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29. Notes that the EU cooperation activities programmed in the area of social and human development seek to combat poverty, to meet basic health, education and employment needs and to promote fundamental freedoms for everyone, including the most vulnerable groups, i.e. refugees, displaced persons and all religious minorities; insists that all these activities must be implemented in such a way as to strengthen capacity and institutions, in keeping with the principles of inclusion, transparency and good governance;

30. Highlights the sensitive geopolitical position of Iraq, which neighbours Syria, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Jordan; expects Iraq to play a stabilising role in the region, in particular in view of the ongoing civil war in Syria; expects Iraq to support a democratic and inclusive transition in Syria;

31. Applauds the recent establishment of Iraq's High Commission for Human Rights as an independent institution that can give meaning to the rights guaranteed in Iraq's Constitution and play a central role in the protection of these rights; emphasises the importance of maintaining this institution's independence from political influence and of providing adequate, secure and independent financial support for its operations; stresses the need for regular, transparent and ongoing cooperation by government organs with the Commission's investigations; calls on the Member States to support its development through technical assistance, ongoing dialogue and the sharing of experience in relation to human rights protection efforts;

32. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President of the European Council, the President of the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the presidents of the parliaments of the Member States and the Government and the Council of Representatives of the Republic of Iraq.

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### **Implementation of IEPA between the European Community and Eastern and Southern Africa States in light of the current situation in Zimbabwe**

**European Parliament resolution of 17 January 2013 on the implementation of the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement (IEPA) between the European Community and the Eastern and Southern Africa States, in the light of the current situation in Zimbabwe (2013/2515(RSP))**

(2015/C 440/13)

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement between Madagascar, Mauritius, the Seychelles and Zimbabwe, on the one part, and the European Community, on the other part, which has been provisionally applied since 14 May 2012,
- having regard to the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000 (the Cotonou Agreement),
- having regard to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), in particular Article XXIV thereof,
- having regard to the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 8 September 2000, which sets out the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

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- having regard to its resolution of 25 March 2009 on the Interim agreement establishing a framework for an Economic Partnership Agreement between Eastern and Southern Africa States on the one part and the European Community and its Member States on the other part <sup>(1)</sup>,
  - having regard to the Communiqué of the Southern African Development Community Extraordinary Summit of 1 June 2012,
  - having regard to the Council conclusions on Zimbabwe of 23 July 2012 and to Council Implementing Decision 2012/124/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Zimbabwe <sup>(2)</sup>,
  - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the trade cooperation chapter of the Cotonou Agreement, under which the EU extended non-reciprocal trade preferences to ACP countries, expired on 31 December 2007, since when the situation has not complied with World Trade Organisation rules;
- B. whereas economic partnership agreements (EPAs) are WTO-compatible agreements aimed at supporting regional integration through trade development, sustainable growth and poverty reduction while promoting the gradual integration of the ACP economies into the world economy;
- C. whereas Madagascar, Mauritius, the Seychelles and Zimbabwe are signatories to the Cotonou Agreement; whereas respect for human rights is an essential element of the development cooperation agreement between the EU and the ACP countries;
- D. whereas interim economic partnership agreements (IEPAs) may be considered as a first step in the process towards full EPAs, thanks to the inclusion not only of rules on trade in goods but also of chapters on rules of origin and the protection of infant industry;
- E. whereas provisions on good governance, transparency in political offices and human rights, in accordance with Articles 8, 11(b), 96 and 97 of the Cotonou Agreement, have to be considered to be part of this IEPA between the European Community, on the one part, and the Seychelles, Madagascar, Mauritius and Zimbabwe, on the other part;
- F. whereas, although the current situation in Zimbabwe with regard to human rights and democracy has shown signs of improvement, there remain many challenges for future cooperation between the Union and Zimbabwe, notably the full implementation of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) and an end to all forms of harassment and human rights abuses;
- G. whereas Zimbabwe's economic recovery is still fragile and certain state policies present a threat to future economic relations between the Union and Zimbabwe;
- H. whereas Zimbabwe is showing flagrant disregard for international agreements and its own domestic laws by continuing to permit the sale of illegal elephant ivory;
1. Points out that the EU must promote fair trade between itself and developing countries, based on full respect for and a guarantee of ILO labour standards and working conditions, and must ensure the application of the highest possible social and environmental standards; takes the view that this includes paying a fair price for resources and agricultural products from developing countries;
2. Highlights the provisional entry into force of the IEPA as an important step towards enhancing the partnership between the EU and the four African countries concerned, within a stable legal framework; underlines the importance of continuing negotiations with a view to arriving at a full agreement aimed at encouraging increased open and fair trade, investment and regional integration;

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 117 E, 6.5.2010, p. 129.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 54, 28.2.2012, p. 20.

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3. Considers the entry into force of the Human Rights Commission Act in Zimbabwe as an encouraging step by the government with a view to improving the human rights situation in that country and as a step forward as part of the agreed roadmap for peaceful and credible elections;
  4. Calls on the Commission to upgrade negotiations with the seven remaining countries of the region and to adopt a development-friendly approach that is both in line with the strategic objectives and priorities of the region and its countries and in conformity with WTO rules;
  5. Expresses its concern, nevertheless, about continuing abuses of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Zimbabwe, which are undermining the commitments made by Zimbabwe's Government of National Unity in recent years, and in particular about recent incidents of harassment of human rights defenders, journalists and members of civil society in Zimbabwe; calls on the Government of Zimbabwe to take all the necessary measures to ensure that no one is subjected to harassment or intimidation for addressing human rights issues;
  6. Deplores the absence of a strong human rights clause in the IEPA, and repeats its call for trade agreements concluded by the EU to include binding human rights clauses; regrets the omission of a chapter on sustainable development and of a requirement to respect international labour and environmental standards.
  7. Stresses that freedom of assembly, association and expression are essential components of democracy to which Zimbabwe fully committed itself under the GPA; draws attention to the current consent procedure, emphasising that the ratification of the IEPA with the European Union is a further opportunity to reiterate the need for full implementation of those commitments and obligations;
  8. Stresses that under the circumstances the suspension of EU development cooperation (under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement) should be maintained, but that the EU remains committed in its support for the local population;
  9. Supports the targeted measures the EU currently has in place, which are a response to the political and human rights situation in Zimbabwe, with annual decisions allowing the EU to keep senior figures in the Zimbabwean Government under constant review; emphasises, furthermore, that these measures will not be affected by the IEPA;
  10. Calls on the Zimbabwean Government to take the necessary steps, including restoration of the rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights and, in particular, a peaceful and credible constitutional referendum and electoral preparations that meet recognised international standards, to enable the targeted measures to be suspended;
  11. Reaffirms its willingness to use all the tools at its disposal should there be a significant deterioration in the human rights situation, including, inter alia, considering the use of the provisions set out in Article 65 of the Agreement (the so-called 'non-execution' clause);
  12. Calls on the EU delegation in Harare to continue to offer its assistance to Zimbabwe's Government of National Unity in order to improve the human rights situation with a view to peaceful and credible elections in line with the standards the EU would expect of any of its trading partners;
  13. Calls on the Zimbabwean Government to enforce the identification and prosecution of those implicated in the illegal export and trade of ivory and, furthermore, to work on increasing transparency in Zimbabwe's extractive industries, in order to ensure that wealth accrued from the legal exploitation of the country's natural resources is properly accounted for and benefits all Zimbabweans;
  14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the European External Action Service, the Government and Parliament of Zimbabwe and the governments of the Southern African Development Community.
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