



Zimbabwe

EU - Zimbabwe: Political Relations

As one of the 79 countries of the Africa-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) grouping, Zimbabwe is a signatory to the Cotonou Agreement. This is a comprehensive agreement between the European Union (EU) and partner countries aimed at poverty reduction, sustainable development and integration of ACP countries into the world economy. The partnership is based on a series of principles, including respect for human rights and democratic principles and political justice.

After the escalation of political violence related to the elections in 2002, the EU decided to introduce measures against Zimbabwe's ruling ZANU-PF party as a means to put pressure on those considered responsible. These measures have been renewed each year since 2002. The establishment of a Government of National Unity in 2009 triggered a re-engagement process between the Government of Zimbabwe and the EU. The EU's most recent renewal of measures occurred in February 2011, where it concluded that significant progress has been made in addressing the economic crisis and in improving the delivery of social services. As a result, the EU decided to ease the measures, removing 35 persons from the list and to renew the remaining measures for one year. However, the EU equally noted that these developments have not been matched by equivalent progress on the political front. Further reforms are necessary with regard to the respect for rule of law, human rights and democracy. These measures can be reassessed at any moment should positive developments take place.

What do the measures entail?

The measures have three components: suspension of government-to-government cooperation, targeted measures against individuals and companies; and an arms embargo.

Suspension of government-to-government cooperation (Article 96): Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement prevents the EU from channelling its assistance through the Government of Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, the EU remains committed in its support of the local population, particularly in the areas of agriculture, food security, health & education and governance. Since the measures were introduced in 2002, the EU has channeled € 1.5 billion through UN organisations and other non-state actors in line with government development priorities and in coordination with local ministries – making the EU and its Member States the largest providers of assistance. This funding has been instrumental in supporting the ongoing stabilization process and enhancing EU-Zimbabwe relations.

Targeted measures against individuals and companies: A visa ban and asset freeze is currently enforced against individuals whose activities are considered to undermine democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law in Zimbabwe. After the removal of 35 persons from the list in February 2011, the list contains 163 persons who are prevented from travelling to and accessing their assets in the EU. Also affected are the 31 companies associated with those persons targeted by the visa ban and a few controlled by State authorities.

Arms embargo: Individuals or companies of EU Member States are currently prohibited from the supply or sale of arms and related munitions to Zimbabwe.

EU measures against Zimbabwe

- > Redirecting funding from the Government of Zimbabwe to UN organisations and non-state actors
- > Visa ban and asset freeze against 163 persons and a trade ban on 31 companies
- > Arms embargo