



EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE

JOINT LOCAL STATEMENT ON RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

The Heads of Mission of the Delegation of the European Union, France, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Romania, Sweden and the United Kingdom and the Heads of Mission of Australia, Canada and the United States of America issue the following statement in Zimbabwe:

Intimidation, harassment and physical attacks on human rights defenders, trade union and civil society representatives, and opposition politicians - prior to, during and following the demonstration in Harare on 16 August - are cause for great concern.

The Zimbabwean Constitution guarantees the right to personal security from violence and prohibits physical or psychological torture. The Heads of Mission urge the authorities to respect these fundamental rights, and to hold perpetrators of violence legally responsible.

The Heads of Mission call on the authorities to respect the constitutional rights to freedom of assembly, association and expression as well as to peaceful protest, and urge all political party leaders and supporters to abstain from threats and incitement to violence as well as acts of violence or vandalism. The security forces must adhere to their Constitutional mandate and exercise restraint and proportionality while maintaining public order.

Only by addressing concretely and rapidly these human rights violations will the Government of Zimbabwe give credibility to its commitments to address longstanding governance challenges. The Heads of Mission reiterate their calls for the implementation of the government's political and economic reform agenda, underpinned by inclusive national dialogue and increased efforts to address the severe social situation.

In Harare, on 20 August 2019