

# URGENT ACTION

## RELEASE ARBITRARILY DETAINED JOURNALIST

On February 24, a journalist named Blessed Mhlanga was arrested. He was accused by authorities of sharing messages that could cause harm and violence. Prior to his arrest, he interviewed people who criticized the president of Zimbabwe. Blessed must be freed immediately and unconditionally because he was only using his right to freedom of expression. His arrest is unfair and goes against the laws protecting and respecting the human right to freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: September 26, 2025

### TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on UA 29.25. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

#### Honorable 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; [justice@justice.gov.zw](mailto:justice@justice.gov.zw)  
Twitter/X: @MoJLPA

#### Send a copy of your letter to the address below

CC: Embassy of Zimbabwe in the United States  
Deputy Chief of Mission and Head of Chancery  
Mrs. Sarah Bhoroma  
1608 New Hampshire Avenue, NW,  
Washington DC 20009  
Email: sbhoroma@zimembassydc.org

Dear Honorable Ziyambi Ziyambi,

I am very worried about the **arbitrary** arrest of a **journalist** named Blessed Mhlanga. He was put in jail after he interviewed a **war veteran** and former member of **Zanu-PF Central Committee**, criticizing the president of Zimbabwe of **corruption** and a poor **economy**.

Blessed Mhlanga's arrest is not fair. He has the right to share information and express his thoughts freely. I ask you to let him go right away and remove all the **charges** against him.

Please make sure everyone in the country is treated fairly and has the right to share their opinions, as promised in Zimbabwe's laws and agreements.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]



**Photo Left:** Map of the continent of Africa, highlighting Zimbabwe, a country in southern Africa.

**Photo Right:** Blessed Mhlanga.

## Learn More About Blessed

Blessed Mhlanga is a journalist in Zimbabwe. Under **International Human Rights Law**, specifically Article 19 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, journalists are protected by the right to freedom of expression, including the right to **seek**, receive, and share information.

On February 21, the police in Zimbabwe started looking for Blessed. They said he broke the law by sharing messages that could cause harm and violence. On February 24, Blessed went to the police station to settle this matter, and they arrested him. On February 25, a court decided he could not go home while waiting for his **trial**, which will start on April 4, 2025.

This isn't the first time Blessed has had trouble because of his work as a journalist. In May 2022, he was arrested after filming the police arresting someone. Although Blessed said he was a journalist, the police still arrested him, broke his phone, and hurt him. Later, he was found not guilty.

Zimbabwe has laws that give everyone the right to speak freely and protect journalists. For example, they signed The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, meaning Zimbabwe must be committed to promoting and protecting human rights. These rights are also supported by agreements Zimbabwe has made with other countries. These agreements say everyone should be able to share ideas and opinions freely without fear.

## Learning Activities

- [Vocabulary Chart](#)
- [The Universal Declaration of Human Rights Worksheet](#)
- [Tips for Letter Writing](#)