

POSITION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION ON SANCTIONS AGAINST ZIMBABWE

With reference to recent statements made by Zimbabwean officials and underlined by the local press on the occasion of the recent SADC Summit in Dar Es Salaam, according to which the so-called sanctions imposed against Zimbabwe by the EU have accelerated the economic crisis and brought about suffering for the population, the following should be noted:

- 1) The EU is not imposing economic or trade sanctions against Zimbabwe. The EU shares the opinion expressed by a number of international organisations whereby the main cause of the serious social and economic crisis which Zimbabwe is experiencing should be sought in inappropriate economic policies, the manner in which the land reform has been carried out, the drought and the HIV/AIDS pandemic;
- 2) the measures adopted by the EU, as a result of the break down of the rule of law and human rights abuses, are the freezing of personal assets of senior members of government and other high-ranking officials, the prevention of the same to travel to EU Member States and the embargo on the sale of arms. None of these measures could affect or cause any hardship to the Zimbabwean population;
- 3) the suspension or re-orientation of certain financial and development cooperation programmes with the Government of Zimbabwe is mainly due to the fact that it has not complied with the provisions of the pertinent bilateral agreements and to the political and economic environment which is not conducive to development cooperation with government structures;

- 4) the EU and its Member States are deeply concerned with the economic and humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe. Consequently, the humanitarian assistance given to the people of Zimbabwe by the EU and its Member States has continued and has, in the last two years, amounted to Euro 300 million (equivalent to approximately USD 330 million). In addition, the EU and member states fund programmes in direct support of the people of Zimbabwe in poverty alleviation, education, health, infrastructures, human rights and democratisation;
- 5) the EU remains committed to engaging the Government of Zimbabwe in a comprehensive dialogue on the present difficulties being experienced in the country with the aim of restoring political, social and economic stability.