



Urgent Action Office 3-1992 Yonge Street Toronto ON M4S 1Z7 Phone: (416) 363-9933 Fax: (416) 363-3103 [urgentaction@amnesty.ca](mailto:urgentaction@amnesty.ca)  
First UA: 29/25 Index: AFR 46/9185/2025 Zimbabwe of March 26, 2025

## **ZIMBABWE FREE JOURNALIST BLESSED MHLANGA NOW**

On February 24, journalist Blessed Mhlanga was arrested and charged with transmitting data messages that incite violence or damage to property. Before his arrest, he interviewed a war veteran and senior member of the ruling Zanu-PF party, who criticized President Mnangagwa.

Blessed Mhlanga is being punished simply for doing his job—exercising his right to free speech and press freedom. His detention is arbitrary and violates Zimbabwe’s Constitution and international human rights commitments.

Authorities must immediately and unconditionally release Blessed Mhlanga and drop all charges against him.

### **Write to the Minister of Justice Legal and Parliamentary Affairs urging the authorities to:**

- Immediately and unconditionally release Blessed Mhlanga, as he is detained solely for peacefully exercising his human rights.
- Drop all charges against him.
- Uphold and protect the human rights of all people in Zimbabwe, including freedom of expression and media freedom.
- Ensure Zimbabwe respects its own Constitution and international human rights commitments, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights.

### **Write to:**

Honourable Ziyambi Ziyambi  
Minister of Justice. Legal and Parliamentary Affairs  
Mgandane Dlodlo Building (New Gvt Complex)  
Cnr Samora Machel Avenue & Simon Vengesai  
Harare, Zimbabwe  
Emails: [pr@justice.gov.zw](mailto:pr@justice.gov.zw) ; [justice@justice.gov.zw](mailto:justice@justice.gov.zw)

X: @MoJLPA

Salutation: *Honourable Ziyambi Ziyambi*

### **And copy:**

His Excellency Cecil Toendepi Chinenere  
Ambassador  
Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe  
332 Somerset Street West  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0J9  
Tel: (613) 421-1242 Fax: (613) 422-7403  
Email: [zimfaottawa@gmail.com](mailto:zimfaottawa@gmail.com)

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

On February 21, the Zimbabwe Republic Police announced they were looking for journalist Blessed Mhlanga, accusing him of violating Section 164 of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act. On February 24, he voluntarily went to the police station, where he was arrested and charged with “transmitting data messages that incite violence or damage to property.” The next day, the Harare Magistrate’s Court denied him bail, and the High Court later upheld that decision. His trial is scheduled to begin on April 4, 2025.

Blessed Mhlanga’s arrest appears to be linked to interviews he conducted with war veteran and former Zanu-PF central committee member Blessed Geza on January 27 and February 11. In those interviews, Geza criticized President Mnangagwa and called for his resignation over corruption allegations and worsening economic conditions.

This is not the first time authorities have targeted Mhlanga. In May 2022, he was arrested and charged with “disorderly conduct” after filming the arrest of former opposition MP Job Sikhala. Police allegedly punched him, smashed his phone, and detained him despite knowing he was a journalist. He was later acquitted.

Blessed Mhlanga’s arrest and detention violate his rights to liberty, freedom of expression, and press freedom. Zimbabwe’s 2013 Constitution protects these rights, and the country is also bound by international human rights agreements, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights. Authorities must respect, protect, and promote media freedom and ensure a safe environment for independent journalism.

***Please take action as soon as possible until September 26, 2025. The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.***