

28 March 2018

Zimbabwe: Human rights defender brutally attacked

On 27 March 2018, human rights defender **Makesure Choga** was attacked with stones, sticks and knives in Kwekwe, Zimbabwe, reportedly by members of a youth group called “Alshabab” suspected to have links to the ruling party ZANU-PF.

[Makesure Choga](#) is a human rights defender and leader of **Mbizo Community Theatre**. He uses drama and theatre to encourage young people to sign up to vote in the upcoming elections and shares his activities on social media. As part of this project, he has organised community theatre in a number of villages, towns and cities and these productions include key electoral developments to inform the public ahead of the 2018 elections.

On the evening of 27 March 2018, Makesure Choga was attacked while visiting his family. He had been in hiding since 11 March 2018 after receiving threats from the same group, which would later attack him, that unless he turned himself in to them, he would be “wiped from the face of earth”. He was reportedly attacked by members of a youth group known as “Alshabab” which is suspected to have links to the ruling party ZANU-PF. The assailants told Makesure Choga that the next time, they would attack his family. When he went to the police station to report what had happened, the police wrote a report but would not visit the scene of the attack. The human rights defender was hospitalised as a result of his injuries.

Front Line Defenders strongly condemns the brutal attack on Makesure Choga as it believes he was targeted for his legitimate work in the defence of human rights and democracy in Zimbabwe.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Zimbabwe to:

1. Strongly and immediately condemn the attack on Makesure Choga;
2. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the attack on Makesure Choga, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
3. Guarantee in all circumstances that human rights defenders in Zimbabwe are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.