

URGENT ACTION

OPPOSITION MEMBER SHOT AND KILLED

On August 14, Mutotwe Kafwaya – a former cabinet minister and member of opposition party, Tonse-Pamodzi Alliance - was reportedly shot and killed during a state run security operation in Lusaka, Zambia's capital. The authorities only confirmed his death five days later, on August 19, after his family had been left without official information about his fate and whereabouts. The Zambian authorities must conduct a prompt, independent, impartial, transparent, and effective investigation into the circumstances surrounding the shooting and killing of Mutotwe Kafwaya and ensure that those suspected to be responsible are brought to justice in fair trial fair trials.

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 81.26**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

President Hakainde Hichilema

State House
Independence Avenue P.O. Box, 30135
Lusaka, 10101,
Zambia
Email: info@eservices.gov.zm

Send a copy of your letter to the address below

CC: Zambian Embassy in the United States
Ambassador Dr. Chibamba Kanyama
2419 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20008
Email: washington@grz.gov.zm

Dear President Hakainde Hichilema,

I am concerned about the reported shooting and killing of former cabinet minister **Mutotwe Kafwaya** on August 14 during a state security operation in Kabulonga, in Zambia's capital of Lusaka.

On August 14, state run security forces carried out a raid on a property linked to **Brian Mundubile**, presidential candidate and leader of the main opposition party, National Reconciliation Party for Unity and Prosperity (NRPUP). During the operation, four individuals - all NRPUP members - were arrested. Mutotwe Kafwaya, member of Tonse-Pamodzi Alliance, which is backing NRPUP - was seen being shot twice by state security forces. His fate and whereabouts were unknown until the authorities announced his death on August 19, five days later. The authorities allege that the raid and its arrests relate to an insurrection investigation, but it seems to instead form part of a politically motivated crackdown initiated by the authorities to crackdown on the opposition and peaceful dissent.

Mutotwe Kafwaya's family had been left without official information about his fate and whereabouts. International human rights law requires states to respect, protect, and ensure the right to life and account for deaths resulting from the use of excessive force by state security agents.

I urge you to ensure the conduct of an effective investigation into the circumstances of the shooting and killing of Mutotwe Kafwaya, including the circumstances in which lethal force was used and whether that use of force complied with the principles of legality, necessity, and proportionality under international human rights law. I also urge you to ensure that the findings of the investigation are made public, and anyone suspected of responsibility for the shooting are brought to justice in fair trials. I urge you to ensure access for the victim and his family to justice and effective remedies.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mutotwe Kafwaya is a former cabinet minister, having served as the Minister of Works and Supply in 2018 and later as the Minister of Transport and Communications in 2019.

The government alleges the security operation carried out on August 14 was to target an insurrection plot and announced that military-grade weapons had been recovered at the site. According to official government briefings issued by Secretary to the Cabinet Patrick Kangwa, the raid on the night of “August 13” 2026 was a Zambia Police Service-led joint operation working with Military Tactical Units, State Intelligence (OP), and the Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC). While the police led the operation, the Zambia Defense Force (specifically specialized tactical or commando units) provided the heavy tactical presence. The state’s justification for involving the military was the intelligence that the raid targeted a suspected “militia cell” and that three of the suspects detained were former commandos with specialized military training. The Zambia Security Intelligence Service Act, 1973 (Chapter 109); legally mandates, empowers, and provides the framework for the Office of the President to gather and process intelligence regarding threats to national security. A direct presidential deployment under Section 5 of the Defense Act or constitutional emergency powers follows a formally declared state of emergency or a public threat requiring the military to take control of an area.

The Kabulonga raid took place against the backdrop of a broader crackdown on opposition members before, during, and after Zambia’s 2026 general election. Between late July and mid-August, several opposition figures and supporters including **Kennedy Kamba, Harry (Valden) Findlay, Moses Ng’andwe, Felix Mangani Phiri, Winston Ngosa**, and **Sebastian Kopulande** were arrested in separate operations in Lusaka. Police have stated that some suspects had been under investigation for years, yet the arrests were carried out during the election period while investigations are said to remain ongoing, raising wider concerns about arbitrary detention and due process, as well as violations of international fair trial standards.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: February 25, 2027

NAME AND PRONOUN: Mutotwe Kafwaya (he/ him)