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ZIMBABWE

A human rights agenda for political parties

June 2000

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Amnesty International has and will continue to raise its concerns with the Zimbabwean authorities about politically-motivated harassment, intimidation, and violence. We have also pressed for measures to ensure an environment conducive to freedom of speech, assembly, movement and association and thus to the holding of free and fair elections. Nevertheless, with national parliamentary elections scheduled for 24 and 25 June 2000, we are seeking direct meetings with the leadership of Zimbabwe's political parties to encourage a longer term focus on human rights principles so that the people of Zimbabwe will be able to hold successful candidates accountable for adopting solutions to the country's problems which accord with human rights standards.

Amnesty International is encouraging all political parties to commit themselves to a vision of a government which respects human rights, and to pledge themselves to the principles outlined below, during the election campaigning and after.

We ask party leaders, in answering the following questions, to pledge their support for human rights:

1. In the context of the June 2000 elections, will you publicly urge your party's activist members and supporters to respect the right of

all Zimbabweans to hold and express different opinions without being subjected to physical or psychological intimidation?

2. Will you, as a party leader, refrain from using inflammatory or provocative language and make a clear and public call to all members and supporters of your party to do likewise?

3. Will you, as a party leader, state clearly and publicly that your party does not condone politically-motivated violence and that its members will ensure that perpetrators of violence are handed over swiftly to the police?

4. Will your party, if elected to parliament, call for a thorough and independent criminal investigation into all alleged human rights abuses which have been reported in the run-up to the 24/25 June elections, with a view to bringing the perpetrators to justice?

5. Will the party, if elected to parliament, seek to ensure that all future allegations of human rights violations, in particular torture or ill-treatment or the unlawful use of lethal force, will be promptly and thoroughly investigated and that perpetrators will be brought to justice?

6. Will the party, if elected to parliament, take the lead in ensuring that the results of investigations into the human rights violations committed against residents of Matabeleland during the 1980s are made public, and those implicated in committing atrocities are brought to justice?

7. Will your party publicly reaffirm its commitment to upholding the rule of law and respecting the rulings of Zimbabwe's courts?

8. Will the party, if elected to parliament, make a clear public pledge that it will not condone torture and ill-treatment by police or other security officers; that it will seek to ensure that Zimbabwe ratifies the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment?

9. Will your party, if elected to parliament, promote the impartiality and non-political nature of the Zimbabwe Republic Police, reaffirming their duty to protect all the people of Zimbabwe including all minority groups, and seek further training for the police in carrying out their duty in accordance with human rights standards?

10. Will your party, if elected to parliament, consider proposing the abolition of the death penalty and make a recommendation that, until the death penalty is abolished, no executions should be carried out?

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