



HRDs Alert

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### **PASTOR MAWARIRE CHARGED WITH SUBVERTING CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT**

ZIMBABWEAN police on Wednesday 01 February 2017 charged Pastor **Evan Mawarire** with subverting a constitutional government after arresting the clergyman upon his arrival in the country from the USA.

Pastor Mawarire was arrested at Harare International Airport on his return home and detained at Harare Central Police Station before he was charged with subverting a constitutional government as defined in Section 22 (2) (a) of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act Chapter 9:23.

According to a warned and cautioned statement, which was recorded from Pastor Mawarire on Wednesday evening, Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) officers alleged that the clergyman incited Zimbabweans from “all walks of life either locally or internationally” to revolt and overthrow a constitutionally elected government.

The ZRP officers charged that Pastor Mawarire, who is represented by **Harrison Nkomo** and **Sharon Hofisi**, a member of Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, circulated several videos on social media platforms inciting Zimbabweans “to stage violent demonstrations to subvert the constitutional government of Zimbabwe and resultantly from August 2016 to January 2017 there have been violent demonstrations in the country where several property was destroyed.”

The police officers alleged that on 15 September 2016, Pastor Mawarire incited some Zimbabweans living in the USA and “all over the world” through social media to converge in New York on 22 September 2016 to “confront” President Mugabe, who was attending the United Nations General Assembly and order him to “immediately” resign from his position accusing him of destroying the country.

In July 2016, ZRP officers arrested and charged Pastor Mawarire with inciting public violence at a time when Zimbabweans staged crippling anti-government protests before prosecutors altered the charges to attempting to overthrow a constitutional government. However, Harare Magistrate **Vakai Chikwekwe** set free the clergyman after ruling that ZRP officers had violated his constitutional rights in arresting and detaining him and that it was also unconstitutional for prosecutors to bring fresh charges against the clergyman while in court.

In September last year, President Mugabe told his ruling ZANU PF party supporters upon returning from New York that Pastor Mawarire was a “great shame” and a “disgrace” for “allowing himself to

demonstrate against the country" during the United Nations General Assembly.

**ENDS**

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