

Zimbabwe: Authorities must end 'unjust and abusive' incarceration of opposition MPs



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The continued arbitrary detention of opposition leader and Member of Parliament Job Sikhala and MP Godfrey Sithole reveals the politicised justice system in Zimbabwe, Amnesty International said today, 100 days since their incarceration.

“The ongoing arbitrary detention of Sikhala and Sithole is unjust and abusive. It has caused unspeakable emotional distress to them and their families. “The continued incarceration is a travesty of justice - they are victims of a government hellbent on silencing opposition voices. “Sikhala and Sithole must be released immediately and “Zimbabwean authorities must stop criminalising dissent and instead create a conducive environment for people to freely express themselves.”

Sikhala and Sithole were arrested on 14 June this year after attending the funeral of political activist Moreblessing Ali, who was missing for three weeks before being found murdered and her body mutilated on 11 June 2022.

Zimbabwean authorities have accused the MPs of encouraging their supporters to cause violence in Nyatsime, Chitungwiza, during Ali’s memorial. They are facing charges of inciting violence and were denied bail when they appeared in the magistrates court. Several appeals for bail have since been rejected.

As critics of the government and members of the opposition are frequently harassed and arrested, Amnesty believes that the charges against Sikhala and Sithole, and the denial of

their bail, is an effort to persecute and silence political opposition by the Zimbabwean authorities.

Job Sikhala and Godfrey Sithole are senior members of the country's main opposition party Citizen's Coalition for Change. Sikhala is the chairman and Godfrey Sithole is MP for Chitungwiza North. They have been arbitrarily detained for 100 days, sometimes without access to lawyers.

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