



Human Rights Council 34th Session
Item 6 – Adoption of the report on the UPR of Zimbabwe
Oral statement

Mr. President,

FIDH and Zimbabwe Human Rights Association value the commitment by Zimbabwe to among others: ‘take concrete steps to create and maintain a safe and enabling environment for HRDs’; ‘ensure that violence directed against human rights defenders will not be tolerated and that perpetrators will be held accountable..’; and ‘to investigate the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of Itai Dzamara and ensure that those responsible are brought to book.’

However, we are concerned that Human Rights Defenders continue to face harassment, arbitrary arrests and torture for exercising their freedoms to assemble and of expression. State institutions such as the police, military and the intelligence continue to be at the forefront of perpetrators of human rights violations with impunity.

Mr President, the 9th of March 2017 marked the second anniversary of the disappearance of Itai Dzamara. We are deeply concerned that there has not been any genuine efforts by the Government in investigating the circumstances surrounding his disappearance, despite government reporting that it was working closely with the Dzamara family and his lawyers.

We urge the Government of Zimbabwe to fully investigate these and other human rights abuses highlighted during the Universal Periodic Review process, in particular to put serious efforts into the investigation of Itai Dzamara’s disappearance.

Mr President,

It is further saddening to note that after celebrating the inauguration of a progressive Constitution that creates mechanisms for an independent judiciary, the Government immediately after the review introduced the Constitution Amendment Bill No. 1 which seeks to take away the same safeguards for an independent judiciary. A strong and independent judiciary is critical to the building of a strong human rights culture in any country. We are deeply concerned that the GoZ did not only fail to comply with its undertaking but also acted contrary to its entrenched position to align the laws of the country to the new Constitution and safeguarding the sanctity of the Constitution.

We therefore urge the government of Zimbabwe to reaffirm and respect its commitments under the UPR to protect and respect all the rights of its citizens.

Thank you.