

# MAHATHIR PICKED

By HOO BAN KHEE

**HARARE:** Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will head a group of 11 to decide on follow-up actions to be taken to bring about non-racial democracy in South Africa.

The Commonwealth leaders, at their retreat at Victoria Falls on Sunday, also decided to ask Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku to visit South Africa "the soonest possible."

Follow-up actions would be taken based on the outcome of the visit, said Chief Anyaoku at a press conference on Sunday evening.

The group of 11 comprises President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe together with the

## PM to head group of 11 on South Africa

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original members of the High Level Appraisal group — Australia, Britain, the Bahamas, Canada, India, Jamaica, Malaysia, Nigeria, Singapore and Zambia.

Chief Anyaoku said the Commonwealth heads of government welcomed the important changes taking place in South Africa over the last 20 months.

They believed that these developments had brought into view the goal of non-racial democracy in South Africa.

"However, they are concerned over the escalation of violence and its possible effects

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on the process of negotiation," he added.

"They call upon the South African Government and all the parties in South Africa to bring the violence to an end as a matter of utmost urgency.

"The terms of a constitutional settlement are for the people of South Africa to decide but the Commonwealth leaders believed that the Commonwealth must stand ready to assist the negotiating process in the ways that could be found helpful."

Chief Anyaoku said he would explore with the main parties of South Africa areas in

which the Commonwealth could assist "in lending momentum to the negotiating process."

He will report to the group of 11 for them to decide on what follow-up actions to take.

He added that he had consultations with representatives of the African National Congress and the Pan African Congress as well as with the South African Government on his mission.

"I am glad to say that in the light of these

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# Anyaoku to leave for South Africa

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consultations, I will be leaving for South Africa the soonest possible."

The Commonwealth leaders, in response to reforms taken by Pretoria, have already decided to adopt the recommendation made by the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Committee on South Africa to lift the restriction on people-to-people contacts between Commonwealth nations and South Africa.

This will mean the lifting of visa restrictions and the ending of a boycott of cultural and tourism exchanges.

However, financial and economic sanctions will remain until the situation improves further.

The South African issue has been the preoccupation of the Commonwealth in recent years as the "club" leads a relentless campaign to end apartheid.

At the current CHOGM, fundamental issues on human rights and good government have taken centre stage, with developed nations leading the cause.