



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on Zimbabwe

*2859th EXTERNAL RELATIONS Council meeting
Brussels, 10 March 2008*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

1. "The Council remains very concerned about the humanitarian, political and economic situation in Zimbabwe and conditions on the ground, which may endanger the holding of free and fair Parliamentary and Presidential elections. The Council notes that no formal invitation has been made to the European Union to send an official EU Observation Mission.
2. The Council therefore urges the government of Zimbabwe to ensure that the forthcoming elections meet international norms and standards including the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) principles and guidelines concerning elections, of which Zimbabwe is a signatory.
3. The Council recognises the efforts of President Mbeki, on behalf of SADC, to improve relations between the Government of Zimbabwe and the opposition and the progress achieved so far. The Council hopes this process will continue in order to settle fundamental issues and that the changes agreed thereby will be implemented in such a way as to allow for the holding of free and fair elections. The Council calls on the SADC countries to remain actively engaged.
4. The Council recalls its continued commitment to the people of Zimbabwe and emphasises that the EU remains the most important donor to Zimbabwe. The Council reiterates that its targeted measures (consisting of a visa ban, an assets freeze and an arms embargo) are exclusively aimed at those leading figures responsible for Zimbabwe's crisis of governance and human rights' abuses and do not penalise the Zimbabwean population.
5. The EU will continue to closely monitor the situation in Zimbabwe and support efforts towards ensuring democracy, stability, economic recovery and respect for human rights. The Council also wishes to confirm its willingness to continue to make use of any opportunity provided to carry on the dialogue with the Government of Zimbabwe and, as soon as conditions allow, to begin working towards the resumption of full cooperation."

P R E S S
