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**PETITION TO INFLUENCE THE RELEASE OF JOB SIKHALA**

**As Member of Parliament, Legal Advocate and Vice Chairperson of Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC)**

16<sup>th</sup> March 2023

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This petition has been formulated by several of the members of the organisations listed, with particular thanks to CCC Newcastle, Nontokozo Malaba Ncube, CCC Manchester Branch, Thomas Machinguata, Peter Makotose; Model Pamire CCC UK Province; Chief Ndiweni MyRight2Vote; John Burke ZHRO; Leo Ndlovu of ZAPU Europe and Panyika Karimanzira ROHR Zimbabwe. In addition, we are extremely thankful for the support of Lord Oates, From the House of Lords and Chief Felix Ndiweni the Zimbabwean Traditional Chief.



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**PETITION APPERTAINING TO THE INCARCERATION, WITHOUT CHARGE, BAIL  
(REJECTED ON THE MOST SPURIOUS OF REASONS MANY TIMES) OF VICE CHAIR  
OF OPPOSITION CITIZENS COALITION FOR CHANGE<sup>1</sup> (CCC)  
JOB SIKHALA**

**Day 275 in Detention as of this petition hand over: Dated 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

## Summary

**Lead by:** Citizens Coalition for Change Zimbabweans in the Diaspora and Supported by many other groups within the Zimbabwean diaspora and their non-Zimbabwean supporter friends.

**Summary:** *This petition is by the Zimbabweans Citizens in the Diaspora pleading with the international community to stop the Zimbabwe government from systematically conducting gross violations of human rights against members of the opposition party and in this particular case Job Sikhala.*

***JOB SIKHALA is a Member of Parliament, Vice Chairperson of the opposition party Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) in Zimbabwe, a lawyer and a family man who has been unlawfully incarcerated in Chikurubi maximum prison for the past NINE MONTHS WITHOUT TRIAL.***

*This is gross violation of a citizen's human rights perpetrated by the government because of his choice to affiliate with a political party of his choice and conducting his professional duties of representing victims of political violence. This action by the government of Zimbabwe constitutes violation of the Zimbabwean Constitution and the International Convention on Human Rights, therefore we petition the British government to find ways to stop this kind of brutality by a government upon its own citizens.*

## Background

Job Sikhala is a Zimbabwean a Member of Parliament, lawyer and a family man who is languishing in prison for no apparent reason except for demanding justice on behalf of a brutally murdered citizen of Zimbabwe for political reasons. Moreblessing Ali<sup>2</sup>, a member of CCC political party, was murdered by a known Zanu PF supporter. Her body was mutilated, dismembered and dumped in a shallow well close to the murderer's family home. The family of Moreblessing appointed Job Sikhala to be the family lawyer and spokesperson in the process of seeking justice for Moreblessing. While in the process of executing his professional duties as per the family instructions, ***Sikhala was arrested on 14 June 2022*** together with other fifteen members of the CCC but still remains in prison up to this day without trial.

The other fifteen arrested together with Sikhala have already been released on bail after it was clear that evidence presented by the prosecution for the commission of a crime was weak. They are facing

<sup>1</sup>, a new political party born out of the former Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) organisation. The MDC was part of the GNU Coalition 13<sup>th</sup> February 2009 to July 2013

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.africa-press.net/zimbabwe/all-news/zimrights-calls-for-investigation-into-the-killing-of-moreblessing-ali> dated 12th June 2022 – just 2 days before Job Sikhala's arrest as her lawyer.



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flimsy charges of inciting violence, yet they were arrested while attending a memorial service for their murdered colleague. **Currently Job Sikhala is in Chikurubi Maximum Prison**, locked up together with D-class prisoners. The Chikurubi D-Class is known for housing the worst convicts in the country which includes murderers, robbers and some of those convicts are on death row.

## The Case for Diplomatic Intervention

We write to alert the British Government of this ongoing political persecution and human rights abuses against a citizen because of his political affiliation. As earlier indicated, Job Sikhala is the Vice Chairperson of the Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) in Zimbabwe, a political party that is contesting the ruling party in the forthcoming General Elections in August 2023. He is well known for his political activism and fearless personality in exercising his constitutional rights, freedom of association and affiliation as affirmed in the constitution of the country. He is known for standing up to the government by challenging the establishment on violence against citizens, corruption and mis-governance since the mid-nineties when he was a student leader. His political activism has resulted in him being arrested sixty-seven (67) times in the past and not convicted on any of them. The current case is number sixty-eight (68) and as usual is built upon 'trumped-up' charges.

### State Capture

The State, through the Courts, is making sure that Sikhala is 'punished' for his role to speak against the its own evils. There is clear evidence of judiciary capture in the manner that Sikhala is treated by both the State and the judiciary. Traditional court standards and procedures are not being followed by the prosecution team, whilst the Magistrate appears to be looking aside. The prosecution team in Sikhala's case have promised to avail "overwhelming evidence" against Sikhala but have not done so for the past eight months and shockingly the Courts are not challenging the prosecution for this unprecedented behaviour. Sikhala's defence team has all along been pressing and challenging for evidence from the prosecution which continue to give false promises. The Courts are clearly showing signs of State Capture as they cannot independently preside over the case without fear or favour. It must be remembered also that justice delayed is justice denied. On this case we can safely say that Sikhala is being denied justice by the Courts in conjunction with the State. The State is brazenly interfering in the manner in which the Courts exercise their duties thereby compromising the independence of the Courts.

### Political Bias in the Courts<sup>3</sup>

The same Courts behave differently when someone from Zanu PF is arrested for serious offenses. The Zanu PF members and supporters are released on the **first day** of their court appearance besides the availability of evidence that a serious crime was committed. Henrietta Rushwaya a known relative of the President of Zimbabwe was apprehended at the airport leaving the country with gold worth millions of dollars in her luggage but she did not spent time in cells. She was bailed on her first Court appearance and subsequently the case was thrown out for lack of evidence.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.transparency.org/en/blog/delivering-justice-in-zimbabwes-courts>



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Justice Wadyejena, a Zanu PF member of parliament for Gokwe constituency was arrested for defrauding the Grain Marketing Board of **five and a half million dollars** [\$5,500,000]. He was given bail at first Court appearance and his case has now been thrown-out after the state could not provide evidence besides the known fact that money was transferred from a bank account to his personal account.

Obadiah Moyo, former minister of health is also free after defrauding the government of **over sixty million dollars** of the money meant to assist during the covid 19 pandemic. He did not spend a night in cells but went to Court with suitcases loaded with cash for his bail which he already knew before the Court session. However, Hopewell Chinono an independent journalist who reported on the fraud that led to the arrest of the minister and subsequent dismissal, spent eighty-four days in Chikurubi Maximum prison as a way to muzzle reporters against reporting on such cases that involve the Zanu PF big fish.

Priscila Mupfumira a former government minister of public service and social security is also free after defrauding the pensioners of **ninety-five thousand dollars** [\$95,000]. These are just a few of the cases that we have highlighted as examples of people who deserve to be in prison but are walking scot free due to their affiliation with the ruling party. At the same time, a member of the opposition party in this case Job Sikhala, is languishing in maximum prison for no offence committed.

This kind of special treatment given to known members and supporters of the ruling party apparently vindicates the claim by the opposition political activists that there is selective application of the law in Zimbabwe based on political party affiliation.

#### Unlawful Denial of Bail<sup>4</sup>

Job Sikhala is unlawfully denied bail, which is a right according to the constitution of Zimbabwe. He applied for bail six times and was denied in all cases. The state on the other hand is deliberately delaying the commencement of the trial. In November last year the state gave 3 January 2023 as the trial date however, the trial has been postponed several times on flimsy reasons; like the Magistrate presiding over the case reported to be busy with another case; on another occasion the lady Magistrate was not feeling well; the latest is that she is now on maternity leave and the trial date has been postponed to 3 April 2023. This kind of systematic torture has never been witnessed the World over, that an accused person has to wait for the presiding officer to come back from maternity leave for the trial to commence. It is common sense that the given date is not going to materialise because the ruling party through the government institution's desire to keep Sikhala in prison until the elections are over - probably by August. The plot is just to make sure that Sikhala does not participate in the forthcoming general elections.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/jan/05/zimbabwe-court-denies-opposition-mp-pre-trial-bail-for-fifteenth-time-job-sikhala>



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### Abduction of Opposition as a weapon for Intimidation<sup>5</sup>

The government of Zimbabwe has a history of weaponizing the law against opposition. Three ladies who are affiliated to the opposition party are undergoing trial for a case whereby they were arrested by the police, subjected to inhumane treatment by being raped while in police custody, severely tortured and made to eat and drink their excrement, before they were dumped in the middle of nowhere. Joanna Mamombe (MP), Cecilia Chimbiri and Netsai Marowa were later arrested in hospital while receiving treatment and accused of faking abduction. Such is the brutality of the Zimbabwe government towards members of the opposition political parties and anyone who dare to oppose the government.

On 9 March 2015 Itai Dzamara a fierce critic of the Zimbabwe government was abducted in broad day light and disappeared while in State custody. Ever since the abduction by state security agents, Itai Dzamara has not been found.

Patrick Nyabanyama who was an election agent for an opposition parliamentary candidate, was abducted by Zanu PF activists and has never been seen again. Tichaona Chiminya and Talent Mabika were petrol bombed by a known state agent in 2000 and the killer has not been arrested beside a Court order demanding his arrest. Such is the kind of predicament faced by the Zimbabwean citizens who dare stand against the tyranny.

It has become fashionable for the government of Zimbabwe to violate citizens' rights and dignity with impunity. Notwithstanding gross violations of human rights in the past, no independent mechanism has been established to address these serious past human rights crimes, including widespread election-related violence, and the massacre of an estimated twenty thousand (20,000) people in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces between 1985-1987.

### Conflicts with the Constitution<sup>6</sup>

Despite the Constitution of Zimbabwe guaranteeing the freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the government of Zimbabwe continues to ignore the law of the land and all the International Treaties of which, that Zimbabwe is a signatory. The government of Zimbabwe cannot be left to mistreat and abuse its citizens because of their political affiliation.

In seeking the British government's intervention in Job Sikhala's situation, the Zimbabwean Diaspora and the people of Zimbabwe are alive to the fact that Zimbabwe as a member of the United Nations has obligations under the UN Charter, Articles 55 and 56, the obligation to promote, respect for human rights and to cooperate with the UN in promoting human rights. The scope and content of these obligations are customary international law and are non-negotiable. We therefore appeal to the British government to escalate our case and that of political prisoners such as Job Sikhala to the United Nations for consideration.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/06/zimbabwe-authorities-must-do-more-to-stop-culture-of-abductions/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/zimbabwe>



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## We further appeal to the British Government to;

1. Engage the Zimbabwean government for the immediate release of Job Sikhala and other political prisoners being persecuted for exercising their human rights and freedom to support political parties of their choice as guaranteed by the constitution.
2. Highlight the human rights abuse of Zimbabwean citizens at international fora for the purpose of making Zimbabwe accountable for human rights abuse against its own citizens.
3. Urge the International Community particularly the United Nations to intervene and investigate human rights abuse in Zimbabwe, especially the systematic use of the law to abuse political opponents.
4. Engage the Zimbabwe government and seek reassurance that Job Sikhala be freed in order to exercise his constitutional rights in the forthcoming 2023 elections.
5. Engage SADC for a transparent, free, fair and violent-free 2023 harmonised elections through the implementation of the SADC electoral protocol.
6. Continue to demand that the government of Zimbabwe observe the rule of law as a condition for reinstatement to the International Community.
7. *Take heed of the “All Party Parliamentary Group on Zimbabwe”, and in particular Lord Oates, their Co-Chair – who is a signatory to this petition today. He is also planning an event in April {possibly the 17<sup>th</sup>} to mark 300 days in captivity for job Sikhala. Lord Oates also asked questions about Job Sikhala in the House of Lords on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022<sup>7</sup>.*

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## Supporting Evidence

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/06/zimbabwe-authorities-must-do-more-to-stop-culture-of-abductions/>

Responding to the discovery of the dismembered body of Moreblessing Ali, Lucia Masuka, *Executive Director of Amnesty International Zimbabwe*, said:

**“Authorities must not leave any stone unturned in the investigation of this case and ensure that suspected perpetrators are held accountable”**

The moment Job Sikhahla started to seek legal redress for this heinous crime, he was {coincidentally} arrested. That was on **14<sup>th</sup> June 2022**.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://members.parliament.uk/member/4549/writtenquestions#expand-1505650> UIN HL2234



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[Former Mozambican Leader Joachim Chisano](#)

[Says “Free, Fair Elections Key to Zimbabwe’s Economic Transformation”: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023<sup>8</sup>](#)

Former Mozambican president Joachim Chisano, who is a facilitator to Zimbabwe’s second structured dialogue platform meeting on the arrears and debt clearance, says “Zimbabwe should hold free and fair elections and respect human rights in order to record economic development.”

Speaking at the conference today, Chisano said “a democratic electoral process will bring in the much-needed investment in the country.”

His views were echoed by Akinwumi Adesina, president of the **African Development Bank**, who said “the southern African nation needs to improve its democratic system in order to transform the local economy.”

[The Guardian Newspaper UK 5<sup>th</sup> January 2023<sup>9</sup>](#)

“Sikhala, a militant opposition figure known for his confrontational style of politics, is viewed as an important figure in drumming up urban support for CCC, a new political party born out of the former Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) organisation. He has been arrested [more than 60 times](#), with a Harare Court describing him as a habitual offender.”

“Sikhala’s arrest has drawn widespread criticism.”

““We are shocked by continued denial of bail to Job Sikhala. The state is clearly not ready. That alone constituted a fundamental change of circumstances. The law must protect itself against capture. It must remain autonomous,” said Tendai Biti, a former finance minister and opposition MP”

[The African Exponent – Quoting Kate Hoey – House of Lords 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023<sup>10</sup>](#)

UNITED Kingdom (UK)’s House of Lords member Kate Hoey has said Zimbabwe must not be re-admitted into the Commonwealth club over the country’s deteriorating human rights record and continued detention of opposition legislator **Job Sikhala**.

[Pindula News Quoting Lord Jonathan Oates in the House of Lords 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022<sup>11</sup>](#)

A United Kingdom ~~Member of Parliament~~[House of Lords], Lord Jonathan Oates Wednesday 28th September 2022 {answered to his written question of 6<sup>th</sup> Sept} asked what the UK government was doing with regard to the prolonged detention of opposition MP **Job Sikhala**.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.voazimbabwe.com/a/6975619.html?nocache=1>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/jan/05/zimbabwe-court-denies-opposition-mp-pre-trial-bail-for-fifteenth-time-job-sikhala>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.africanexponent.com/post/19026-continued-detention-of-opposition-legislator-frustrates-zimbabwes-readmission-into-commonwealth>

<sup>11</sup> <https://news.pindula.co.zw/2022/09/29/uk-parliament-discusses-sikhalas-prolonged-detention/>



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*Sikhala was arrested in June together with a fellow legislator, [Godfrey Sithole](#) and 14 Nyatsime residents over public violence which erupted in Nyatsime on 14 June during the funeral wake of slain Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) activist Moreblessing Ali.*

**Job Sikhala is clearly a political prisoner and is being punished for being an opposition Vice Chairperson: We are seeking pressure via the British Embassy in Harare, to plead for his immediate release.**

[Chief Felix \(NhlaNhlaYamangwe\) Ndiweni makes several observations<sup>12</sup>:](#)

As a Chief, I am reminded about what the war of independence was about, only some 43 years ago. It was partly about The Rule of Law and Democracy. The world rallied around Zanu PF and ZAPU as they fought this "just" cause. With regret we now observe that Zanu PF has rejected the principle of Rule of Law and Democracy. Job Sikhala 's imprisonment testifies to this.

By this note Zanu PF has no place in a modern Zimbabwe. To treat an advocate and Member Of Parliament in this manner runs contrary to "The Spirit of Ubuntu ( Humanity)", and as Africans this is Zanu PF's failing. And so without reservations at all, as an African Traditional Leader I most urgently ask The world to directly and indirectly intervene in this gross injustice before us.

[My Right to Vote Aspect from Chief Ndiweni<sup>13</sup>](#)

As MyRight2Vote. Job Sikhala has not broken any law in Zimbabwe yet he languishes in jail. At a stroke Zanu PF has withdrawn all of Job Sikhala's Human Rights. The true colours of the paper thin Zanu PF so called democracy are finally out for all to see. MyRight2Vote is about the Human Rights for the 6.6million Zimbabweans in the Diaspora who Zanu PF has denied the Human Right to Vote.

This large number of Zimbabweans equates to about 50 % of the voting constituency of Zimbabwe. Zanu PF's conduct in this regard has resulted in an ever-increasing instability in Zimbabwe, South Africa, and the whole SADC Region. Appeasement of wrong-doing is dangerous. Hence, we call on the international community at Large to directly and indirectly intervene in this matter and insist that the Zimbabwean Diaspora Vote.

## Quelling All Opposition

Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Bill

Irish Times Report 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023 [Bill Corcoran](#) in Cape Town

<https://www.irishtimes.com/world/africa/2023/02/20/fears-zimbabwes-president-aims-to-quell-opposition-before-elections/>

Zimbabwe's president has promised to assent legislation that critics believe is designed to intimidate and silence non-governmental organisations opposed to the ruling party in advance of this year's general elections.

<sup>12</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nhlanhlayamangwe\\_Felix\\_Ndiweni](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nhlanhlayamangwe_Felix_Ndiweni)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.myright2vote.org/2021/02/14/eu-observer-some-zimbabwe-voting-disorganised/>





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In early February the southern African country's senate voted to adopt the highly contentious Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Bill, but it must be ratified by President Emmerson Mnangagwa before it becomes law. **Amnesty International** has called on Mnangagwa, who is running for a second term in office, to reject the bill in its current form, saying it will have

*“dire consequences” for civil society and rights groups in the country”.*

*“This bill, if passed by the president, could be used to deny registration of human rights organisations due to the work that they do, including defending rights such as freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly,” **Amnesty said in a statement.***

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/02/zimbabwe-president-mnangagwa-must-reject-proposed-new-law/>

Relief Web International 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023

<https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/un-experts-urge-president-zimbabwe-reject-bill-restricting-civic-space>

*“While one of the stated aims of the Bill is to counter terrorism and money laundering in Zimbabwe, the restrictions contained therein will have a chilling effect on civil society organisations – **particularly dissenting voices.** By enacting this legislation, authorities would effectively be closing an already shrinking civic space,” the UN experts said.*

UN experts\*<sup>14</sup> today urged Zimbabwe's President to reject enacting a bill that would severely restrict civic space and the right to freedom of association in the country.

The experts expressed deep concern that the oversight regime in the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Bill for civil society organisations provides for disproportionate and discretionary

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<sup>14</sup> The experts: Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; Mary Lawlor, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; Irene Khan, Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of opinion and expression; Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism.

The Experts are part of what is known as the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council's independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms that address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. Special Procedures experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent of any government or organisation and serve in their individual capacity.

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powers to the newly established Office of the Registrar of PVOs, without independence from the executive branch.

The Senate passed the bill on 1 February 2023, and the legislation is currently before the President of Zimbabwe for his decision on its enactment.

## Vote Rigging is Evident

### Delimitation Report and Analysis

Written by: Thanks to Dr Pedzisai Ruhanya and CCC Diaspora

Published: 20 February 2023

Access the full [Delimitation Report: ZDI Analysis here](#). Thanks to ZDI and Dr Pedzisai Ruhanya.

*The Preliminary Delimitation Report done by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) and the attendant politics have highlighted three key issues peculiar to competitive authoritarian regimes that need to be identified and resolved ahead of 2023.*

**First** is the capture of the electoral system by the ruling elite to influence the electoral outcome through gerrymandering, calculated to disorient the main opposition and benefit the ruling party. These include collapsing of constituencies with more registered voters to beef-up constituencies with less registered voters, multiplying constituencies with ZANU PF majorities in Harare to list a few. This paper gives an analysis of the ZEC preliminary delimitation report to underline evidence of this.

**Second** is ZEC's incompetence shown by failure to follow constitutional provisions, failure to follow simple arithmetic calculations to determine constituency and ward delimitation and lack of consultation of key stakeholders.

**Third** is the elite dis cohesion within ZANU PF which is identified as a precursor for a possible authoritarian breakdown.

*This is shown through a sudden dis cohesion within ZEC and between ZEC and key allies of Mnangagwa affected by the preliminary delimitation. Fundamentally, the botched delimitation report speaks to infighting within the ruling party elites. It is a continuation of the post-coup and post-2022 ZANU PF congress - the unresolved ZANU PF leadership question post-Mugabe. Our view is that, the delimitation report generally and overall benefits ZANU PF as a political party but disadvantages one faction in the power matrix and configuration of the securocratic state. Source: <https://zditrust.org.zw>*

The issues surrounding the ZEC report, and the accompanying breach of the Constitution by ED Mnangagwa are many-fold. But the net result is election manipulation and rigging of the wards and





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where citizens are 'permitted' to vote - and it would appear that will not necessarily be where they are living! Thus, confusion on voting day. Source ZDI Zimbabwe.

As Tweeted on the 18th February 2023 by Jonathan Moyo - the ZEC and Zanu PF CANNOT be trusted to "run free, fair and credible elections!"

### **Conclusions regarding the Delimitation Report by ZEC**

*The ZEC delimitation secures ZANU PF's two-thirds majority disguised as maintaining stability of previous electoral boundaries. It violates the constitutional demands for adherence to the census population dynamics and national values of equal representation in conducting boundary delimitation.*

*The framework used to allocate constituencies per province contradicts the constitution and its net outcome gives ZANU PF stronghold provinces over representation in Parliament whilst under-representing opposition stronghold provinces.*

### **Voter Intimidation via 'Targeted' and High Profile Abductions**

*Overall: Indeed, the very purpose of the Zanu PF Authoritarian Regime, masquerading as a democracy, whilst at the same time holding Job Sikhala in prison/detention for 251 days so far - as the Vice Chairperson to of CCC - this is clearly intimidation of the credible opposition.*

## Appendix and Source Material

### The Detention of Job Sikhala

<https://www.africanexponent.com/post/19026-continued-detention-of-opposition-legislator-frustrates-zimbabwes-readmission-into-commonwealth>

### **Continued Detention of Opposition Legislator Frustrates Zimbabwe's Readmission into Commonwealth From the African Exponent; 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

UNITED Kingdom (UK)'s House of Lords member Kate Hoey has said Zimbabwe must not be re-admitted into the Commonwealth club over the country's deteriorating human rights record and continued detention of opposition legislator Job Sikhala.

Hoey was commenting on Sikhala's recent emotional letter from prison in which he disclosed that he had developed a strange illness. Job Sikhala, an MP from the country's biggest opposition Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) has been denied bail six times [Now 15 times] and has been in remand prison for 206 [now 251] days.

"A shocking abuse of human rights by Emmerson Mnangagwa and Zanu PF. Zimbabwe must not be allowed back into the Commonwealth," Hoey tweeted on Sunday.

Sikhala has been in detention since June facing a charge of incitement to public violence following violent skirmishes that broke out at the funeral wake of slain opposition activist Moreblessing Ali.



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Responding to Hoey's remarks on Sikhala, the country's Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services secretary Ndavaningi Mangwana said: "She has been parroting her anti-Zimbabwe nonsense for decades. If there is credit to be given to her, it is consistency in her regime change in Zimbabwe agenda."

## The Guardian Questions Job Sikhala's Continued Detention without Trial

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/jan/05/zimbabwe-court-denies-opposition-mp-pre-trial-bail-for-fifteenth-time-job-sikhala>

### The Guardian Newspaper 5<sup>th</sup> January 2023

*"A Zimbabwean opposition politician who has spent more than 200 days in prison has been denied bail for the **fifteenth** time."*

"[Job Sikhala](#), an outspoken lawyer for the Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) [and **VICE CHAIRPERSON**], who was arrested in June 2022 for "inciting violence" when he allegedly threatened to avenge the murder of an opposition activist, is a victim of political persecution before a crucial election this year, say government critics."

## Authoritarianism Rules in Zimbabwe – Democracy has no place

<https://africanarguments.org/2020/12/zimbabwe-deepening-authoritarianism-dissipating-alternatives/>

### Zimbabwe: Deepening Authoritarianism, Dissipating Alternatives. 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020

The violence of the state's responses to these protests exceeded even Mugabe's threshold. Firstly, in addition to a more widespread deployment of the military to deal with dissent, President Mnangagwa introduced Constitutional Amendment No 2 Bill, effectively broadening his control over both the executive and the judiciary. This proposed bill is accompanied by two more intended to place greater control over social media activism and international civic advocacy. These are the Cyber Protection and Data Protection and Patriot Bills.

Secondly the state has intensified its abuse of the judiciary to undermine the main opposition political party, the MDC Alliance, as well as broader civic activism. [This abuse of the law has taken several forms:](#)

- Arbitrary arrests without substantial prior investigation.
- Unfair bail conditions to limit freedom of expression.
- Arrests and harassment of lawyers.
- Criminalising political debate and dissent.
- The sanctioning of abductions and torture outside of the law

These judicial interventions have been tied to a series of measures designed to dismantle the opposition. They include, using a Supreme Court judgment in 2019 to overthrow the existing leadership of the MDC Alliance; appropriating opposition resources, including the MDC Alliance headquarters; arresting and abducting civic and opposition activists, exacerbated by gendered violence; recalling MDC



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Alliance legislators and councillors from Parliament and city councils; and the unconstitutional suspension of by-elections until January 2021 under the guise of Covid-19 lockdown measures (Veritas Bill Watch 65/2020, 3 October 2020). Even several practising judges [wrote a letter of complaint to Mnangagwa](https://nehandaradio.com/2020/10/28/judges-gang-up-on-malaba-claim-victimisation-complain-to-mnangagwa/); { <https://nehandaradio.com/2020/10/28/judges-gang-up-on-malaba-claim-victimisation-complain-to-mnangagwa/> } stating that public perceptions about judicial capture are ‘no longer fiction or perception’ but ‘in fact reality’.

*“Conclusion: Once again, Zimbabwe’s future looks bleak. Its state continues an authoritarian trajectory as it carries out its intention to dismantle the opposition. Yet the legacies and the futures of Southern Africa’s liberation movements face increasing public scrutiny even as the alternatives remain opaque.”*

## No Democracy Evident in Zimbabwe

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/08/16/zimbabwe-s-coup-did-not-create-democracy-from-dictatorship-pub-77069>

Zimbabwe’s Coup Did Not Create Democracy from Dictatorship 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018 Carnegie Endowment

Mugabe was a violent, repressive ruler. And Mnangagwa – whose nickname is “the Crocodile” – was [his vice president and enforcer](#). In the weeks since the election, the government has ruthlessly cracked down on the opposition. Police have [beaten and arrested](#) dozens of Chamisa supporters, and groups of Mnangagwa’s backers have conducted house-to-house searches for opposition leaders.

Tendai Biti, a well-known opposition figure, fled to Zambia, but was turned over by the Zambian government to Zimbabwe’s security forces. Mnangagwa’s government [charged him with inciting public violence](#). He was released on a US \$5,000 bond only after a global outcry.

Today, Zimbabwe remains tense as it awaits the results of the [Court battle over the presidency](#). Most observers expect Chamisa’s case will fail, and that Mnangagwa will officially be installed as Zimbabwe’s third president since 1963.

But Mnangagwa is tied to numerous human rights abuses, including overseeing a series of government-ordered massacres between 1982 and 1986 known as the “[Gukurahundi](#).” An estimated 20,000 civilians from Zimbabwe’s Ndebele ethnic group were killed. And behind his seemingly reasonable rhetoric, there were signs that Mnangagwa would stoop to win Zimbabwe’s election at any cost.

Human rights groups reported [widespread voter intimidation](#), especially in rural areas, where the government deployed plainclothes security forces to “remind” people to vote – for Mnangagwa. Zimbabwe’s state-controlled media relentlessly broadcast pro-Mnangagwa messages.

And, according to civil society groups, the election commission kept the voter registration roll under wraps until it was [too late](#) for voters who discovered their names were missing to re-register.

ELECTORAL AUTOCRACY



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Zimbabwe's recent history mirrors a pattern familiar to other authoritarian countries undergoing a transition. Research shows that authoritarian leaders almost always contend with [two major political pressures](#): challenges from within their regime, which [rarely trigger a democratic transition](#), and popular challenges from outside the system, which might.

Mugabe succumbed to pressure from within his party last year after a succession battle between his wife, Grace, and Mnangagwa's faction. The military settled this struggle decisively in November 2017, putting Mugabe under house arrest. Grace fled the country, and [Mnangagwa was installed as acting president](#).

Once he assumed office, Mnangagwa worked resolutely to guarantee he could quash the next challenge facing him: popular opposition.

Even as he cited the importance of human rights and invited international observers to monitor Zimbabwe's presidential election, he was methodically working with allies to [lay a repressive groundwork](#) that would ensure he stayed in power as the standard-bearer of the ruling ZANU-PF party.

After the electoral commission announced his tenuous victory, Mnangagwa reacted in classic authoritarian fashion: he deployed police and military forces to repress street protests, driving would-be challengers into hiding.

## Academic Research Frames Zimbabwe as an Authoritarian Regime

Identity, procedures and performance: how authoritarian regimes legitimize their rule<sup>15</sup>

Christian von Soest and Julia Grauvogel: GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Hamburg, Germany 2017

Six claims to legitimacy: Types of claims

Identity-based:

1. Foundational myth
2. Ideology
3. Personalism
4. Procedures
5. Performance
6. International engagement

**Foundational myth:** Incumbents, ruling elites, and parties all refer to their role in the state-building process in order to legitimate their rule: 'historical accounts are significant and contentious precisely because of their relationship to the legitimacy of power in the present' (Beetham, 1991, p. 103). Particularly strong solidarity ties are established during periods of violent struggle such as war, revolutions, and liberation movements (Levitsky & Way, 2013, p. 5), which are often used as powerful legitimization narratives. Moreover, parties that emerge from a

<sup>15</sup>

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315329729\\_Identity\\_procedures\\_and\\_performance\\_how\\_authoritarian\\_regimes\\_legitimize\\_their\\_rule](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315329729_Identity_procedures_and_performance_how_authoritarian_regimes_legitimize_their_rule)



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successful national liberation struggle often claim an entitlement to steer the country's future based on past achievements and a fusion of the (former) liberation movement and the state (Clapham, 2012; Schedler, 2013, p. 227). Hence, this dimension does not simply focus on the fact that the politicians or parties were involved in the establishment of a polity but their recurrent and prominent reference to it in order to boost their domestic legitimacy. Former liberation movements in Africa have, for instance, strongly invoked this foundational myth (Schatzberg, 2001).

**Ideology:** In line with Easton (1975), we understand ideology-based legitimacy claims as narratives regarding the righteousness of a given political order. In this sense, ideology denotes a belief system intended to create a collective identity and, in some cases, a specific societal order (Linz, 2000). The main point from this paper's perspective is not a specific content of the ideology invoked, but the regime's teleological proclamation of an 'official' belief system against which all political behaviour is assessed. This ideology can comprise 'macro' or 'micro' claims and also encompasses narratives other than grand ideologies such as communism. Ideological claims, as understood here, may therefore include references to nationalism and religion. Post-independence regimes often rely strongly on nationalism as a legitimisation strategy (Linz, 2000, p. 227). Likewise, nationalism can be particularly pronounced following a change of government, with the new leadership seeking to strengthen national consciousness (Krastev, 2011). Religion (Albrecht & Schlumberger, 2004; Wintrobe & Ferrero, 2009) is regularly discussed as a major source of legitimacy claims, also in conjunction with nationalism (Mansfield & Snyder, 1995; Razi, 1990).

**Personalism:** Authoritarian regimes frequently focus on the person of the ruler to boost their appeal among both the population and the political elite. Personalism comprises two aspects: Weber (1980, pp. 133–136) refers to charismatic authority as an important source of legitimacy, which stems from the 'extraordinary personality' and leadership qualities of an individual. Charismatic leaders portray themselves as chosen 'from above' to fulfil a certain mission (Fagen, 1965, pp. 275–277) and as having traditional authority through hereditary succession (Brownlee, 2007; Herb, 1999). Personalism-based claims may also represent a discursive mechanism that emphasizes the ruler's centrality to certain achievements such as the nation's unity, prosperity, and stability (Isaacs, 2010; Nelson, 1984).

**Procedures:** Attempts to create procedural legitimacy can be based on the carrying out of elections and other rule-based mechanisms for handing over power through 'orderly' process, be it nominally democratic through elections, hereditary power transfer (Yom & Gause, 2012), within a ruling party or based on mechanisms for the implementation of policies. This applies to more than just democracies. Bureaucratic–military authoritarian regimes, for example, go to considerable lengths to operate within a legalistic framework despite the many arbitrary elements in their exercise of authority (Linz, 2000, p. 186).

**Performance:** Our take on performance-related narratives is based on Easton's (1965) notion of specific support, which refers to regime legitimacy that stems from success in satisfying citizens' needs. We hence focus on the extent to which the regime either deliberately cites its achievements in fulfilling societal demands such as material welfare and security or, alternately, employs claims of achievements in the absence of real improvements (see Dimitrov, 2009 on economic populism). Hence, different components can comprise the notion of 'performance', among them the claim that the state organizes equal redistribution and access to certain public goods, such as healthcare and education (von Soest & Grauvogel, 2015), as well as the presentation of a regime as a guarantor of stability, territorial integrity or state building after a civil war (Radnitz, 2012). Instead of, as is common practice, using proxies such as economic growth, inflation, and unemployment to measure a regime's performance-based support we ask to what extent a regime explicitly invokes such performance-related claims.



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**International engagement:** Lastly, autocrats also use international engagement to bolster their domestic legitimization narrative. This has hardly been considered in a systematic fashion by the extant research on authoritarian attempts to gain legitimacy. In contrast to ‘external legitimacy’, i.e. recognition from other states (Burnell, 2006; Jackson & Rosberg, 1982), we focus on the extent to which a regime refers to its international role in order to legitimate its rule domestically. Disproportionate international engagement – for instance, in international negotiations or regional organizations but also in providing global public goods and acting as an ideological ‘model exporter’, as in the case of Venezuela or Iran (von Soest, 2015; Whitehead, 2015) – may serve to strengthen the legitimization of regimes, especially those that can hardly draw on domestic sources of legitimization (Schatz, 2006). Using the term ‘externalization’, Dzhueraev (2012, p. 2) describes how political leaders leverage their country’s role in international arenas ‘as tools in manufacturing domestic legitimization’ (see also Koesel & Bunce, 2013). Furthermore, the need to defend the country against an external enemy can also be used to claim domestic legitimacy

### Competitive Authoritarian Regime

<https://democracychronicles.org/competitive-authoritarian-regime/>

**The Case of Zimbabwe’s Competitive Authoritarian Regime** BY FARAI CHIRIMUMIMBA - JUNE 20, 2017

Zimbabwean politics is a theatre of conflicts and might be difficult to comprehend. Although it is seemingly designed as a kind of a multiparty democracy, a single party sets the agenda. Yet Zimbabwe’s parliament has had its fair share of lively parliamentary conflicting debates and robust election campaigns since 2000 when the main opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-T) came into the fore.

A good working definition of one-party dominance is presented by Giovanni Sartori in his seminal work from 1976, *“Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis”*. It is simple, one-party dominance is when the same party wins an absolute majority in at least three consecutive elections. Under this definition, currently, a one-party system is not applicable in Zimbabwe since ZANU-PF failed to win an absolute majority in 2008 parliamentary elections. However, ZANU-PF remains largely unchallenged in political control since independence in 1980.

As a former liberation movement in political power since independence, ZANU PF’s trajectory translates into a specific form of authoritarian democracy. It is rather like other liberation movements in the region, SWAPO in Namibia, Frelimo in Mozambique, ANC in South Africa and Chama Cha Mapinduzi in Tanzania.

ZANU-PF has somehow managed to anchor an enduring party dominance, based on a specific historical legacy even when it lost a parliamentary majority to MDC-T in 2008. This does not necessarily go hand in hand with a heroic narrative or patriotic history, which has ZANU-PF at its centre. Rather, it has much to do with violence and intimidation of the people which usually result in presidential amnesty to the perpetrators after the election.





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### Signatures Signed by: Organisers and Supporters

Name	Organisation	Signature
Lord Jonathan <b>Oates</b>	House of Lords, UK Co-Chair All Party Group on Zimbabwe	
Model <b>Pamire</b>	CCC UK Province Organising Secretary	
Nontokozi Malaba <b>Ncube</b>	CCC Newcastle Branch Secretary and Petitioner {see below}	
Thomas <b>Machingauta</b>	CCC Manchester Secretary	
Vengai <b>Mutsawu</b>	CCC Manchester Vice Secretary	
John C <b>Burke</b>	ZHRO Founder	
Panyika <b>Karimanzira</b>	ROHR Zimbabwe: Spokesperson and Board Member	
Leo <b>Ndlovu</b>	ZAPU EU Representative	

### Signed by: Petitioners

Name	Organisation	Signature
<a href="#">Chief Felix Nhlanhla Ndiweni</a>	MyRight2Vote and Traditional Ndebele Traditional Leader	
Nontokozi Malaba <b>Ncube</b>	CCC Newcastle Branch Secretary	
Diana <b>Machinguata</b>	CCC Manchester Branch Communications Secretary for Youth Assembly	
Vengai <b>Mutsawu</b>	CCC Manchester Branch Vice Secretary	
Lloyd <b>Shumbayaonda</b>	CCC Manchester Branch Vice Treasurer	
William <b>Shoriwa</b>	CCC Manchester Branch Committee Member	



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## Current Social Media Campaigns

**Petition Delivery**  
**2:00pm 16th March 2023\***  
**10 Downing Street**  
**Free Job Sikhala from Jail**

[model.p@ccc-diaspora.com](mailto:model.p@ccc-diaspora.com) and [thomas.m@ccc-diaspora.com](mailto:thomas.m@ccc-diaspora.com)  
**SUPPORTED BY THE ZIMBABWE DIASPORA**  
*\* Provisional Time and Date:*  
*awaiting confirmation from Downing Street Liaison Team.*  
**Meet at 12:00 noon at Zimbabwe Embassy, London**

<https://ccc-diaspora.com> and <https://zhro.org.uk>

12th March 2023      Petition Hand Over 16th March 2023

Job Sikhala INJUSTICE AND INCARCERATION		
Jailed		300 Days
14-Jun-22		10-Apr-23
days added	Dates	
272	13-Mar-23	
273	14-Mar-23	
274	15-Mar-23	
275	16-Mar-23	
276	17-Mar-23	
277	18-Mar-23	
278	19-Mar-23	
279	20-Mar-23	
280	21-Mar-23	
281	22-Mar-23	
282	23-Mar-23	
283	24-Mar-23	
284	25-Mar-23	
285	26-Mar-23	
286	27-Mar-23	
287	28-Mar-23	
288	29-Mar-23	
289	30-Mar-23	
290	31-Mar-23	
291	01-Apr-23	
292	02-Apr-23	
293	03-Apr-23	
294	04-Apr-23	
295	05-Apr-23	
296	06-Apr-23	
297	07-Apr-23	
298	08-Apr-23	
299	09-Apr-23	
300	10-Apr-23	
301	11-Apr-23	
302	12-Apr-23	

300 Day Demo at Westminster, London 10th April 2023  
 CCC-Diaspora | ZHRO | ROHR | ZAPU

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<https://zhro.org.uk/events/eventdetail/4183/-/petition-to-no-10-downing-street>

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<https://zhro.org.uk/human-rights-uk/zim-updates/117-16th-mar-2023-petition-to-uk-pm>

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<https://ccc-diaspora.com/index.php?view=article&id=12:16th-march-petition-to-pm-re-job-sikhala&catid=2>

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[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=pfbid0pnYMUM8Vy1tHgc1dXsp35Pspq1GZiubgAdw8EbR7Rd2xybPgMWSSAR8SDv49LkHnl&id=1238325362](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid0pnYMUM8Vy1tHgc1dXsp35Pspq1GZiubgAdw8EbR7Rd2xybPgMWSSAR8SDv49LkHnl&id=1238325362)

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[https://www.change.org/FREEDOM4\\_Job\\_Sikhala](https://www.change.org/FREEDOM4_Job_Sikhala)  
 7,100 Views

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<https://twitter.com/ROHRZimbabweorg/status/1635272686745313281?s=20>

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<https://twitter.com/Washington0010/status/1635232288043831298?s=20>

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<https://twitter.com/ZimEye/status/1634928046867185664?s=20>  
 5,400 Views and climbing

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<https://twitter.com/EfieZethu/status/1631179771609600000?s=20>  
 retweeted by Lord Jonathan Oates

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[https://twitter.com/jonny\\_oates/status/1629524327447027713?s=20](https://twitter.com/jonny_oates/status/1629524327447027713?s=20)  
 Tweet by Lord Oates regarding demo 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 2023 71,000 views