

News statement

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African civil society calls for AU investigation into Zimbabwe human rights abuses

Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt – African civil groups meeting ahead of the African Union Summit in Egypt have called on African leaders to publicly condemn the human rights violations and abuses taking place in Zimbabwe.

The Centre for Citizen's Participation in the African Union, comprising 63 civil society groups from across Africa, said in a statement that that they were deeply disturbed that that the government had ordered the suspension of the work of civil society organizations despite four million Zimbabweans requiring humanitarian assistance.

Said Yemisrach Kebede, Director of The Centre for Citizen's Participation: "African civil society is concerned about the rampant and escalating politically motivated and organized violence that has taken place since the March 29th election in Zimbabwe. The general population has been massively disenfranchised by displacement and intimidation."

The period preceding the run-off election have not met minimum conditions for free and fair elections, and the SADC-led mediation has failed to alleviate or bring an end to the current situation.

In a communiqué to be presented to African leaders meeting at the AU summit, civil society groups recommended that the AU call for an independent and impartial investigation into human rights abuses in Zimbabwe.

Said Ms Kebede: "Basic political and civil rights in Zimbabwe must be restored. The African Union must now broker a multi-stakeholder dialogue to create a political process, which will allow for internationally observed elections to be held as soon as possible."

Ends.

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