

# Home of Prominent Zimbabwe Opposition Leader Bombed

Authorities Should Impartially Investigate, Prosecute Perpetrators



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*Job Sikhala, former legislator and member of the Zimbabwean opposition party Citizens Coalition for Change, climbs into a prison truck at the magistrates court in Harare, Zimbabwe, January 24, 2024. © 2024 Jekesai Njikizana/AFP via Getty Images*

In the early hours of August 30, unidentified perpetrators [bombed](#) the home of Job Sikhala, a prominent critic of Zimbabwe's government. [Video](#) shared on social media and reviewed by researchers shows damage to Sikhala's house, including to the windows, facade, roof, and a car parked outside. Sikhala reported that at the time [only his children](#) were in the house, in a suburb of Chitungwiza, near the capital Harare, but escaped unharmed.

Sikhala, 53, said in a [statement](#) posted to X early on September 1 that the bombing was "targeting to kill my children" and while he had reported the attack, his "family has not received any feedback from the police. No statement, no feedback to the victims of this heinous crime."

The attack occurred while Sikhala was in South Africa to launch his book, "Footprints in the Chains: The Life Story of Job Sikhala." The book [is an account](#) of human rights abuses in Zimbabwe and of Sikhala's own political journey.

In June 2022, the authorities detained Sikhala, then an opposition member of parliament and vice-chairperson of the Citizens Coalition for Change [party, and held him without bail for 595 days](#) on charges of inciting public violence. A [petition](#) signed by prominent Zimbabweans, foreign diplomats and civil society groups called for Sikhala's release, stating that his prolonged detention eroded the value and essence of the criminal justice system, which was being "weaponized against dissent." After his receiving a suspended sentence and release, he started the [National Democratic Working Group](#), a civic pro-democracy movement.

At Sikhala's book launch in Masvingo in July, suspected members of the ZANU-PF youth, the youth wing of the governing party, [violently disrupted](#) the event, [assaulting guests](#) and seizing copies of the book. Police allegedly [refused to act](#) against the assailants, despite victims and witnesses filing multiple complaints.

Since President Emmerson Mnangagwa came to power in 2017, the [numerous cases](#) of politically motivated violence against government critics and the political opposition, and the failure to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators, have undermined his pledge to usher in a "[new dawn](#)" in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe authorities should take all necessary steps to protect Job Sikhala, his family, and other critics of the government. They should thoroughly and impartially investigate this attack and other cases of politically motivated violence and ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.

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