

Concha
Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 14, 2008



His Excellency Ban Ki-Moon
Secretary-General
United Nations Secretariat
One United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017

US
Zimbabwe

Dear Mr. Secretary-General:

We are writing to urge you to immediately deploy a high-level United Nations Special Envoy to Zimbabwe to investigate and monitor the country's election process.

The ZANU-PF regime, headed by President Robert Mugabe, continues to evade its constitutional obligation to provide basic freedoms to its citizens, including the right to a free and fair election. The United States Congress has received numerous reports that Zimbabwean police, soldiers, war-veterans and youth militia are systematically torturing and murdering opposition supporters and burning and looting homes and religious sites.

The immediate deployment of a high-level UN Special Envoy may provide necessary intervention with President Mugabe to end the current spate of violence against civilians. A Special Envoy also may provide oversight of the next stage of the electoral process in Zimbabwe which, to date, has been seriously marred by state-sponsored violence, intimidation and manipulation. This would also convey the determination of the international community that President Mugabe's regime must respect the rule of law, peace and democracy.

We commend you for calling for a peaceful, credible and transparent election in Zimbabwe. However, we believe that a UN envoy is now urgently needed to press the regime to live up to its most basic constitutional responsibility. We understand that President Mugabe will likely raise objections to the appointment of such an envoy, but we urge you to press ahead regardless. You may recall that President Mugabe initially opposed the appointment of UN envoy Anna Tibaijuka of Tanzania in 2005 following Operation Murambatsvina (Operation Throw Out the Trash), during which 70,000 dwellings and shops were destroyed and 700,000 people driven into the open veldt. According to the United Nations, 2.4 million people were affected by the operation. Despite President Mugabe's objections, Ms. Tibaijuka was given a mandate to investigate, and the mass demolitions abruptly came to an end. It is our sincere hope that the rapid dispatch of an equally effective envoy will yield similar results and that the political crisis that has engulfed Zimbabwe will be resolved without further delay.

We are grateful for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Howard L. Berman

HOWARD L. BERMAN, M.C.

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

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His Excellency Ban Ki-Moon

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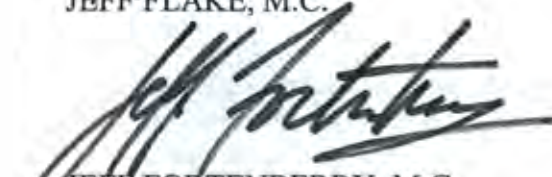

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