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Zimbabwe: Amnesty International rejects AU claim that violations are 'internal' matter

Amnesty International rejected claims by the African Union (AU) today that it would not be "proper" for the AU to interfere in the "internal" affairs of Zimbabwe.

"The people of Zimbabwe are being sold out – in the interests of a false 'African solidarity'. This conspiracy of silence amongst African leaders is fuelling a human rights catastrophe for the people of Zimbabwe. African solidarity should be with the people of Africa – not with governments responsible for grave human rights violations," said Kolawole Olaniyan, Director of Amnesty International's Africa Programme, speaking from Lagos today.

"All AU member states have made a commitment to promote and protect the human rights of the people of Africa. This commitment is explicitly stated in the Constitutive Act of the AU, adopted by member states in 2000."

"The AU must take action to protect the rights of African men, women and children. Human rights are not simply a domestic matter."

Background

The AU statement was made earlier today by AU spokesman Desmond Orjiako.

Amnesty International, together with more than 200 African and international human rights organizations, launched an urgent "Joint Appeal" yesterday calling on the AU and UN to take action on the crisis in Zimbabwe.

For details of the "Joint Appeal" and a list of signatories, please see <http://news.amnesty.org/index/ENGAFR460172005>.

Public Document

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