

President Mnangagwa  
Office of the President  
Munhumutapa Building  
Corner Sam Nujoma and Samora Machel Avenue  
P. Bag 7700, Causeway  
Harare  
SIMBABWE

Your Excellency,

Cecellia Chimbiri, Joanah Mamombe and Netsai Marova were arrested on 13 May 2020 at a police roadblock in Harare for leading an anti-government protest over the authorities' response to the COVID-19 pandemic and widespread hunger in the country. On the same day, they were forcibly disappeared from police custody. During their abduction they were subjected to torture, including sexual assault, with their clothes torn. On 15 May 2020, they were found abandoned in Bindura, about 87km from Harare, and were hospitalised. A few days later, and while still hospitalised, police charged the activists with gathering with intent to promote public violence and breach of peace. Prison guards and police officers were at the hospital to prevent them from talking to journalists. After stating that they recognised some of their attackers, the women were re-arrested on 10 June 2020 and charged with faking their ordeal. They were detained until 26 June 2020, when they were given bail. No investigation has been initiated into their disappearance and their credible allegations of torture, including sexual assault.

Please ensure that all charges against Cecellia Chimbiri, Joanah Mamombe and Netsai Marova are dropped immediately and unconditionally. Please also instruct the authorities to end the harassment the three women face for peacefully exercising their right to protest and speaking out against sexual violence.

Yours sincerely,

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