



ACTION SHEET

September 2017

CASE STUDY

ITAI DZAMARA

ZIMBABWEAN JOURNALIST ARRESTED OVER TWO YEARS AGO, WITH NO NEWS OF HIS WHEREABOUTS



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Itai is a 37-year-old journalist and pro-democracy activist from Zimbabwe, who has a wife called Sheffra and two children.

In March 2015, Itai was at the hairdresser when a group of men came in and accused Itai of stealing. They handcuffed him and forced him into a truck. We do not know where Itai is or what has happened to him since.

Sheffra, Itai's wife, reported his abduction straight away to the police in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital city. However, over a year later, there has still not been a full investigation into Itai's disappearance.

Itai stood up for democracy in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has had the same president, Robert Mugabe, since 1980 – that is 37 years! Mugabe and his followers have used violence and intimidation to stay in power. There are reports that some people were prevented from voting by Mugabe.

We think Itai may have been abducted because he stood up to Mugabe and his followers.

Itai Dzamara was interviewed on the radio just before he was abducted. When asked how he would like to be remembered, he said:

'For having made a contribution – to the best of my ability, genuinely and sincerely – towards the creation of a better Zimbabwe where people enjoy their freedoms and with dignity; where leaders are accountable and answerable to the people; where the resources and wealth benefit and uplift the lives of all; where elections are fair and credible contests of ideas and policies. Lastly, a Zimbabwe that coexists and competes with the rest of the world, favourably, viably and in harmony.'

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DEMOCRACY

Democracy literally means rule by the people, and is when people elect their own leaders by voting. People need to feel safe when they vote and that their vote will be counted, otherwise this is not a true democracy. Leaders who want to stay in power without respecting this fair process often target people who fight for democracy.

SOLIDARITY ACTION

Write a message of support for Itai's wife, Sheffra, and their two children. Let them know that you are thinking about them and that you are supporting their case.

GET CREATIVE

Draw a picture of Itai using the photo on the first page with the message 'Where is Itai?'

Itai is a journalist. You might like to lay out your page like the front page of a newspaper, including information or what you think about Itai's case.

Ask your parent, guardian or teacher to take a photo of your drawing of Itai and message and tweet it, along with #whereisitai @AmnestySARO @AmnestyUK.

Post your drawings and messages to us. We will tweet a selection and then we will post them to the Zimbabwean authorities.

APPEAL ACTION

Write to Zimbabwe's Commissioner General of the Police, Augustine Chihuri, to ask him to ensure that a full, thorough investigation is made into Itai's disappearance and that the results of the investigation are made public. Start your letter, 'Dear Commissioner General.'

SEND YOUR ACTION LETTERS OR CARDS TO US AND WE WILL FORWARD THEM ON:

Alice Sims

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Please don't write your name on the card or letter itself, but instead complete and send us the actions cover sheet found on our website.

