



**Item 6 – Adoption of the UPR outcome of Zimbabwe  
15 March 2012**

Thank you, Mr. President.

Human Rights Watch welcomes the Human Rights Council's review of Zimbabwe in December 2011. The working group report contains many important recommendations, including ensuring rule of law and respect for human rights; ending impunity; putting an end to all forms of intimidation, harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, and torture against all persons, in particular human rights defenders, political activists and journalists; reform of the security sector; ensuring independence of the judiciary; and repealing or amending repressive laws.

While we welcome the government of Zimbabwe's participation in the Universal Periodic Review we are gravely concerned that the delegation from Zimbabwe rejected all of the recommendations we have detailed above. Instead, the government has continued to commit serious abuses, a matter that is of grave concern ahead of elections in the coming year.

There has been little progress on promised human rights reforms or respect for the rule of law. Human rights defenders and other critics of the government continue to be arbitrarily arrested and detained and otherwise harassed.

For example, on February 7, 2012, police arrested 10 members of the nongovernmental organization Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) as they peacefully demonstrated in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second-largest city. The women were detained for two days and then released on bail. Seventeen members of the same group had been arrested on January 19, and released on the same day.

On December 5, 2011, the authorities arrested three activists from the Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe (MMPZ) in Gwanda after they held a community meeting on public information rights in November. The three activists spent 11 days in detention before they were released on bail.

Although the government accepted the UPR recommendation to bring its National Human Rights Commission into operation, three months later, the government still does not have a statute that would allow the commission to become operational. State institutions such as the Office of the Attorney General and the police force remain highly partisan in support of ZANU-PF despite the government's denial that this is the case.

We deeply regret that Zimbabwe rejected at the outset crucial recommendations addressed by Russia and South Africa to investigate allegations of violations. More than three years after Zimbabwe's presidential election run-off, the power-sharing government has not investigated widespread abuses, including beatings,

killings, and torture committed by the army and supporters and officials of ZANU-PF against real and perceived supporters of the former opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). There has also been no justice for victims of serious abuses that took place during elections in 2002 and 2005, and for the victims of Zimbabwe's violent land reform program.

Zimbabwe's refusal to implement key recommendations pertaining to human rights calls into question its commitment to the UPR. We therefore call for all governments to continue to insist that the government of Zimbabwe among other things: restores and respects the rule of law; takes all necessary measures to end human rights violations; upholds media freedoms; and ensures accountability for perpetrators of violence, killings, and other abuses.