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Wednesday, 26 November 2008

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Assembly backs unity government in Zimbabwe**

### **Urgent resolution**

*Directorate-General for Communication*  
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

## **SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE**

Debate: 26.11.2008

Vote: 28.11.2008

### **Assembly backs unity government in Zimbabwe**

**The Assembly confirms that a government of national unity is a solution for ending the political, economic and social crisis that followed Zimbabwe's widely-criticised elections of June 2008. In a draft resolution to be adopted on 28 November, it calls on the parties to a power-sharing deal of September 2008 to work together for a lasting democratic and peaceful solution, and advocates a peace and reconciliation commission.**

The official results of the second round of the presidential elections on 27 June 2008 brought back the incumbent President, Robert Mugabe, following the withdrawal of opposition candidate Mordan Tsvangirai.

The Assembly firmly condemns campaigns of violence and intimidation against the population with the aim of influencing voting in the June 2008 elections and violations of the rights of the opposition.

It also welcomes the African mediation efforts led by President Thabo Mbeki, and urgently calls for the increased engagement of African countries and regional institutions such as the SADC and AU, as well as eminent African personalities in negotiating and monitoring a solution.

#### **Peace and reconciliation commission**

The Assembly calls on the future government of national unity to set up a neutral and independent peace and reconciliation commission with a view to promoting a national healing process that will review the crimes against humanity, torture, rape and other crimes committed in the internal conflict.

#### **Refugees and aid**

The Assembly also expresses deep concern about the situation of Zimbabwean refugees in the region and deplores acts of violence against Zimbabwean refugees in neighbouring countries. It calls on the European Commission to support these countries with financial and material programmes for the refugees.

It strongly appeals to all stakeholders and the international community to be prepared to ensure the rapid provision of aid for the post-conflict reconstruction of Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe is facing a cholera outbreak with a virtually collapsed health system and broken water supply. Life expectancy has dropped from 60 years for both sexes to 37 years for men and 34 for women in the past decade and 1.7 million people there are now living with HIV.

#### **Plenary session**

"It is unacceptable that Zimbabwe's leaders are still failing to respect the will of its people", said Michael Gahler (EPP-ED, DE).

Zimbabwe is a worry for the SACS countries, because the situation is not evolving so fast as we would wish. Angola is ready to share its experience to help it to achieve a peaceful settlement", said Batawar Bonito de Sousa (Angola), adding that "all the parties must respect the voters' choice and work to improve Zimbabweans' living conditions".

"Robert Mugabe may be mistaken about the level of tolerance of oppression and violation of people's rights, said Ana Gomes (PES, PT), adding that "this is not a democratically negotiated agreement - African leaders must speak out more clearly", and "the image of the African Union is at stake".

A representative of Mugabe's Zanu-PF party said that efforts to "resolve the political situation are well-advanced, and some provisions are already being implemented, e.g. on the allocation of ministerial posts". One constitutional change - amendment 19 for a more inclusive government, is before the facilitator and should soon be submitted to Parliament and the Senate, he added.

"We shall sign nothing until amendment 19 reflects the September 2008" agreement replied an opposition MDC representative, who pointed out that "food does not reach those suspected of belonging to the opposition".

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/60\\_16/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/60_16/default_en.htm)

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