

# Press release: Minister for Africa statement on Zimbabwe elections 2018

Following the recent elections in Zimbabwe, the Minister of State for Africa, Harriett Baldwin, said:

The UK was encouraged that Zimbabweans turned out in record numbers to vote in the elections on 30 July, and particularly the increase in first-time voters, including many young, urban Zimbabweans, who found themselves excluded from previous electoral rolls.

While polling day passed off peacefully, a number of concerns have been raised by observer missions, particularly about the pre-election environment, the role of state media, and the use of state resources. There is much to be done to build confidence in Zimbabwe's electoral process.

The UK remains deeply concerned by the violence following the elections and the disproportionate response from the security forces. We have urged all parties to work together to ensure calm. It is vital that any appeals against the results or the process are handled swiftly and impartially. All candidates have a responsibility to ensure their supporters act with restraint and avoid violence, while any challenges to the results are resolved.

We will continue to work with the Government and the Zimbabwean people to support democracy and good governance, help with the country's development, and promote regional security and prosperity. The UK remains a close partner of the Zimbabwean people in their quest for a better future.