



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zimbabwe to the United Nations  
Office and Other International Organisations in GENEVA  
27, Chemin William Barbey, 1292 Chambesy

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STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, LEGAL AND  
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS OF ZIMBABWE, MR PATRICK A CHINAMASA  
(MP) AT THE INAUGURAL SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL:  
GENEVA : 19-22 JUNE 2006

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Mr Chairman  
The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Louise Arbour  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

The Zimbabwe delegation joins those delegations that have spoken before me in congratulating and welcoming the establishment and successful inauguration of the Human Rights Council as a successor human rights organisation to the Human Rights Commission. We consider this a positive development. We embrace the new Human Rights Council fully cognisant of the fact that the legal instrument, which set it up, was the outcome of very wide and all inclusive consultations amongst member states of the United Nations.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the Members of your Bureau on your election as office-bearers for the inaugural session of the Human Rights Council. We wish you a fruitful tenure at the helm of this new ship, on its maiden voyage through some challenging and uncharted waters. Happily for you, all nations have a stake in your voyage.

From the ashes of the Commission has risen this new Council and we pray and trust that the new institution will, in the manner it relates to member countries and in all respects, meet our expectations. Lest we forget some of our expectations from the new dispensation ushered in by the Council are :

Firstly, that the new Council will succeed in fostering a culture of genuine worldwide commitment to the promotion and respect for human rights in their entirety encompassing, as they should do, both the political and civil rights, and the socio-economic and cultural rights, the so called development rights which we recognise as universal interdependent and indivisible.

Secondly, that the new Council will make it its business to depoliticise the pursuit of human rights issues. If we are to make headway in building a culture that promotes the respect for human rights we must work hard to exorcise the ghost of politics from human rights issues.