

URGENT ACTION

FEMALE ACTIVISTS DETAINED IN ZIMBABWE

Twelve activists from the social justice movement, Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), have been unlawfully detained at Bulawayo Central police station. They have been arrested for participating in a peaceful march to commemorate International Day of Peace in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second city. Some of them are in poor health.

On 21 September, police in Bulawayo used excessive force to break up a peaceful march commemorating the United Nations' International Day of Peace. The march had been organised by the social justice movement, **WOZA**. At least 14 activists were injured and needed medical treatment, and 12 members of WOZA, including leaders **Jenni Williams** and **Magodonga Mahlangu**, were arrested and detained at Bulawayo Central police station. The two are reported to be in poor health following medical operations in recent weeks. On 22 September, police charged 10 of the detainees with "criminal nuisance" and Jenni Williams and Magodonga Mahlangu were told they would be charged with "kidnapping and theft."

Amnesty International considers all 12 detainees to be prisoners of conscience arrested solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression as guaranteed by Zimbabwe's constitution and international human rights treaties, including in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

WOZA activists have faced repeated arbitrary arrests and detention for engaging in peaceful protests highlighting social justice issues that affect women and their families in Zimbabwe. WOZA members have previously suffered torture and other ill treatment while in custody and denied access to lawyers, to food and water and to necessary medical care.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English or your own language:

- Urge the Deputy Commissioner-General of Police (Crime) to end systematic harassment and intimidation of WOZA activists by police officers and ensure that they respect and protect all human rights in line with Article 1 of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Co-operating Organisation Code of Conduct for Police Officials.
- Urge the Officer in Charge, Bulawayo Central Police Station, to end systematic violations of human rights by police officers under their command and to ensure that they respect and protect all human rights in line with Article 1 of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Co-operating Organisation Code of Conduct for Police Officials.
- Urge both police authorities to ensure the immediate and unconditional release of the 12 WOZA activists.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 3 NOVEMBER 2011 TO:

Deputy Commissioner-General (Crime)

Innocent Matibiri
Zimbabwe Republic Police
P. O. Box 8807, Causeway
Harare
Zimbabwe

Salutation: Dear Commissioner-General

Officer in Charge

Bulawayo Central Police Station
Zimbabwe Republic Police
P.O. Box 2329
Fife St/ L Takawira Avenue
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe
Fax: +263 9 65763

Salutation: Dear Officer in Charge

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

Name: Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA)

Gender m/f: Female

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