

**Zimbabwe Rights Lawyer to Spend 3rd Night in Jail**  
**By Gillian Gatora, Associated Press**  
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HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — Prominent Zimbabwean rights lawyer Beatrice Mtetwa was set to spend a third night in jail Tuesday after a court adjourned a hearing on charges she faces of allegedly obstructing justice.

Police brought her to court after ignoring a judge's order to release her Monday.

Her arrest, the day after a referendum on a new Zimbabwe constitution, prompted an outcry from African and international law organizations.

"Her arrest is not just an attack on her profession but on the people of Zimbabwe who have just voted yes to a new constitution that enshrines fundamental human rights," said her lawyer, Thabani Mpofu.

Mtetwa, arrested Sunday while representing four officials of the prime minister's party being searched by police, arrived at the Harare magistrate's court in an open-back police truck. She greeted colleagues and activists with a spirited wave but was not allowed to speak to reporters.

In court, state prosecutors alleged the four officials in Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's office, including his chief legal advisor, were compiling information, some of it in breach of official secrets laws, to discredit the nation's judicial officials for allegedly not prosecuting corrupt politicians.

Mtetwa's arrest was a ploy to stop her from defending officials of Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change party, her attorney argued in court Tuesday.

State prosecutors objected to bail for Mtetwa and the officials and Gofa adjourned the court to resume Wednesday.

Mtetwa was led by prison officials to the basement cells of the courthouse for transportation to the main Harare remand prison.

Mtetwa's arrest was "patently senseless" at a time when she wanted to act on behalf of suspects on Sunday, argued Mpofu, her lawyer.

"Her intimidation was of unwarranted proportion which reflects badly on our institutions," he said.

She was abused by the police in "the high-handed manner in which they treated her by handcuffing her and throwing her into the back of an open truck as if she was a threat to police and national security," Mpofu said.

While in custody, police confiscated her mobile phone and went through it in breach of norms of attorney-client confidentiality.

"There is no basis to act in such a manner to a lawyer of over 30 years," said her lawyer.

He said when locked in a cell two male police officers at around midnight even tried to remove prison-issue blankets from her.

To the charge she shouted at police officers and attempted to prevent them from doing their duty, Mtetwa, in her written testimony, said she told the police she wanted to see their search warrants but was ignored.

"What you are doing is unlawful, unconstitutional and undemocratic," she told the officers, Mpofu said.

The police response was to arrest her, he said.

Justice Charles Hungwe issued an order around 1 a.m. Monday (2300 GMT Sunday) for arresting officers to immediately release Mtetwa.

But police refused to obey the order and Mtetwa was still held in police cells on Monday.

The action showed that Zimbabwe "is a state that is prepared to act like an outlaw," Mpofu told the court.

Obstructing justice carries a maximum penalty of two years in prison.

Mtetwa has represented Tsvangirai and several of his top aides in past cases brought against them. She has also defended human rights defenders and journalists. She holds an array of international awards, including those from the American Bar Association and the main European Bar Human Rights body.

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