

# URGENT ACTION



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UA 303/09

Fear for safety

ZIMBABWE

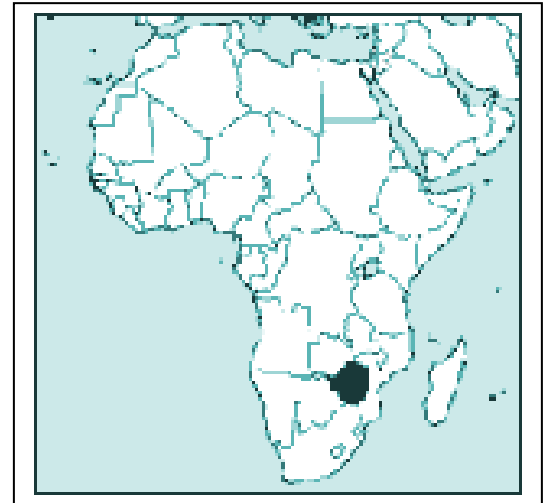
Getrude Hambira (f), trade union activist

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The home of 48-year-old Getrude Hambira, a prominent female trade union activist in Zimbabwe, was attacked by three armed men on 3 November. Getrude Hambira is now in hiding, fearing for her life.

On 3 November, the home of Getrude Hambira, the Secretary General of the General Agriculture and Plantation Workers Union (GAPWUZ) was attacked by three armed men who forced their way in. At the time of the attack Getrude Hambira was not at home. However, her husband, Getrude's elderly mother and the couple's children, including a five-year-old, were at home.

At around midnight, Getrude Hambira's husband was woken by three men who had broken into the house in Milton Park, a suburb in the capital, Harare. When he confronted the men, they asked him about the whereabouts of his wife. He was pinned down by the intruders who threatened to shoot him when he called for help. One of the men fired a single shot into the roof of the house. The men took with them three mobile phones, US\$100 cash and some photographs of Getrude Hambira with her children from a family photograph album. The armed men only left the house when a security alarm was activated, and Getrude Hambira's husband was able to escape and alert a neighbor before calling the police.



The attack on Getrude Hambira's home follows two similar attacks linked to state security agents in Harare in the previous week. On 27 October, Edith Mashayire, an employee of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) political party led by Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, was attacked on the street in Harare by armed men believed to be state security agents. They reportedly told her that she was under arrest and started assaulting her with their guns, but they released her after she called for help from members of the public. During the same week another MDC employee, Pascal Gwezere, was abducted by state security agents from his home. He was reportedly tortured by his abductors. He was later charged with breaking into a military armoury and undergoing military training in Uganda in 1999. These charges are widely believed to be trumped up.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible:**

- Calling on the authorities to guarantee the safety of Getrude Hambira;
- Calling for an independent investigation into the circumstances around the attack on Getrude Hambira's family home;

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*Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.*

- Urging the authorities to investigate the attack and to end harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders and political activists by state security agents.

**APPEALS TO:**

**Commissioner General of Police**

Mr. Augustine Chihuri

ZRP Headquarters

P.O. Box 8807

Causeway

Harare, ZIMBABWE

**Fax: 011 263 4 253 212**

**Salutation: Dear Commissioner**

**Hon Giles Mutsekwa**

Minister of Home Affairs

P. Bag 7703

Causeway

Harare

ZIMBABWE

**Fax: 011 263 4 707 231**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

**Getrude Hambira**

Secretary General

GAPWUZ

**Fax: 011 263 4 797 918**

Ambassador Dr. Machivenyika T. Mapuranga

Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe

1608 New Hampshire Ave. NW

Washington DC 20009

**Fax: 1 202 483 9326**

**Email: info@zimbabwe-embassy.us OR  
zimembassy@yahoo.com**

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.**

**Check with the AIUSA Urgent Action office if sending appeals after 18 December 2009.**