



The EU's Human rights & Democratisation Policy

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Zimbabwe elections: Commission congratulates the EU observation team on their final report

IP/00/706 - Brussels, 4 July 2000

The Head of the EU Election Observation Mission to the parliamentary elections in Zimbabwe, Mr Pierre Schori, today presented the Mission's Report to the Commission and Member States, as well as to the European Parliament. Mr Schori's Report recommends "that the EU makes a particular effort during the coming weeks and months to monitor events in Zimbabwe and to provide assistance and support where appropriate". Commissioners Patten and Nielson endorsed this recommendation.

Commissioner for External Relations Chris Patten said: "The outcome of the elections could mark a major transformation towards a multiparty system. As a major donor, the EU must use its influence to encourage the Government to take positive steps for re-establishing the rule of law and good governance. Responsibility for this is in Mugabe's hands".

Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Assistance Poul Nielson announced that the Commission will continue supporting poverty alleviation schemes and will restart its technical and policy support for land reform. He said: "If the Government seizes the opportunity offered by these new elections, the EU support could be much more substantial in the future. This will depend on visible progress in the field of good governance and economic reform".

Commissioners Patten and Nielson congratulated the whole team of 190 observers and thanked them for having fulfilled their objectives under difficult circumstances. The mobilisation of a full and experienced team on the ground by the European Commission within less than four weeks after a decision by EU Foreign Ministers, as well as the astute surmounting of political hurdles by the Observation Mission, make the operation a reference point for electoral observation in countries in crisis.

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