

**ZIMBABWE'S INTERVENTION DURING THE WORKSHOP  
ON THE IMPACT OF UNILATERAL COERCIVE MEASURES  
ON THE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS: 5 APRIL 2013**

Mr Chairman,

First and foremost we thank the conveners of this workshop and the esteemed presenters who have so ably unpacked the important issues before us.

The issues before this workshop are of utmost importance to my delegation, to the Human Rights Council as indeed they should be to the whole international community. Unilateral coercive measures are measures taken outside the United Nations Security Council and therefore, the imposition of these measures on other member states are a violation of the United Nations Charter and all that the Organisation stands for. Coercive measures are a violation of the various Conventions of the Human Rights Council and hence a blatant violation of the human rights of innocent peoples, women and children alike.

It is in this context that the 16<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Heads of State and Governments of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) emphasised that one of the main challenges to human rights is

the coercive and unilateral measures imposed by some powerful western countries. This threat impedes efforts by states to attain the enjoyment of human rights of its people.

Chairman,

In Zimbabwe, unilateral coercive measures are not an issue for theoretical discussion. We have for so many years and are still living under the regime of measures imposed on us and have seen the devastating effect of these measures on our economy and subsequently on our people.

Unilateral coercive measures were imposed on us following our successful land reform programme which saw the black majority getting back its land that had been illegally taken by the British colonialists. The measures were imposed by the United States and the EU on 21 December 2001 and 18 February 2002 respectively to weaken the government of the day, thereby attempt to effect regime change. These unilateral measures included withdrawal of financial support in particular commercial loans and grants. They also included illegal unilateral measures imposed on private companies and parastatals especially those in agriculture and diamond mining which are the core of the Zimbabwean economy.

Chairman,

My delegation recalls that the former US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Chester Crocker, addressing the US Senate hearing on ZIDERA, stated that, " To separate the Zimbabwean people from ZANU PF, we are going to have to make their economy scream, and I hope you, senators, have the stomach for what you have to do". Indeed, having the stomach to impose such far reaching measures was called for given the fact that it is the most vulnerable Zimbabweans, including women, children, people living with HIV and Aids, who would be the most deprived of their right to health care, education and livelihoods by a screaming economy.

Those who imposed unilateral measures on my country would wish to hoodwink the international community by claiming that these are targeted sanctions. If the sanctions were targeted as they purport to be, one wonders why the United States sanctions law against Zimbabwe, the ZIDERA, bars international financial institutions from extending any loans, credit, or guarantee to the government of Zimbabwe. It is clear that such access to any loan, credit or guarantee which is necessary for any country to achieve economic growth and recovery, is not being denied to only a few individuals but the government and people of Zimbabwe. Imposing unilateral

coercive measures which deprive the financial capacity of any government that has the primary duty to create an enabling economic environment within which socio-economic rights can be guaranteed, is as good as depriving all persons within the jurisdiction of such government's authority their enjoyment of such rights.

It is not farfetched to assert that Zimbabwe's efforts to meet its Millennium Development Goals have been pinned back by these unilateral coercive measures. Sanctions have caused us not to meet some of the targets we were in line to achieve especially on education, health and social services. Since our independence in 1980, the EU was the most important donor to the health, education and agricultural sectors, contributing millions of Euros in various programmes in the respective sectors. However, following the inception of the land reform programme, the EU withdrew all its support and there was a depletion of essential drugs in 73% of Zimbabwe's health facilities which led to an increase in infant mortality rate with at least 100 children dying every day with treatable diseases and at least eight Zimbabwean women dying every day while giving birth due to chronic underfunding of the health sector. The Global Fund made it difficult and most of the times impossible

for the country to scale up its HIV prevention programmes by rejecting our application for funds for unspecified reasons.

Chairman,

My delegation wishes to remind everyone that in her recent visit to Zimbabwe in 2012, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Navanethem Pillay, admitted that illegal sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe by western countries was a gross human rights abuse and had a harmful impact on the country and its people.

It is not a secret that the unilateral coercive measures on Zimbabwe used the threat of disinvestment, economic collapse and socio-economic deprivation to make Zimbabweans fear supporting their government's indigenisation and economic empowerment policies. However, thanks to the ingenuity of Zimbabweans, they have stood from this near collapse and faced the challenges head on. This is why we understand countries like Cuba and others who are reeling under these measures and thus we continue to condemn those states which wantonly violate the UN Charter and international law by imposing such measures.

Finally, my delegation wishes to categorically state that Zimbabwe opposes unilateralism and unilaterally imposed measures by certain states which can lead to the erosion and violation of the UN Charter, international law and human rights. It is against this background that Zimbabwe supports the establishment of a special procedure of the Human Rights Council on the issue of the impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights.

I thank you