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Statement on the arrest and detention of 44 GALZ members

12 August 2012

GALZ deplores the arrest of 44 members of GALZ who had attended the launch of the GALZ Violations Report and a briefing on the Second Draft of the Zimbabwe Constitution on 11 August 2012 at the GALZ offices.

Four police officers attempted to gain entry into the premises before calling for back up where about fifteen riot squad members descended on the office and effected arrest. Thirty one men and thirteen women members were detained overnight at Harare Central Police Station on 11 August 2012. Police, some of them visibly drunk, assaulted most of the members using baton sticks, open hands and clenched fists before detaining them without charge.

Such use of force is in direct contradiction to the Global Political Agreement. Denying Zimbabweans the right to participate in processes that compliment National efforts is an infringement of the right to freedom of assembly and association.

It is the constitutional obligation of state agencies to uphold all the rights of citizens under the Declaration of Rights. GALZ calls on the state to immediately refrain from the use of any form of organised violence and to refrain from utilising violence of any sort in the pursuit of their political interests.

GALZ does not condone violence and we are not a threat. Those who cause violence are a threat to public safety and security and we ask that they stay away from our premises.

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