On 21 April 2009 Sir John Kaputin, Secretary General of the ACP Group of States, addressed a letter to the President of the Committee of Ambassadors and to Commissioner Louis Michel regarding the evolution of the political situation in Zimbabwe.

On 20 May 2009, the ACP Working Party agreed on the draft reply to the above letter.

The Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to advise the Council to approve the draft reply letter as set out in the Annex to this note.
Dear Secretary General,

Thank you for your letter of 21 April 2009 concerning the situation in Zimbabwe. The EU shares your opinion that there are indications of a positive evolution of the political situation in Zimbabwe, notably the formation of the Inclusive Government as foreseen in the Global Political Agreement (GPA) concluded between the three main political parties in September last year.

We are following the situation with great attention, in the hope that it will as soon as possible lead to a new phase of stability, respect for human rights and rule of law and economic development to which the people of Zimbabwe aspire. In a recent meeting in Washington with Mr. Tendai Biti, the Zimbabwean Minister of Finance, the Commission has been given a detailed picture of the country's economic and political situation, in particular on the government's programme of public sector reforms and for the setting up of an accountable public finance system. However, the pace at which the new Government can deliver on its own programme to the people of Zimbabwe still remains a major concern for all, both in the country and within the international community.

On 19 March 2009, the Government of Zimbabwe officially proposed to engage in a structured political dialogue with EU based on Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement. We see this as a very significant and positive step towards addressing constructively our respective concerns by keeping the focus on the implementation of the GPA including in relation to human rights, the democratic principles, the Rule of Law and economic governance.

We consider that the dialogue should allow us to define a roadmap of reciprocal undertakings between the Government of Zimbabwe and the European Union. This would hopefully bring us to a progressive resumption of our full cooperation.
We trust, Mr Secretary General, that we will continue to benefit from the support of the ACP Group of States in this endeavour.

Yours sincerely

For the Council

For the Commission