

Hon Ziyambi Ziyambi
Minister of Justice, Legal, and Parliamentary Affairs
Mgandane Dlodlo Building (New Gvt Complex)
Cnr Samora Machel Avenue & Simon Vengesai
Harare
Zimbabwe

Dear Hon Ziyambi Ziyambi,

I am writing on behalf of Amnesty International to raise concern over the failure to launch an effective investigation into the enforced disappearance of **Itai Dzamara**. Itai Peace Dzamara, a journalist and pro-democracy activist, was abducted 10 years ago on 9 March 2015 by five unknown men while at a barber shop in Harare's Glen View suburb. He was handcuffed and taken away in a white Isuzu with hidden license plates after being accused of stealing cattle. It has been 10 years and his fate or whereabouts remain unknown. His family members and human rights attorneys have made unsuccessful attempts to find him.

On 13 March 2015, the High Court of Zimbabwe ordered the Central Intelligence Organization's Director General, the Commissioner-General of Police, the Minister of State Security, and the Minister of Home Affairs to locate the Itai Dzamara and report the progress of their search to the Registrar of the High Court every second Friday before 4pm until his whereabouts are established. None of the security authorities have completely complied with the directive to notify the High Court since it was issued.

Itai Dzamara was an activist who campaigned for good governance and called upon the government to address the deteriorating economic conditions in Zimbabwe. He was arrested and severely beaten by the police as he exercised his right to protest.

We note that President Mnangagwa took power in 2017 pledging to "uphold and defend the constitution and all other laws of Zimbabwe", however the human rights reforms are yet to be realized in the country. Itai's case is one of many cases of abductions and enforced disappearances that the authorities are yet to investigate and ensure accountability. Amnesty International continues to document cases of human rights defenders, activists, journalists and opposition political party members who are subjected to arbitrary arrests, unlawful detention and unfair trials solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

In light of the above, we urge you to hear the appeals of Itai's family for answers and:

- Ensure that an independent judge led commission of inquiry is set up to comprehensively investigate the enforced disappearance of Itai Dzamara, establish his fate or whereabouts and bring to justice those suspected of criminal responsibility in fair trials.
- Ensure full compliance with the High Court order to report progress of the search for Itai Dzamara fortnightly until his fate or whereabouts are determined.

Additionally, I urge the government of Zimbabwe to:

- Take measures to stop abductions and enforced disappearances and thoroughly, impartially, independently, and transparently investigate all outstanding cases of abductions and torture.
- Ratify UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

We are available for any further discussions with your office, and you may contact us via email at: tshidi.leatswe@amnesty.org.

Yours sincerely,