

The Platform for Concerned Citizens (PCC)

Follow-up on the Petition for the Release of Job Sikhala, Godfrey Sithole, and the Nyatsime 18 from Detention.

27 September 2022

The Platform for Concerned Citizens (PCC), because of its concern over the denial of bail and continued detention of MPs, Job Sikhala and Godfrey Sithole, as well the 18 others from Nyatsime, presented a petition to the President of Zimbabwe, Hon. Emmerson Mnangagwa on 9th September 2022. The PCC decided to present this petition out of our own belief that the continued denial of bail and detention seemed manifestly unjust, and not in accordance with common judicial practice, and we detailed our reasons for these views in the petition.

The PCC subsequently, and because we were inundated with requests from people wishing to associate themselves with petition, arranged for the petition to be placed online through the kind agency of Change.org. The petition can be viewed online through the following link:

https://www.change.org/p/release-mps-job-sikhala-and-godfrey-sithole-and-14-others-from-nyatsime-from-detention-freethenyatsime16?recruiter=48720800&recruited_by_id=1ec011e0-90c0-0130-24b6-38ac6f16cbb1&utm_source=share_petition&utm_campaign=share_for_starters_page&utm_medium=twitter

It is evident that the petition has unveiled the concerns of Zimbabwean citizens about the denial of bail and continued incarceration of these 18 Zimbabweans. At the time of writing this petition, 48, 092 people have joined and signed. The vast majority of those who have signed are Zimbabweans, both from within the country and from the Diaspora, but they have been joined by the citizens of many other countries. In short, the petition has world-wide concern, and people are continuing to sign.

The PCC issued a statement on 16 September, outlining publicly the reasons for our submission of the petition to the President. We did so in response to comments and statements from the government that the petition was inappropriately calling for the President to interfere in the courts and hence violate the constitution. We pointed out in that statement that we were making no such call, but as indicated in the petition submitted to the President, that he ensures that the abuse of the Constitution and judicial process be immediately resolved.

We made the following point in this subsequent letter:

In our statement of 16 September 2022, we made plain that we do not expect your Excellency to directly interfere in the operations of the Zimbabwean courts, but rather to insist that your government directs its agencies to strictly follow the constitution and the laws of the country. Here we would additionally point out that many lawyers in the country do not believe that the denial of bail and continued incarceration of these 18 people is warranted on the facts as these are publicly available.

Today, we have informed the President about the progress of the petition and the very large number of Zimbabweans that believe there is a miscarriage of justice. It is our hope that the President will understand the concerns of the citizens of Zimbabwe and make plain the commitment of the Government of Zimbabwe to constitutionalism and the rule of law, and we shortly see this miscarriage of justice being rapidly corrected.

APPENDIX
FOLLOW-UP ON PETITION

SUBMITTED TO:

Dr Misheck Sibanda
Chief Secretary to the President and Cbinat
HE. Emmerson D. Mnangagwa
Munhumutapa Building
HARARE

27 September 2022

ARREST AND DETENTION OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT JOB SIKHALA AND GODFREY SITHOLE, AND 14 RESIDENTS OF NYATSIME, CHITUNGWIZA

Dear Dr Sibanda,

We submitted a petition to the President on 9 September, supported by over 100 people, both Zimbabweans and others concerned about the situation regarding Job Sikhala, Godfrey Sithole and 16 others.

Following this submission, we were continuously approached by others who wished to associate themselves with the petition. Accordingly, we arranged for the petition to be placed online through the kind agency of Change.org. This petition can be viewed through the following link:

https://www.change.org/p/release-mps-job-sikhala-and-godfrey-sithole-and-14-others-from-nyatsime-from-detention-freethenyatsime16?recruiter=48720800&recruited_by_id=1ec011e0-90c0-0130-24b6-38ac6f16cbb1&utm_source=share_petition&utm_campaign=share_for_starters_page&utm_medium=twitter

At the time of writing this letter to the President, nearly 48,000 (44,599) persons have signed this petition. This large number of concerned people come from Zimbabweans in the vast proportion, both from within Zimbabwe and from the Diaspora, but many other citizens of other countries have also signed. If necessary, we are happy to provide the full petition that is being signed online as a hard copy.

Signed:

Ibbo Mandaza
For and behalf of the Platform for Concerned Citizens (PCC)