



Crisis in Zimbabwe

Statement by Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Washington, DC
June 23, 2008

Yet another vicious assault on the opposition and its supporters for exercising their right to assemble and their right to free speech has reinforced that it is impossible for there to be a free, fair or peaceful election in Zimbabwe on June 27. Due to these and other events, and out of concern for the lives of his Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) supporters, Morgan Tsvangirai announced he will no longer contest the run-off election.

The United States condemns in the strongest terms the Government of Zimbabwe's continuing campaign of violence against its own people. It is abundantly clear that Mugabe is determined to thwart the will of the people of Zimbabwe as so clearly expressed on March 29. Reports that international election monitors were also victims of state-sponsored violence are particularly troubling.

Both the MDC and Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) parties must work together on behalf of the people of Zimbabwe. The Mugabe regime cannot be considered legitimate in the absence of a runoff. In forsaking the most basic tenet of governance – the protection of its people – the Government of Zimbabwe must be held accountable by the international community. We call upon the Southern African Development Community, African Union Peace and Security Council, and the United Nations Security Council to take up this issue immediately.

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