

## **Sanctions or Targeted Restrictive Measures?: The United States and European Union 'Sanctions' on Zimbabwe, 2001 to 2010.**

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This paper examines the debate over the origins, nature and impact of the 'sanctions' imposed by the United States (US) and the European Union (EU) on President Robert Mugabe and individuals in the inner-circles of his ruling party, the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), for allegedly contributing to the undermining of democratic processes and institutions in the country by electoral fraud, human rights abuses and bad governance. ZANU-PF depicts the 'sanctions' a result of the US and EU anger over Zimbabwe's Fast Track Land Reform Programme that was initiated by the government in 2000 which saw white farmers losing their farms. The party also accuse the former opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-T) led by Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai for calling for the imposition and renewal of the US and EU 'sanctions' in order to gain political mileage by bringing economic hardships so that people would remove it from power through the ballot box or violence. The paper argues that far from being a tool to force ZANU-PF to reform, the 'sanctions' have been seen to be crippling the economy and hurting the innocent civilians. Contrary to these assertions, MDC-T denies instigating the imposition of 'targeted restrictive measures' on ZANU-PF individuals. MDC-T maintains that the matter is a bilateral foreign policy issue between Zimbabwe, the US and EU, and it does not have power to influence these countries remove the 'targeted restrictive measures'. The paper argues that the 'sanctions' made the country's political crisis more complex and had the inadvertent effect of providing ZANU-PF with ready-made excuses for the country's economic failure and its refusal to implement democratic reforms. The paper makes wide ranging use of newspaper evidence, parliamentary debates and oral evidence.