

URGENT ACTION

FORMER OPPOSITION LEADER'S CONVICTIONS QUASHED

On 22 July, former member of parliament Job Sikhala was acquitted by the High Court of Zimbabwe on charges of 'publishing or communicating false statements prejudicial to the State' and 'incitement to commit violence'. He spent 595 days in pre-trial detention and was released on 30 January 2024 after he received a suspended two-year prison sentence for 'incitement to commit violence'.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

On 22 July, the politically motivated conviction and sentencing of former member of parliament, **Job Sikhala** for 'publishing or communicating false statements prejudicial to the State' and 'incitement to commit violence' was quashed by the High Court of Zimbabwe.

Job Sikhala was arrested with fellow opposition leader Godfrey Sithole and 14 other men (collectively known as the 'Nyatsime 16') on 14 June 2022. They were charged with 'obstructing justice' and 'incitement to commit violence and disorderly conduct'. On 3 May 2023, Job Sikhala was convicted and fined for 'obstructing justice'. While a High Court ruling overturned the conviction in November 2023, Job Sikhala remained in prison during this time, awaiting trial for the incitement to commit violence and disorderly conduct charges. On 30 January, he received a suspended two-year prison sentence for "incitement to commit violence" and was subsequently released after 595 days of pretrial detention. On 15 February 2024, Job Sikhala received a nine-month suspended prison sentence for charges of 'false statements prejudicial to the state' - a law that no longer exists and was declared void by the Constitutional Court in 2014 - after he was accused of posting a video on Facebook claiming that a police officer had killed a baby.

Job Sikhala's politically motivated prosecution was part of the Zimbabwean authorities' growing crackdown and suppression of dissenting views.

The Urgent Action was impactful as it amplified the case globally in addition to local calls, especially the student movements.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Job Sikhala (he, him, his)

THIS IS THE THIRD AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 90/22

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr46/7791/2024/en/>

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