

## Nigeria Against Mugabe Dictatorship, But..

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The newly elected Nigerian president, Umaru Yar'Adua has expressed concern about President Robert Mugabe's dictatorship but supported his attendance at the European Union/Africa Summit. In what is seen as ground-breaking comments among African leaders he said the alleged abuse of human rights and the absence of the rule of law in Zimbabwe was unacceptable. Speaking at a media interaction in Wiesbaden, Germany on Sunday at the end of the Germany & European Partnership with Africa meeting, Yar'Adua said what was happening in Zimbabwe was unacceptable. "I want to emphasise that what is happening in Zimbabwe is not in conformity with the rule of law. I do not subscribe to this," he said, adding that the Nigerian government was concerned that fellow Africans were being subjected to dictatorship and bad governance. But on the EU/AU summit he exhibited the same tendency as others to put their own economic interests first and not let anything jeopardise the potential trade and aid from interaction with Europe, even at the expense of the lives of their own brothers. Commenting on the forthcoming EU-AU Summit set for Portugal in December, Yar'Adua said Mugabe's attendance should not be an issue; instead leaders should discuss about his governance principles. "The issue that will be discussed at the EU-AU Summit is partnership, which is very important, and therefore the success of the summit should not be hinged on the attendance or non-attendance of the Zimbabwean president. The attendance of Mugabe should not be made an issue," he said. He however added that Zimbabwe had a right to be represented at the Portugal Summit and that the EU should understand that. "There are so many opportunities which will be provided by the Africa and Europe summit and therefore the Zimbabwean problem should not bog down these opportunities expected from the summit." The media briefing was also attended by German President, Horst Kohler; President Thomas Yayi Boni of Republic of Benin, President Armando Guebuza of Mozambique and President Festus Mogae of Botswana.