Cordial invitation to a side event on

**ZIMBABWE - ENHANCING COOPERATION AMONG GOVERNMENT, UN AND CIVIL SOCIETY STAKEHOLDERS**

**Thursday, 20 March 2014, 12:00 – 14:00**

**Palais des Nations, Room XXIV**

As Zimbabwe is set to undergo its Universal Period Review (UPR) mid-term review, concerns still remain about continued restrictions on inclusive political participation, freedom of speech, association and assembly following national elections in July 2013. Moreover, a number of pressing issues remain unaddressed, including the government’s unwillingness to genuinely engage with the UN bodies, agree to requests for visits by UN Special Rapporteurs and constructively respond to concerns raised by international and national Civil Society groups. The side event will bring together a diverse group of human rights activists/defenders from Zimbabwe to discuss the role the UN Human Rights Council can play in encouraging human rights reform in Zimbabwe and opportunities for civil society engagement with the Government of Zimbabwe.

**Panellists:**

1. **Abel Chikomo:** An overview of the post-election political, economic and human rights situation.

2. **Cephas Zinhumwe:** The UN’s engagement with the new government including engagement with Parliament.

3. **Cephas Zinhumwe:** The UN’s engagement with the SADC and the AU, in the light of other regional developments.

4. **Arthur Gwagwa:** Post-election engagement with civil society.

**Moderator: Renate Bloem** (CIVICUS)

*Refreshments will be provided*

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