

# Press Releases: Recent Events in Zimbabwe

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
August 9, 2018

---

The United States government is gravely concerned by credible reports of numerous detentions, beatings, and other abuses of Zimbabweans over the past week, particularly targeting opposition activists. There should be no role for violence, intimidation, or harassment in the new Zimbabwe.

We are also deeply concerned that Zambia chose to hand over former Minister of Finance Tendai Biti to the Zimbabwean authorities, and in the face of a reported Zambian court order blocking his expulsion from Zambia.

This decision is particularly disheartening given the courage that Zambia showed in sheltering thousands of Zimbabwean freedom fighters from Rhodesian aggression in the days of Zimbabwe's independence struggle. We will be discussing this matter with Zambia's leaders and reviewing certain aspects of our cooperation with the Zambian government.

The Government of Zimbabwe is now responsible for Tendai Biti's safety and welfare. We call on Zimbabwe's leaders to guarantee Mr. Biti's physical safety and ensure his constitutional and human rights are respected, consistent with the rule of law and Zimbabwe's international obligations and commitments. In Washington, the United States has convoked the ambassadors of both Zimbabwe and Zambia to register our gravest concerns.

While Zimbabwe had a historic opportunity to move the country toward a brighter future for all its citizens, an electoral process marred by violence that does not respect constitutional rights and procedures is not a step toward that future.

*The Office of Website Management, Bureau of Public Affairs, manages this site as a portal for information from the U.S. State Department.*

*External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.*