, you can be reported to the police. And no one can assist you if you are reported to the police.... We are living in fear."

An eyewitness to the elections on 28 and 29 July in the Bindura area told Amnesty International about unlawful roadblocks along the road. They were manned by ruling party supporters -- described as its Youth Brigade -- standing alongside the Zimbabwe Republic Police. Unlawful searches were conducted: if they found materials deemed supportive of the opposition, members of the Youth Brigade "took the law into their own hands", according to the witness. This scene has been repeated at other by-elections held in the past two months.

The police have also repeatedly used excessive force to quell peaceful protests, including protests by journalists, workers, and students. In April 2001 police action to end protests by students resulted in the death on the University of Zimbabwe campus in Harare of one student, Batanai Hadzidzi, with at least 28 other students reportedly injured. The police claimed that Batanai Hadzidzi was trampled to death when students fled in panic after riot police fired tear gas into their accommodation to disperse them. Eyewitnesses, however, stated that riot police assaulted Batanai Hadzidzi, who was not actively involved in the protests, with their batons after entering his student hostel room late at night on 8 April. As far as Amnesty International is aware, no inquest has been conducted so far into the circumstances surrounding Batanai Hadzidzi's death.

A climate of impunity

The pattern of incidents described above overwhelmingly indicate that the perpetrators of human rights violations have acted in the belief that the Zimbabwean authorities would not take action to hold them to account. In October 2000, President Robert Mugabe made this premise explicit when he granted an amnesty to every person liable to criminal prosecution, whose guilt or innocence has not been determined by a court, for any politically-motivated crime committed during the period 1 January to 31 July 2000. Although the order makes exception for some grave crimes, the amnesty protects perpetrators of human rights abuses who are liable to prosecution for, or are charged with, assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm (torture), common assaults, kidnapping and abductions during the specified time frame. This has given a clear signal to the perpetrators of human rights violations that they can continue to act with impunity. Amnesty International calls for this indemnity order to be repealed so that Zimbabwe's legislation is brought back into line with international law and standards. Those suspected to be responsible for human rights violations should be brought to

justice in line with international standards of fair trial but without recourse to the death penalty.

Deepening this problem of impunity has been the Zimbabwean government's attempts to undermine the impartiality of the judiciary. On several occasions, including when the Supreme Court has delivered judgments on the land issue, the President and government ministers have announced that they will not comply with court decisions. Anthony Gubbay, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court took early retirement in March 2001, reportedly as a result of threats and intense pressure. On at least one occasion a group of war veterans invaded the High Court in Harare and threatened court officials.

Recommendations

In light of the pattern of politically motivated human rights violations around elections and the campaigning before them, Amnesty International's recommendations focus on the run-up to the presidential elections, due sometime before April 2002. The presence of domestic and international observers and reporting by domestic and international journalists are the most effective means of curtailing intimidation and attacks of opposition activists by ruling party supporters, in some cases aided by the Zimbabwe Republic Police.

A second focus of Amnesty International's recommendations is on the international community's engagement with civil society as well as with the government of Zimbabwe. Long after international observers have gone back to their respective countries, Zimbabwean human rights monitors, election observers and journalists must deal with the ongoing struggle to protect and promote their fellow citizens' rights and freedoms. Wilfred Mhanda, a former military commander in the Zimbabwe People's Army in the war for independence and now chair of the Zimbabwe Liberators' Platform, a civil society group representing war veterans, recently told Amnesty International: "We insist that the international community must address civil society as well as the government, rather than engage President Mugabe on their own".

A third element for future action is cooperation between the international organizations offering assistance and observation through this period of political upheaval and human rights violations. An important grouping of Southern African countries, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), will remain key to resolving this human rights crisis. On 10 September 2001, the Presidents of South Africa, Namibia, Malawi, Mozambique and Botswana met President Mugabe and began a two-day SADC Summit in Zimbabwe to address the situation in the country. In his opening speech, Malawian President Bakili Muluzi, the current chair of SADC, stated: "We are very concerned about the worsening economy, the decline in the rule of law, and the spread of violence and political instability in Zimbabwe". At the conclusion of the meeting, in which the heads of state were

unable to meet representatives of the Crisis Conference Coordinating Committee, a coalition of leading Zimbabwean rights groups, the SADC summit agreed to set up a mechanism to monitor the level of human rights violations in the country. The Commonwealth and the European Union should coordinate their efforts with SADC, through the governments of Malawi as the SADC chair and Mozambique, which was recently named as the new coordinator of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security.

Appeal to the European Union

Amnesty International is calling on the EU to address urgently the climate of fear in Zimbabwe and to help restore the rule of law and effective accountability for human rights violations. The EU should publicly commit themselves to:

- Agree upon preparations for the formation and early, widespread deployment of a comprehensive EU Observation Mission to monitor the human rights situation across rural Zimbabwe in the run-up to the presidential elections. An observation mission to Zimbabwe's presidential elections from the United States was expelled from Zimbabwe in September 2001, while the preparatory mission for the EU Observation Mission was blocked from entering the country on 15 September 2001. In light of this attempt to obstruct international monitoring, the EU should insist upon immediate access for its observers, then effectively monitor and protest against any attempt by the government of Zimbabwe to block or hinder the legitimate activities of international and domestic observers.
- Implement the conclusions and recommendations of the EU's own Election Observation Mission to the Parliamentary Elections in Zimbabwe on 24 to 25 June 2000. In particular, the EU should pay attention to the Mission's recommendation that the Zimbabwean authorities create an open and transparent management and administration of the upcoming presidential electoral process, which would go far in protecting the Zimbabwean people's rights to free political expression, including the rights to assembly, speech and association. To this end, the EU should insist that the Zimbabwean authorities:
 - accredit international and local monitors in good time to allow them to travel to their assigned areas,
 - grant unhindered access to the country's rural areas for all observers to monitor the human rights situation in Zimbabwe from the present time and through to the presidential elections due in 2002, and
 - ensure monitors have all necessary protection by police authorities from attack and intimidation.
- Provide a clear mandate for the head of that EU Observation Mission in Zimbabwe to make public immediately all of the EU observers' reports of violence and intimidation that take place in the context of the elections, and to publish its official report while still present in Zimbabwe.

- Include in the EU Observation Mission experts on professional policing to review the conduct of the Zimbabwe Republic Police and make specific recommendations to the EU on future steps the organization could take to provide future assistance for its reform.

Appeal to the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group

Amnesty International urges the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, which is due to meet sometime in the next month after the postponement of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Brisbane, to take immediate action to:

- Publicly condemn the ongoing state-condoned violation of human rights in Zimbabwe, including politically-motivated attacks and killings, physical assaults and acts of torture, as well as threats of violence and the destruction of property, and indicate what steps and when the Commonwealth will act upon the evidence of breaches of the undertakings agreed upon in the Abuja meeting of 6 September 2001.
- Press President Mugabe and the government of Zimbabwe to accept the long-delayed CMAG visit to Zimbabwe and insist on unhindered access to civil society, the general population and the rural areas of the country. In the event that such a visit is refused, CMAG ministers should ensure that they receive information in person or in writing from representatives of NGOs and other human rights defenders in Zimbabwe, and that their views are clearly represented in its report to the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in January 2002.
- Publicly express support for non-governmental organizations engaged in defending and promoting human rights, and other human rights defenders such as lawyers and journalists, and seek assurances that freedom of movement, association and expression will be respected.

In a general appeal in this period before the January 2002 Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, Amnesty International urges Commonwealth leaders to review the conclusions and recommendations of the Commonwealth Observer Group to the June 2000 Parliamentary Elections in Zimbabwe. In their final report, the previous Commonwealth observers in Zimbabwe deplored “the level and nature of politically motivated violence which characterized the period leading up to polling days” and that was aimed principally at opposition and independent candidates. If lessons would be learned from this last experience in election observation, the Commonwealth should commit itself to :

- Insist that the government of Zimbabwe immediately allow the entrance of international observers from several different nations, non-governmental organizations and inter-governmental organizations to begin monitoring the human rights situation in Zimbabwe from the present time through to the presidential elections due in 2002.

- Provide international monitors in larger numbers than the previous Commonwealth Observer Group of 33 nationals from Commonwealth member states and provide sufficient resources to the teams, such as cellular telephones and vehicles, as part of the Commonwealth's commitment to effective monitoring of the human rights situation in the rural areas.
- Support local Zimbabwean monitors to ensure they are also adequately trained and equipped to undertake their work.
- Ask for assurances from the Zimbabwean authorities that all monitors be accredited in good time to allow them to travel to their assigned areas, and that they be afforded all necessary protection by police authorities from attack and intimidation.
- Assist in the development of Codes of Conduct through round-table discussions involving the Government of Zimbabwe, opposition parties and civic organizations regarding the activities of political parties and candidates during the campaign and election period, as well as media coverage, freedom of expression and access to the media, and insist that all political parties, and the government of Zimbabwe, respect these agreed guidelines.

For more information, please see:

Zimbabwe: a human rights brief for election observers, Amnesty International, 1 June 2000 (AFR 46/12/2000)

Zimbabwe: Terror tactics in the run-up to parliamentary elections, June 2000, Amnesty International, 8 June 2000 (AFR 46/14/2000)

Amnesty International condemns Zimbabwe amnesty, Amnesty International 11 October 2000 (AFR 46/028/2000)

Zimbabwe: International community must act now, Amnesty International, April 2001 (AFR 46/003/2001)