



16 March 2018  
Check against delivery

**UN Human Rights Council  
Thirty-seventh session, 26 February – 23 March 2018**

**Item 6:  
Consideration of UPR reports**

**ZAMBIA**

Mr. President,

Free expression and space for genuine dialogue and debate are essential to achieving respect for human rights and political stability.

Amnesty welcomes assurances by Zambia during the UPR that it upholds the principles of the UPR mechanism, and spares no effort to promote and protect human rights through its engagement with this mechanism.<sup>1</sup>

Of the 213 recommendations made to Zambia by other states, it is extremely disappointing that 111 of these did not enjoy its support. We urge Zambia to reconsider its position on these recommendations with a view to accepting at least some of them. In particular, we regret that Zambia did not accept recommendations to guarantee the rights to freedom of assembly, association and expression,<sup>2</sup> and to abolish the death penalty.<sup>3</sup>

The authorities continue to stifle freedom of the press, targeting journalists, human rights defenders and activists who express dissenting views. We denounce all attacks against activists and journalists and are concerned that Zambia has rejected

---

<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Zambia, A/HRC/37/14, paragraph A5.

<sup>2</sup> A/HRC/37/14, recommendations 131.67-74 (USA, Guatemala, Ireland, Canada, UK, Paraguay, France).

<sup>3</sup> A/HRC/37/14, recommendations 131.5-10 (Angola, Montenegro, Mexico, Australia, France, Sweden, Togo, Spain), 131.45-50 (Norway, Spain, South Africa, Rwanda, Italy, Namibia), 131.58-62 (Central African Republic, Paraguay, Portugal, Ukraine, UK, Honduras).

recommendations to guarantee their ability to carry out their work without fear of persecution.<sup>4</sup>

The musician Fumba Chama, also known as Pilato, is facing constant intimidation and threats to his life by state agencies because his music is critical of President Lungu. This would indicate a growing intolerance of free speech.

We are also concerned by the use of criminal libel laws to silence critics of the ruling party. On 10 January, government critic Dr. Kwalela Kafunya was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, including on charges of defamation of the President. We call on Zambia to drop the charges against Pilato and release Dr. Kafunya.

Mr. President,

We welcome Zambia's acceptance of a recommendation to reform the Public Order Act<sup>5</sup> and encourage it to consult with civil society in ensuring it complies with the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

We also welcome the reduction in inmates on death row through commutation of death sentences, however, we are concerned that the death penalty continues to be handed down. We call on Zambia to abolish the death penalty.

Thank you, Mr. President,

---

<sup>4</sup> A/HRC/37/14, recommendations 131.81-82 (Finland, Netherlands)

<sup>5</sup> Human Rights Council, Report of the working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Zambia, A/HRC/WG.6/28/L.11, 22 November 2017, recommendation 129.4