

PUBLIC

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Further information on UA 40/02 (AFR 46/008/2002, 7 February 2002)

Fear for safety / Health concerns/ Conditions of detention

**ZIMBABWE Gertrud Ntombeni (f) (please note corrected spelling) - National
Executive member of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)
Abednico Bhebhe (m) - MDC Member of Parliament
Peter Nyoni (m) - MDC Member of Parliament
And 33 MDC supporters**

On 13 February, Gertrud Ntombeni, Abednico Bhebhe, Peter Nyoni and 33 Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) supporters were released from Khami Prison in Matabeleland. They were charged on 8 February in Nkayi Magistrate's Court under the Public Order and Security Act, with throwing stones and being in possession of dangerous weapons including axes and empty bottles. They deny the charges. No trial date their case has been set.

Gertrud Ntombeni, Abednico Bhebhe, Peter Nyoni and 33 MDC supporters were arrested in Nkayi, Matabeleland, on 6 February. They were initially held in poor conditions at Nkayi Police Station. On 8 February, they were refused bail and transferred to Khami Prison.

At a further court appearance on 12 February, the magistrate granted bail of 1000 Zimbabwean dollars each, but the detainees were kept in prison for an additional day before all being released on 13 February.

They were reported to have been given food in prison but were denied access to a doctor. Some received bandages for their injuries, which were reportedly caused when they were assaulted by ZANU-PF militia and army soldiers on 6 February. Some of their injuries were reportedly caused by axe blows, and one person has a suspected broken arm. Following their release, the injured are now receiving medical examinations and appropriate medical care.

Amnesty International is continuing to seek further information and will continue to monitor their situation and take further steps as appropriate. For further information about harassment of Members of Parliament, see *ZIMBABWE: The unfair prosecution of parliamentarians Fletcher Dulinzi Ncube, Moses Mzila Ndlovu and sixteen others* (AI Index: AFR 46/005/2002, January 2002) on Amnesty International's website. (<http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/AFR460052002>)

No further action by the Urgent Action network is requested at this time. Thank you to all who sent appeals.