



Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition (CIZC) Statement on the arrest of CHRA, CHITREST, CCDZ and ZINASU leaders

The Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition (CiZC) would like to condemn in the strongest terms the arrest and incarceration of five democracy activists belonging to CHRA, CHITREST, ZIMRIGHTS and CCDZ on January 28, and 12 ZINASU activists on January 27.

The Coalition calls for the unconditional release of the arrested activists who were exercising their right to demonstrate as enshrined in Section 59 of the constitution. The detention of human rights defenders for staging peaceful protests and coming in a space of two days signals the state's determination to violate the rights of citizens with impunity. It also reflects the government's deliberate intention to suppress any dissenting voices.

The Coalition notes that the CHRA, CHITREST, ZIMRIGHTS and CCDZ leaders, namely Simbarashe Moyo (CHRA Chairperson), George Makoni (CiZC Board member and CCDZ staff member), Jacob Rukweza (ChitRest), Janet Kanavete (ZimRights) and Tinashe Kazuru (ChitRest) were incarcerated for merely showing solidarity with citizens, whose homes are being callously demolished by the authorities in this rain season.

The Coalition expresses the same solidarity to the 12 Zinasu leaders who were detained and subsequently assaulted in police custody, in violation of Section 50 of the constitution which affirms the rights of arrested and detained persons. The actions by the police were unwarranted as the students were in solidarity with their counterparts in defending the right to education by simply calling for the extension of registration dates at Harare Polytechnic College.

Gilbert Mutubuki, Obey, Sithole, Tafadzwa Dzumbunu, Makomborero Haruzivishe, Tamutswa Chikonyora, Ephraim Mtombeni, Patrick Danga, Sherpherd Sithole, Raymond Sango, Kingsley Sibanda, Vision Moyo and Anne Makoni are the Zinasu activists who were arrested.

The Coalition unequivocally supports and applauds the arrested human rights defenders' courage in defending the right to shelter and education, which are clearly provided for in Sections 74 and 75 of the Constitution respectively. The arrested persons should be lauded for defending the new Constitution itself.

The Coalition would like to make it clear that where the government has failed, as it has done in the two cases to defend the fundamental rights of the ordinary citizens; it is much more heinous for the same government to try to silence those whose conscience has driven them to actively seek justice on behalf of the vulnerable Zimbabweans.

The Coalition demands that the government stops the on-going flagrant violation of the new Constitution. The Coalition would like to urge the government to hastily align laws with the constitution particularly those that deal with people's freedoms such as POSA, AIPPA, ICA, BSA etc.

The Coalition calls for an immediate return to constitutionalism and respect for human rights in Zimbabwe.

Ends/

Issued by: **Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition**

Contact Persons:

1. Mfundo Mlilo, Spokesperson, Mobile: +263 772 127 397 / +1 612 483 0685
Email: mfundomlilo@gmail.com
2. Joy Mabenge, Acting Executive Director, Mobile: +27 11 838 9642,
Email: coordinator@crisiszimbabwe.org

Email: info@crisiszimbabwe.org ; publications@crisiszimbabwe.org

Website: www.crisiszimbabwe.org