



November 7th, 2009

Government of Zimbabwe

Your Excellencies

President Robert Mugabe
Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai

Copy to:

**Southern African Development Community
African Union
UN Human Rights Council**

Ref: UN Special Rapporteur on Torture's cancelled visit to Zimbabwe, widespread violence and arbitrary arrests

Your Excellencies,

We the undersigned human rights organizations, from 14 countries, firmly regret the last-minute refusal to receive Mr. Manfred Nowak, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, after his official invitation to conduct a fact-finding mission from October 28 to November 4, 2009.

We also express our concern with regard to Zimbabwe's current human rights situation, in light of its: ongoing and widespread violence; and recent arbitrary arrests of senior civic leaders, political activists and human rights defenders. These human rights abuses highlight the urgency of Mr. Nowak's visit, whose mission would undoubtedly help to improve the human rights protection of Zimbabwe's citizens, particularly to combat torture and ill-treatment.

The Global Political Agreement and its subsequent power-sharing government were originally accompanied by great hope from in the international community for the overall improvement of the human rights situation in the country.

Therefore, we call upon the Government of Zimbabwe to end human rights violations occurring in the country and to cooperate with all UN human rights mechanisms, including by finding a prompt solution to resolve the impasse resulting from the cancelation of Mr. Nowak's visit to the country.

Yours Sincerely,

Asian Legal Resource Centre - ALRC, Hong Kong (China)
Botswana Civil Society Solidarity Coalition on Zimbabwe (BOCISCOZ - Botswana Civil Society Solidarity Coalition for Zimbabwe)
Cairo Institute of Human Rights Studies (Egypt)
Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales – CELS (Argentina)
Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria (South Africa)
CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation (South Africa)
Comisión Colombiana de Juristas (Colombia)
Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (India)
Conectas Human Rights (Brazil)
Corporación Humanas (Chile)
Democracy Coalition Project (USA)
DITSHWANELO – The Botswana Centre for Human Rights (BOCISCOZ - Botswana Civil Society Solidarity Coalition for Zimbabwe)
Fondation Humanus (Cameroon)
Human Rights Concern (Eritrea)
Instituto de Defensa Legal (Peru)
Legal Assistance Centre (Namibia)
MISA Botswana (BOCISCOZ - Botswana Civil Society Solidarity Coalition for Zimbabwe)
Mouvement Citoyen (Senegal)
Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa - OSISA
OIKOUMENE (BOCISCOZ - Botswana Civil Society Solidarity Coalition for Zimbabwe)
People Opposing Women Abuse – POWA (South Africa)
People to People Coalition of Zimbabwe (BOCISCOZ - Botswana Civil Society Solidarity Coalition for Zimbabwe)
Physicians for Human Rights (USA)
Southern African Human Rights Defenders Trust – SAHRDT (South Africa)