

FEBRUARY - MARCH

VOLUME II

# DEFIANT STUDENT VOICES NEWSLETTER

EST. 1997 | Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU)



THURSDAY, 11 APRIL, 2024

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# DIALOGUE

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MULTI-STAKEHOLDER MEETING

## Fiscal Justice For Education

...and what it means for Studnets

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On the 27th of February, 2024, ZINASU, ZIM-CODD and FSNT convened a meeting with multiple stakeholders to discuss issues of fiscal discipline in institutions of higher learning. Findings presented by the President - Emmanuel Sitimah - One of the major concerns raised by students during our investigation was the current fees structure in higher learning institutions. Affordability and currency exchange emerged as significant issues, with students expressing dissatisfaction over demanding fees in USD and the substantial increases in tuition fees. These factors have had a negative impact on enrollment and access to education, creating a sense of disenfranchisement among students. Among the surveyed students, 39.2% pay their fees exclusively in USD, while 60.1% pay their fees partly in USD and the rest in RTGS at the official bank rate.

The impact of the fees structure on education and student rights cannot be understated. Financial insecurities and stress associated with fees payment were found to adversely affect academic performance, with female students being particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse due to financial difficulties.

Moreover, student welfare services were deemed inadequate, and student rights were found to be limited. The high fees disproportionately affected marginalized students, exacerbating inequalities and hindering equal opportunities.



Over 75% of students agreed that the issues surrounding the fees structure somewhat negatively impacted education and student rights.

Transparency and consultation were identified as significant areas of concern. Students felt there was a lack of transparency in how fees were utilized within institutions, and student representatives had limited involvement in the decision-making process.

Greater transparency and consultation were deemed necessary in the fees structuring process to involve students and ensure clear communication. An overwhelming majority of students (89.9%) felt that their institutions were not transparent in communicating fees and their use, while only a small percentage (10.1%) disagreed with this assertion.

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# DEFIANT STUDENT VOICES

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Our applied political economy analysis revealed that economic instability, government policies, corruption, budgetary constraints, and market competition influenced institutional behavior in demanding high fees or exclusive USD payments. Corruption and rent-seeking practices were reported, undermining the integrity of the education system.



Additionally, limited government funding and market competition further contributed to the high fees. A significant majority of students (91.2%) felt that they were not consulted or given the opportunity to provide input during the fees restructuring process, highlighting a lack of inclusivity and participatory decision-making.

Regarding quality assurance, students disagreed that fees paid shaped the quality of education in institutions. They emphasized the importance of resource allocation, teaching and learning ...



... environments, faculty quality and development, and student support services for educational quality. However, students felt that fees were not adequately utilized to enhance these aspects and improve the overall educational experience. Only a small fraction of students (16.1%) somewhat agreed that fees paid were being appropriately utilized for the improvement of education quality and student welfare, while a larger percentage (44.1%) somewhat disagreed. A significant number of students (26.1%) disagreed, and a minority (7.7%) strongly disagreed.

At Great Zimbabwe University, specific data revealed that 35.4% of students agreed that fees paid were being utilized for quality assurance, while 30.8% somewhat disagreed, indicating a lack of consensus among the student body.

# HIGH LEVEL EDUCATION FORUM - II

## HIGH-LEVEL EDUCATION FORUM



**MODERATOR**

**BRIGHTON NCUBE**  
JOURNALIST  
CITEZW

**TOPIC**

**PROMOTING DIGITAL LITERACY:  
REDEFINING AND REMODELING  
EDUCATION FOR THE  
FUTURE OF WORK**

**DATE & TIME**

**SATURDAY, 23 MARCH 2024  
9:00 AM - 12:30 PM**

**VENUE**

**TBA**

### PANELISTS



**M. GUMEDE**  
MEMBER OF  
PARLIAMENT,  
CHAIRPERSON -  
HIGHER  
EDUCATION



**DR.  
W. MALINGA**  
RESEARCH  
MANAGER  
PPRIZ



**B. DUBE**  
EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR  
NYDT



**E. SITIMA**  
PRESIDENT  
ZINASU

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# FORUM

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HIGH LEVEL EDUCATION FORUM

## Promoting Digital Literacy

...redefining & remodeling education for the future work

On the 23rd of March, 2024, ZINASU convened its second High Level Education Forum in Bulawayo. The topic which was discussed by the panelists and the stakeholders was, Promoting Digital literacy: Redefining and Remodeling Education for The Future of Work.

President Emmanuel Sitima underscored the importance of digital literacy, recognizing its positive impact on students and society as a whole. He emphasized the need for reviewing syllabuses and incorporating tech education to promote digital literacy among students. By equipping individuals with digital skills, they become better prepared for the ever-evolving digital world. The President also stressed the necessity of developing digital infrastructure in institutions of higher education. He highlighted the challenges faced at Teachers Colleges, where the lack of Wi-Fi hinders effective learning. The President proposed the establishment of innovation hubs and Wi-Fi networks to tap into the potential of the fifth-generation technology revolution.

Busi Dube, the executive director of NYDT, explained the role of Civil Societies on this issue. According to her, CSOs are actively engaged in raising awareness about technology, particularly in marginalized communities. They advocate for digitization in primary, secondary, and higher education, bridging the digital divide.



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# FORUM

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## HIGH LEVEL EDUCATION FORUM

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Moreover, “CSOs collaborate with various groups, including the elderly, disabled individuals, and those in the informal sector, to ensure everyone has access to the benefits of technology.” - B. Dube

Dr. Malenga, a Policy and Research Manager and PPRIZ, spoke on the issue of high data prices, emphasizing the challenges faced especially during the COVID-19 era. “The sudden shift to e-learning resulted in unpreparedness, leading to higher data prices” he said. To address this issue, Dr. Malenga suggested the implementation of public-private partnerships to find solutions and make data more affordable. He also emphasized the importance of government policies and introducing competition through private players to improve services and pricing in the data industry.

The forum also welcomed the solutions raised by the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Technology, Hon Minenhle Gumede.

The forum highlighted the paramount importance of digital literacy in today’s technological-ly advanced society. It emphasized the need for comprehensive digital education, infrastructure development, and the involvement of CSOs, government, and private players to bridge the digital divide. By prioritizing digital literacy and fostering a digital-ready society, individuals can better navigate the digital landscape, enhance their employability, and contribute to overall societal development.



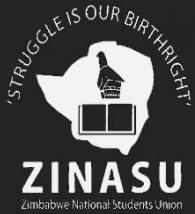
# NO ROOM FOR TRIBALISM



MARCH

# WOMEN'S

HISTORY  
MONTH



FEMALE  
STUDENT  
LEADERS





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# GENDER & WELFARE

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WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

## The Power Of Investing In Women

Female Student Leaders...

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Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU) proudly joined the global community in commemorating International Women's Day, celebrating the remarkable achievements of women in social, economic, cultural, and political spheres. "We acknowledge the significant progress made in dismantling historically entrenched patriarchal systems, which has paved the way for women's emancipation and their indispensable role in society." - T. Muhwandavaka (Gender & Welfare Secretary). However, "we must recognize that there is still much work to be done in Zimbabwe to challenge and transform existing narratives."

One pressing issue that must be addressed is the employment challenges faced by female students upon attaining academic qualifications or training. Despite their qualifications on paper, women often find themselves in subordinate positions, exploited for cheap labor disguised as "graduate trainees." Moreover, those who manage to navigate these patriarchal systems frequently encounter sexual assault and segregation within the power hierarchy. This deeply concerning reality demands urgent action.

Within institutions of higher learning, women often perceive political positions as primarily reserved for men, discouraging their participation.

As we celebrate International Women's Day alongside the global community, ZINASU calls for heightened efforts within the student constituency in Zimbabwe to recognize, uplift, and invest in the girl child, female students, and young women. We believe that by prioritizing their needs and aspirations, we can accelerate progress and create a more equitable society for all.

In light of this, ZINASU makes the following recommendations to promote gender equality and empowerment within the student community:

1. Equal Employment Opportunities - There is a need to advocate for fair recruitment practices that ensure the employment of female students based on merit, while eliminating discrimination and promoting gender diversity in all sectors.
2. Safe Learning and Working Environments - Institutions of higher learning must implement comprehensive policies and protocols that address sexual harassment and assault, ensuring the safety and well-being of female students.
3. Gender-Sensitive Curriculum - Need for the integration of gender perspectives and women's contributions across academic disciplines, promoting a more inclusive and balanced educational experience.
4. Leadership Development Programs - Establishment of mentorship programs, leadership training, and support networks that empower young women to pursue and excel in leadership positions, both within student organizations and wider society.

INTERNATIONAL  
WOMEN'S



DAY

"INVEST IN WOMEN:  
ACCELERATE PROGRESS"

08 MARCH, 2024

#INSPIREINCLUSION

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# GENDER & WELFARE

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FEMINIST HACKATHON CHALLENGE  
2024

## Technology To Participate

Solving gender issues using disruptive tech...

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The gender secretary participated in the pada platform hackathon challenge, and came up with a groundbreaking feminist tech solution to tackle the pervasive issue of sexual harassment in tertiary institutions. Initiated as part of the Pada platform Hackathon, the website aims to strengthen female students and create safer campus environments. It provides an anonymous reporting system, allowing survivors to share their experiences without fear of retribution. The platform also includes a community support group to promote mental health and discourage harmful behaviors. Moreover, the project offers comprehensive educational resources, including university policies and survivors' legal rights. The implementation of this feminist tech solution represents a significant stride in combating sexual harassment on tertiary campuses. Through this innovative approach, every student can pursue their education without fear of harassment or violence. - Gender Secretary, Lilian Tinotenda Muhwandavaka

The gender secretary challenges those in the corridors of power to invest in “state of the art” technologies in Institutions of higher learning. there must be a clear political will



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# DEFIANT STUDENT VOICES

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BY RUMBIDZAI HLANGABEZA  
[ VICE PRESIDENT ]



During the institutional tours, I embarked on a journey aimed at strengthening student solidarity and intellectual engagement within our educational institutions. At Seke Teachers College, we extended solidarity to ZINASU candidates during a crucial election, resulting in a triumphant victory that painted the college in a vibrant shade of blue. Winning the presidential seat and three other key positions was a testament to our collective efforts and commitment to student welfare.

Our visit to Mkoba Teachers College with the Midlands Provincial chair on election day was met with success as we mobilized and recruited new members, establishing a strong ZINASU presence within the institution. The spirit of unity and mobilization resonated deeply, laying the groundwork for future collaboration and empowerment.

At Gweru Polytechnic, we engaged in enlightening discussions on ideological indoctrination and the importance of gender inclusivity, particularly focusing on empowering the girl child. Emphasizing unity and solidarity, we fostered a sense of cohesion and mutual support among students. Concluding our tour at Kwekwe Polytechnic, we reaffirmed our commitment to solidarity and received assurance of steadfast structural support from higher authorities. This reinforced the bond between leadership and grassroots activism, paving the way for collaborative advocacy and student empowerment.

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# SECRETARY GENERAL

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BY EMMANUEL DEVINE NYKUDYA  
[ SECRETARY GENERAL ]



THE SECRETARY  
GENERAL - EMMANUEL  
NYAKUDYA, ATTENDS  
THE PAN AFRICAN  
PARLIAMENT TO GIVE  
RECOMMENDATIONS ON  
PRIORITY AREARS FOR  
THE AFRICAN UNION.

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# DEFIANT STUDENT VOICES

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## The Pan African Youth Union...

The Pan African Youth Union organized the Africa Youth Colloquium on the Margins of the 37th Ordinary Assembly of the Heads of States and Government of the African Union. It was an engagement that was aimed at producing recommendations of the key priorities for the African Union and policy alternatives to Member States on the nexus between Youth mainstreaming and the 2024 AU theme “Educate an African fit for the 21st Century, Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality and relevant learning in Africa. With about 54 delegates representing each respective African state the Addis Students Declaration on a New Social Contract for African Education with 6 objectives which are

1. Integrate Digital and Green Skills
2. Decolonizing the Education Curriculum
3. Promote Innovation and Collaboration
4. Champion Inclusive Access
5. Prioritize Education Investment
6. Empowering Youth Leadership

The Addis Students Declaration was developed after key deliberations and panels. Emmanuel Devine Nyakudya was among the 4 panelists who led the discussion on Innovative Approaches to Education and Skills Acquisition. The conversation stretched the idea of standardisation and harmonization of African Education.

This was prompted by a conversation of whether education is a private good or a public good and if any case what the role of the public and private sectors is in aiding the production of this good. While it is certain that livelihoods can be aided from the careers students will get after attaining education.

it is certain that the public consumes much more from a learned community. As such it is crucial that in efforts to harmonize and standardise education different states should be deliberate in their investments in all African states to produce students who are efficiently capable to practice with ease in any part of the continent .

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# JOIN THE UNION TODAY

Website: <https://zinasu.org>

Email: [administration@zinasu.org](mailto:administration@zinasu.org)

Twitter: @ZINASUZIM

Facebook/LinkedIn/TickTok/Instagram: Zimbabwe National Students Union

Contact details: +263 77 991 2130 /  
+263 71 334 0223

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# POLICY

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BY TAPIWA MAPHOSA,  
RESEARCH SECRETARY

## ALIGNING THE SEXUAL HARRASMENT POLICY



Sexual harassment policies in Zimbabwean tertiary institutions have been neglected, with little investigation into the issue. Offenders often go unpunished, leaving victims without justice or redemption. This deliberate behavior disturbs students' full participation and concentration in their studies. Several studies have shown that a majority of college students have experienced sexual harassment but rarely report it due to the lack of action taken. Unwanted sexual comments, jokes, advances, and physical contact can all be considered sexual harassment, yet these incidents are often ignored. Many female students fall victim to sexual predators without facing any consequences.

This problem can be attributed to systemic issues. Harare Polytechnic, in particular, lacks a proper sexual harassment policy, leading to cases of girls being trafficked to "blesser" relationships by their male counterparts. Similar issues occur in other institutions such as Bulawayo Poly, Midlands, and the University of Zimbabwe, where victims fear reporting to the police to protect their dignity and reputation.

Throughout Zimbabwean tertiary institutions, the absence of grievance committees exacerbates the problem. Unethical practices, such as exchanging sexual favors for marks or abuse of power by lecturers, persist due to the lack of corrective measures. It is concerning that offices have become places for inappropriate activities. Students and lecturers should not be sharing intimate moments. This deplorable condition is a result of the lack of corrective measures within tertiary institutions. At Harare Poly, specifically, there is no grievance policy or committee, and counseling services for traumatized students are lacking. During orientation, institutions fail to outline the necessary procedures for reporting such incidents.

Clear guidelines and a sexual harassment policy should be provided to all students upon enrollment. Why are there no dedicated offices within tertiary institutions to address these issues? Referring victims to an unknown female lecturer is not a sufficient solution. A clearly defined sexual harassment policy should be part of the institutions' code of conduct. Cases have been reported where lecturers demand sexual favors in exchange for passing grades. This results in significant harm to our girl child. We need clear and fair policies that hold perpetrators accountable and support victims accordingly.

Recommendations:

Develop a uniform sexual harassment policy for all tertiary institutions.

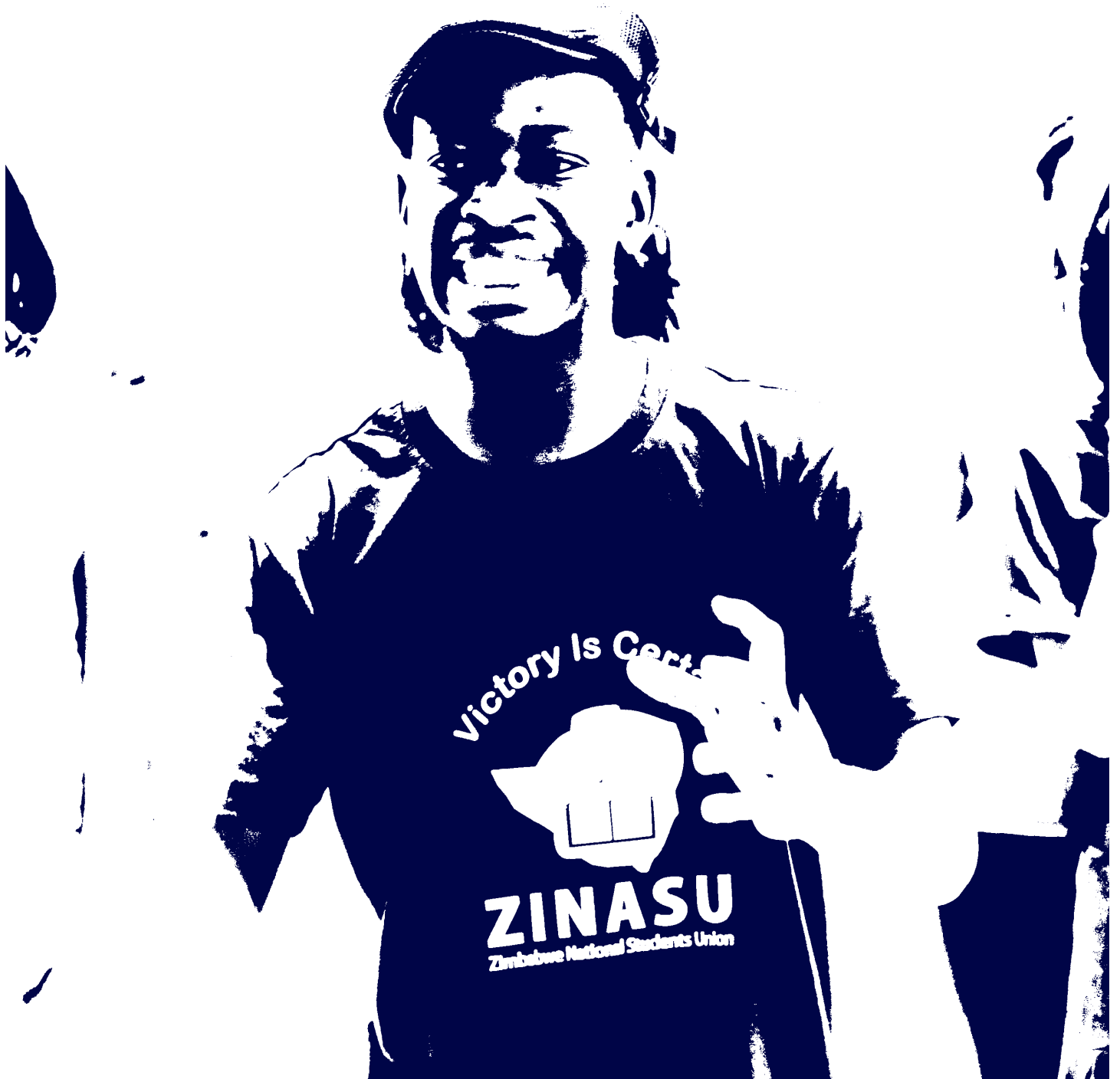
Increase awareness through campaigns.

Foster a culture of zero tolerance for sexual harassment and enforce legislative consequences for offenders.

Establish support systems for victims, including grievance handling committees or offices within tertiary institutions with defined reporting protocols (Victim Friendly Unit).

It is our responsibility to protect our youth. Let us join forces in fighting against sexual harassment in tertiary institutions.

# STUDENT DEMOCRACY THEATERS



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# ACTIVISM + ART = ARTIVISM

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STUDNET DEMOCRACY THEATERS  
2024

## USING ARTISTIC WEAPONS FOR ACTIVISM

... Does this make the message  
easier to understand?

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Zimbabwe National Students Union, is taking an active role in supporting students' fight for academic rights. Through their innovative program, "Student Democracy Theatres,"

ZINASU is equipping students with the necessary skills to be impactful activists. Recognizing the challenges students face in understanding their role and utilizing their activism effectively, the program has been launched across all provinces where ZINASU operates. It focuses on educating students about digital security and creative activism, emphasizing the importance of protecting online privacy while using technology as a tool for advocating change. ZINASU encourages students to harness their creativity for the greater good, urging them to leverage technology for activism, employ digital security measures to safeguard their voices, and explore innovative and tech-driven methods of advocacy. By empowering students with these skills, ZINASU is enabling them to protect the tools that fuel their creativity and drive the fight for a more just world, allowing their "digital dissent to truly sing."

During the Student Democracy Theatres, the ZINASU President Cde Emmanuel Sitima mentioned the significance of strategic planning. He advised students to come together as a team and carefully plan their actions before implementation, emphasizing that successful demonstrations rely on thorough planning. The program also equips students with safety techniques and creative expression methods. They are encouraged to utilize satire, infographics, poetry, and even drama to effectively communicate their concerns to relevant stakeholders. Success, lies in mapping stakeholders, understanding strategies, and selecting appropriate activities.

While the program resonated with many students, some expressed concerns about receiving threatening calls from unknown numbers. In response, Cde Sitima encouraged students to be aware of their rights and seek legal support when necessary. By equipping students with these essential skills, ZINASU is empowering them to become more effective advocates for their rights and the betterment of their communities while ensuring their safety and well-being.



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“GREAT  
PROTESTS  
ARE GREAT  
ART WORKS.”

- Sarah SZE

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# #EducationWithoutBarriers

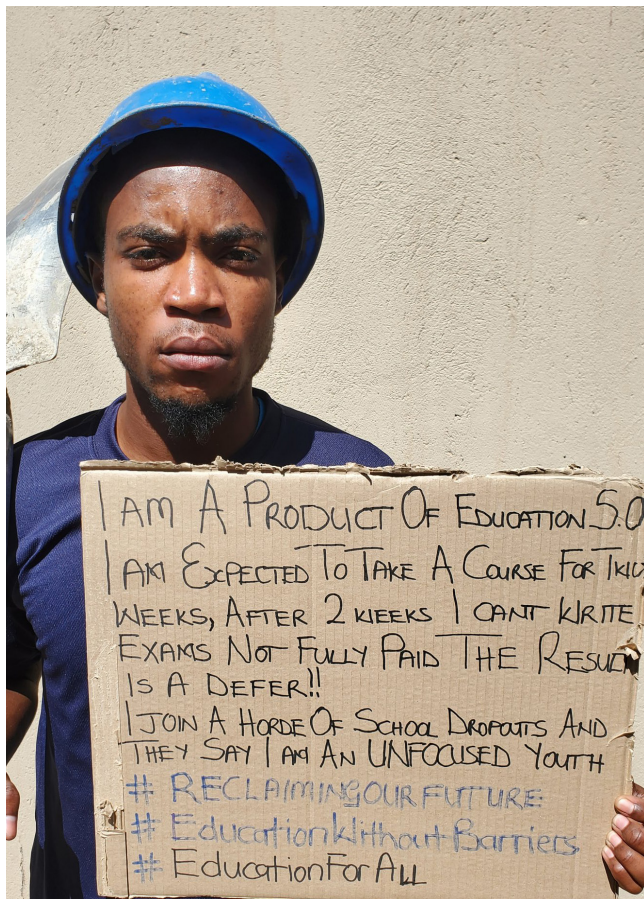
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Campaigns

## Dear Minister of Higher Education

... All we want is dialogue to solve the problem that confront us as students.

On April 1, 2024, the Zimbabwe National Students Union launched a campaign called #EducationWithoutBarrier. This initiative aims to address the numerous challenges faced by students in institutions of higher learning.



From exorbitant tuition fees to poor quality assurance, politicized loans, and even instances of sexual abuse, students in Zimbabwe are encountering significant barriers that impede their right to education. With the campaign still ongoing, hundreds of students have rallied together to demand a solution from the Minister of Higher Education, who has shown little concern for their grievances.

Institutions of higher learning in Zimbabwe present a host of obstacles that hinder students' educational pursuits. One of the most pressing issues is the lack of consultation when it comes to the restructuring of tuition fees. Students find themselves burdened with ever-increasing fees without any input into the decision-making process. This financial strain often leads to students being denied entry into examination rooms if they haven't fully paid their fees, further exacerbating the barriers to education.

Moreover, the quality assurance of education is alarmingly inadequate, compromising the value of degrees obtained by students. Politicized loan schemes add another layer of complexity, as students face significant difficulties in securing loans for their studies. Furthermore, the absence of measures to ensure successful loan repayment perpetuates the cycle of financial insecurity and hampers students' access to education.

Institutions of higher learning in Zimbabwe also fall short in providing a conducive environment for students. The food options available on campuses are often unhealthy, and the exorbitant cost of accommodation places an unbearable burden on students. Female students, in particular, face the additional challenge of abusive lecturers or authorities who exploit their positions of power by sexually abusing them in exchange for grades.

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# DEFIANT CAMPAIGNS

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Additionally, institutions curtail students' rights to participate in the leadership structure and suppress their political freedoms. This denial of basic democratic principles further restricts students' access to education, as their voices and concerns go unheard.

The cumulative effect of these challenges has resulted in a strict barrier to education for countless Zimbabwean students. Access to education is a fundamental right guaranteed by Section 75 of the Zimbabwe Constitution, yet many students are forced to defer their studies or resort to desperate measures such as drug use or engaging in criminal activities. The bleak employment prospects further compound the despair, leaving many students without hope for a better future.

The catalyst for the #EducationWithoutBarrier campaign was the Minister of Higher Education's dismissive attitude towards the students' concerns. Despite numerous invitations to engage in dialogue and find workable solutions, the minister has repeatedly ignored their pleas. His rhetoric during his media addresses has demonstrated a lack of empathy and a disregard for the challenges faced by the students. As a public official entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring inclusive and accessible education, his indifference to the plight of students is disheartening.

In response to the minister's inaction, students have taken matters into their own hands by launching the #EducationWithoutBarrier campaign. The primary objective of this movement is to compel the Minister of Higher Education to engage in a dialogue aimed at resolving the pressing issues faced by students today. The campaign has gained significant traction, with hundreds of students rallying behind the cause, united in their belief that education should be accessible to all.

In conclusion, the #EducationWithoutBarrier campaign in Zimbabwe sheds light on the numerous challenges hindering students' access to education. From financial barriers to compromised quality assurance and instances of abuse, these issues infringe upon students' constitutional right to education. With the campaign still ongoing, students are calling for the Minister of Higher Education to address their concerns and work towards a sustainable resolution. It is imperative that the government recognizes the urgency of this matter and takes proactive steps to ensure that education truly becomes a right for all Zimbabwean students.

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By Fanuel Gona, Legal and  
Human Rights Secretary

## ST FAITH HIGH SCHOOL CHILDREN PROTEST

... ZINASU CONDEMNS THE USE OF POLICE BRUTALITY

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# HUMAN RIGHTS

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Students at St Faith Mission School in Zimbabwe have shown remarkable courage and constitutional awareness by peacefully protesting against exorbitant fee hikes. Their knowledge of their rights and their fearlessness in exercising them is commendable. After a thorough assessment, we can confidently affirm that these students were on the right side of both the law and history

However, their peaceful demonstration was met with unnecessary police brutality. Reports indicate that some students were trampled upon and attacked by police dogs. As advocates for students' rights, the Zimbabwe National Students' Union (ZINASU) demands that the police officers responsible be held accountable and face appropriate punishment. ZINASU also calls for the state to cover the medical expenses of injured students and for the institution to immediately halt the fee hikes and establish an affordable fee structure. Students are reminded to exercise their rights and continue the struggle for academic freedom. The aim is to ensure that basic secondary education remains accessible to all.



By Fanuel Gona, Legal and Human Rights Secretary

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## Fees Structure, Police Brutality and Persecution

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The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the recent events that have taken place in tertiary institutions across the motherland. It will magnify on rigorous issues which are Fees Structure and Anomalies and Police Brutality and Persecution. The report seeks to highlight the impacts of these events on the students board and the actions taken by the Union as panaceas to these encounters.

### Fees Structure and Anomalies

As we are all aware the opening of institutions for the 23/24 2nd phase was punctuated and decorated with infinite fees bizarre which ranged from lack of fiscal discipline to astronomical fees hikes. To name just a few we have Bulawayo Poly, Gwanda State University, National University of Science and Technology (Nust) which urinated different substance to the students.

### Police Brutality and Persecution

The members of Zimbabwe Republic Police have been in a continued cat and mouse game with the members of the Blue Submarine since precolonial era. As if the blood of Batanai Hadzidzi and that of Lameck Chemvura was not enough they continue to harvest terror on the students and this year they have continued with their modus operandi. At the University of Science and Technology after the University authorities hiked the fees, the chapter executive amongst other vanguards of the Union planned a stay away protest and a means to register their dissatisfactions and to force a dialogue they were brutally massacred at the pith of the night by the black division of the police department which resulted in the injury of so many students which were attending to the clarion call of the Union.

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# HUMAN RIGHTS

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As if the limps of our comrades was not enough the police went further to wrongfully arrest President Nesbert Munyuki who was offering solidarity at Kwekwe Poly SRC elections recently, although Cde Munyuki was released without charge. The legal secretary's office would also like to inform members of the Union, stakeholders, human rights defenders and the world of the suspension of Shingai Matambe who was Zinasu Presidential candidate at Kwekwe Polytechnic in the same election that led to arrest of president Nesbert Munyuki.

Cde Shingai was accused of cooking and manufacturing misunderstanding and clash between two contesting unions consisting of adults, as to what receipt and methods he used it remains a secret only to Mr E Musara the one who is said to be the principal at that institution.

## Impact On The Students and Activism

The incidents of police brutality have deeply impacted the mental and physical well-being of some students as they are now living in constant fear, unending physical pain and their limbs and feet's enveloped in bandages. There is a palpable sense of fear and distrust towards "low" in for cement, hindering the conducive environment that tertiary institutions should provide. The students community has rallied together to demand accountability and justice to the victims of police brutality and arrest without just cause.

## Conclusion

The events of fees hikes, fiscal indiscipline, police brutality and persecution in tertiary institutions have underscored the need for concerted action to address systematic issues and uphold the rights of the students across Zimbabwe. This report serves as a statement of resilience and determination of the Union in championing the cause of justice, freedom, equality and equity in tertiary institutions. Let me assure you the office of the Legal secretary shall be open 24/7 a week even on Christmas if need be.

**POLICE BRUTALITY  
IN INSTITUTIONS  
OF HIGHER  
LEARNING  
HAS LED TO  
REPRESSION  
AND HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
VIOLATIONS**



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# STUDENT ADVOCACY CAUCUSES

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In response to the financial burdens and inadequate resource management plaguing state tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe, student advocacy caucuses were conducted to address the pressing issues faced by students. The caucuses aimed to strengthen legislative and policy compliance in the management of public finances in education and health service delivery by 2024. The current situation arose in 2023 when state tertiary institutions began demanding student fees to be paid exclusively in USD, contrary to the law requiring payments in both the local currency at the prevailing bank rate and foreign currency. The government's approval for tuition fees to be pegged in USD currencies violated the Exchange Control Act Chapter 22:05 under section 34 of the Finance Act, which recognizes the Zimbabwean Dollar as the official legal tender. This practice has placed a significant financial burden on students, limiting their access to education and compromising their rights. Furthermore, inadequate resource management has resulted in a lack of essential services, including water and Student Health Services (SHS), further disrupting the learning environment.

The objective of the student advocacy caucuses was to create a platform for students to congregate, engage in discourse, and collectively address their concerns. By consolidating their perspectives, identifying shared obstacles, and formulating a cohesive agenda, students aimed to present their demands to relevant stakeholders. The caucuses aimed to elevate the multifaceted voices of students and convey their concerns in a unified and impactful manner. Through the student advocacy caucuses, students engaged in informed and strategic discussions to gather vital information and facts. This approach ensured that students were equipped with evidence-based arguments, well-crafted proposals, and compelling demands, ultimately enhancing the efficacy of their interactions with stakeholders. The caucuses also aimed to instill a sense of ownership among students, encouraging them to lead their advocacy endeavors. By actively engaging in advocacy strategies and taking responsibility for the process, students were motivated to contribute meaningfully during engagements with stakeholders.

In addition, the student advocacy caucuses fostered collective decision-making and consensus-building among students. Through deliberations and constructive dialogue, students prioritized key issues to be addressed during stakeholders' meetings. This inclusive approach aimed to ensure that the concerns raised were representative of the broader student community, increasing the likelihood of achieving substantive outcomes.

The urgency of the student advocacy caucuses stems from the immediate need to address financial improprieties and mismanagement within institutions of higher learning in Zimbabwe. Illegal demands for tuition fees exclusively in USD or at black-market rates, along with the lack of accountability, significantly impact students' access to education and overall well-being. The caucuses provide a concrete avenue to tackle these issues head-on, building upon the investigative groundwork and fact-finding endeavors already completed. The student advocacy caucuses represent a crucial step in addressing the financial burdens and resource management issues faced by students in Zimbabwe. By consolidating their voices, engaging in strategic discussions, and presenting their demands to stakeholders, students are actively advocating for legislative and policy compliance in the management of public finances in education and health services. The student community remains committed to pursuing substantive outcomes and ensuring a conducive learning environment for all.

# ZINASU 6 ARE NOW FREE



LIONEL MADAMOMBE

EMMANUEL SITIMA

BENJAMIN WATADZA

DARLINGTON CHIGWENA

GAMUCHIRAI CHABURUMUNDA

COMFORT MPOFU

**PROTECT  
THE PROTEST**

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By Vengesai Mavengano,  
Treasurer General

# UNVEILLING CORRUPTION

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## Introduction

Corruption remains a persistent global, continental and national challenge in Zimbabwe undermining institutions and eroding public trust. Unfortunately, even educational institutions are not immune to such malpractices. The Harare Institute of Technology (HIT), renowned for its commitment to academic excellence, recently faced a shocking incident of corruption. An employee within the IT department, responsible for managing the university portal, embezzled a staggering \$1 million USD. This incident highlights the urgent need for financial accountability and transparency not only at HIT but across all the universities in the motherland to ensure the quality assurance of fees paid.

## The Corruption Scandal

Within the walls of HIT, an institution revered for its technological prowess, a sinister plot unfolded. An employee entrusted with the critical responsibility of managing the university portal exploited their position for personal gain. Over time, this individual managed to divert a staggering \$1 million USD according to news outlets into their own pockets, causing severe financial repercussions for the institute, shock to the students and parents. This brazen act of embezzlement not only compromised the institute's financial stability but also tarnished its reputation.

## The Impact on Students and Quality Assurance

The consequences of such corruption extend far beyond monetary losses. Students, the backbone of any educational institution, bear the brunt of such fraudulent activities. The stolen funds could have been used to upgrade infrastructure, enhance research facilities, or provide scholarships to deserving students. Instead, their dreams and aspirations are crushed due to a lack of resources and compromised educational experiences.

Furthermore, financial corruption jeopardizes the quality assurance of fees paid by students. When institutions fail to ensure transparency and accountability in managing funds, doubts arise regarding the utilization of student fees. This erodes the trust between the institution and its stakeholders, leading to a decline in enrollment, a tarnished reputation and grossly poor education quality.

The Need for Financial Accountability and Transparency To restore faith at HIT and prevent future incidents of corruption, the institute must prioritize financial accountability and transparency. Implementing robust systems and procedures that monitor and regulate financial transactions is crucial. Regular audits conducted by independent bodies can help identify and rectify any irregularities, ensuring that funds are used for their intended purposes.

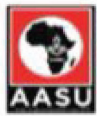
Additionally, HIT should establish a culture of transparency, where stakeholders have access to up-to-date financial information. This can be achieved through the publication of financial reports and statements, demonstrating the institute's commitment to openness and accountability. By involving students, faculty, and staff in the decision-making process, HIT can foster a sense of ownership and collective responsibility for financial matters.

## Conclusion

The corruption scandal at Harare Institute of Technology serves as a microcosm of the macrocosm of what Zimbabwe is facing at every inlet and outlet of every institution. As the students we demand immediate action to thwart such hogwash now and in the future. Financial accountability and transparency are the cornerstones of a reputable educational institution, ensuring that resources are utilized efficiently and in the best interests of students. By addressing the underlying issues and implementing robust anti-corruption systems at HIT in particular and all universities at large students will regain quality education and also trust with their respective institution.



# International Relations



ALL-AFRICA STUDENTS UNION  
UNION PANAFRICAINNE DES ETUDIANTS  
UNIÃO DOS ESTUDANTES DE TODA A ÁFRICA  
اتحاد طلاب عموم إفريقيا



PRESS RELEASE  
COMMUNIQUÉ DE PRESSE  
COMUNICADO DE IMPRENSA

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ACCRA: MONDAY 08 APRIL 2024

## AASU WELCOMES RELEASE OF UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE STUDENTS ARRESTED AFTER PEACEFUL PROTESTS

On 5 April 2024, the All-Africa Students Union (AASU) received welcome news as charges against six University of Zimbabwe (UZ) students, Benjamin Watadza, Emmanuel Sitima, Comfort Mpfu, Lionel Madamombe, Gamuchirai Chaburumunda, and Darlington Chigwena, were dropped by the state. These students had been arrested in May last year following a peaceful protest in Harare.

This development follows AASU's previous condemnation of the arbitrary arrests of its comrades, including Emmanuel Sitimah, Benjamin Watadza, Comfort Mpfu, and Lionel Madamombe, leaders of the Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU). In its earlier statement, AASU denounced the Zimbabwean government's use of repressive methods against student activists and its disregard for human rights in the country. The Union called for the immediate release of the detained students and urged the government to respect the rights and freedoms of students.

The release of these students comes as a relief and a victory for justice and the protection of students' rights. Their detention and the charges against them were a stark reminder of the challenges students face when exercising their fundamental freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly. The All-Africa Students Union commends the decision to drop charges against the University of Zimbabwe students and welcomes their release. This development represents a positive step towards upholding the rights of students in Zimbabwe and sends a clear message that peaceful activism should not be met with punitive measures.

However, while we celebrate the release of these students, we must not forget the broader context of suppression of dissent and attacks on students' rights in Zimbabwe. The right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly must be protected and respected at all times, without fear of reprisal or intimidation.

The All-Africa Students Union calls on the Zimbabwean authorities to ensure that all students can freely exercise their rights without facing harassment, intimidation, or arbitrary arrest. We urge the government to create an enabling environment for dialogue and constructive engagement, where students' voices are heard and respected.

In solidarity with the released students and the broader student community in Zimbabwe, the All-Africa Students Union reaffirms its commitment to defending the rights and welfare of students across Africa. We stand ready to support students in their pursuit of justice, equality, and academic freedom.

Signed:

**Peter Kwasi KODJIE**  
Secretary-General  
All-Africa Students Union (AASU)



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# International Relations

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BY PASSABLE MAREMUDZE,  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

## ZINASU STANDS WITH NAIROBI INTERNS

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During a peaceful protest on 29 February 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya, which was a concern of delayed posting of medical interns and payment of fees for postgraduate students, Dr Davji Atellah who was leading the peaceful protest was shot and injured by Kenyan police. As Zimbabwe National Students Union, we condemn this action that left us shocked and deeply concerned. Dr Atellah is an exceptional citizen who tirelessly serves the community with dedication despite challenges faced daily in the medical field. Instead of receiving support, they fell victims to violence while exercising their democratic right to peacefully protest for a cause that affects masses. We demand the authorities responsible for maintaining law and order to take immediate action and bring the perpetrators to justice. Doctors deserve to feel safe while working tirelessly to save lives while providing quality health care services. The government of Kenya should ensure that no incidents like this one will prevail again. Medical professionals should serve their communities with dignity, respect and resources they need.



## AFRICA ENVIRONMENT DAY

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As the effects of climate change become increasingly evident, young leaders have emerged as key influencers in advancing for environmental protection and driving positive change. Africa Environment Day, serves as a platform to promote environmental conservation and sustainable development across Africa. Students have and should continue doing initiatives that conserve our environment. Issues of tree planting drives combat deforestation and restore ecosystems and also carbon sequestration and enhancing biodiversity. Students are at the forefront focus on waste management, promoting recycling and implementing proper waste disposal systems to reduce pollution and promoting a cleaner environment. There are a lot of benefits of using renewable energy such as solar and wind power to transition towards cleaner energy alternatives. Young people play a vital role in driving environmental justice for Africa through awareness campaigns, mobilization and advocacy. Their efforts contribute to a growing greener future environment.



DIVORCING STUDENTS  
ISSUES FROM THE  
NATIONAL QUESTION  
IS AN ILLEGITIMATE TASK  
IF NOT ROGUS