



Patson Muzuwa (Zimbabwean, tortured in Zimbabwe)

“If this Torture (Damages) Bill becomes law it will be one of the best developments because it will make people accountable, and this has happened to very few so far. It is the way forward to protect people in future from abuse in their own countries. Some aspects of international law [like State Immunity for torture States] are out of date, and unfair to victims. The law needs to change to bring it into shape for the reality facing torture victims, including refugees, who have a right to justice after they have been forced to flee from their own nations.”

Patson's Story

“I left Zimbabwe in November 2001. I had been arrested 9 times by the police on special instructions from the government to stop me campaigning against them. I was reporting to the police for a year. I was not even allowed even to go to a funeral with out telling members of the intelligence. Whatever I was doing was monitored by this regime.

“I was tortured three times. I was electrified, put in a drum of cold water and beaten under the foot uncountable times. On the last incident I was taken from the house at 2am by the militias. They beat me be cause I didn't want to get into their truck. A British journalist booked me a ticket to come here when I had a broken arm and stitches in the head and had been beaten with rubber baton sticks.

“When I arrived in the UK I phoned up and said I'm very sorry I'm no longer coming to Zimbabwe. They were quite shocked. They said we'll get you from the UK. I said that's fine this is my address and I'll be protesting outside the Zimbabwe Embassy on Saturday. They saw me on CNN and ABC talking about my experiences.

“I always demonstrate wherever possible against what the government is doing. This is my life in the UK – to put Zimbabwe in the spotlight. I am deeply embarrassed when I meet people who think asylum seekers like me are just people who need some money. I'm not here to study, I'm not here to make a fortune, I'm not in this country to steal any benefits from anyone, I pay my own taxes. I want to be seen as a refugee and not as a thief.”

Taken from: REDRESS, *Torture: Stories of Survival* (June 2005)