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Pastor Evan Mawarire

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Pastor Evan (full name Evan Mawarire) is a Zimbabwean political activist, politician, religious leader, Motivational Speaker, author and leader of the [This Flag Movement](#). In April 2016 he posted a video on Facebook with the title [ThisFlag](#) which went viral spurring the start of the [#ThisFlag](#) hashtag online. He was arrested in July 2016 after successfully calling for a national 'Stay Away' dubbed '[Shut Down Zimbabwe](#)' charged of treason but later acquitted in November 2017 following a coup that ousted former president [Robert Mugabe](#) from power.

Pastor
Evan



Pastor Evan
Church

[His Generation Church](#)

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Province	Harare
Personal details	
Birth name	Evan Mawarire
Born	 (1977-03-07) March 7, 1977 (age 41)
Nationality	Zimbabwean
Denomination	Christian
Residence	Harare, Zimbabwe
Spouse	Samantha Mawarire
Children	2 daughters
Occupation	

- Motivational Speaker
- Activist
- Religious Leader
- Author

In January 2019, he was arrested again following the 3-day [ZCTU stayaway](#) which he had supported publicly. The stayaway protests had turned violent with retail shops looted and many vehicles burnt. He was charged again with treason on 17 January 2019.

Background

Evan Mawarire was born on March 7, 1977. He is married to Samantha Mawarire and they have two daughters.

Education

He did his secondary education at [Prince Edward High School](#) in Harare. Mawarire is a qualified auto electrician from the [Harare Institute of Technology](#).^[1] Mawarire served as Child President between 1993 and 1994 after having been elected child MP for [Mashonaland West Province](#)'s Hurungwe constituency.^[2]

Career

He was based in London England, as the Regional Director for [Celebration Ministries International](#) responsible for Europe and the Asia Pacific Rim from 2007 to 2010. In 2011 he was chosen as one of Zimbabwe's 10 Outstanding Young People by the Junior Chamber International for moral leadership.^[3] He was the Master of Ceremonies at the wedding of politician [Jonathan Moyo](#)'s daughter in 2015. Commenting on the issue Mawarire said

"Moyo is correct to say I was master of ceremonies at his daughter's wedding. However, he did not know me. I had been hired by his daughter and in turn he had hired two other master of ceremonies and they paid me like any other professional. I work as a professional master of

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ceremony at all sorts of functions, including corporate."

[2]

ThisFlag Campaign

On 20 April 2016, Pastor Evan posted a video on Facebook titled [This Flag](#) in which he decried the state of the economy and how he felt Zimbabwe was not delivering its promises to its citizens. The video went viral on Facebook (where it got more than 100,000 views) and WhatsApp. Video below:

This flag

This beautiful flag

They tell that the Green is for the vegetation and for the crops

I don't see any crops in my country

Hanzi the Yellow is for all the minerals,

Goridhe, diamond, platinum, chrome

I don't know how much of it is left

I don't know who they sold it to and how much they got for it

The Red, they say that is the blood

The blood that was shed to secure freedom for me

And I'm so thankful for that

I just don't know that if they were here

They that shed their blood

And saw the way that the country is

That they wouldn't demand that their blood be brought back

This flag

They tell me that the black is for the majority

People like me

And yet for some reason I don't feel like I am a part of it

I look at it sometimes and I wonder

Is this a story of my future

Or is just a reminder of a sad past

Wherever I go and I put on the colours of Zimbabwe

They look at me and as if they want to laugh they ask

'Are you from Zimbabwe?'

Vachiseka

And sometimes when I look at the flag

It's not a reminder of my pride and inspiration

It feels as if I just want to belong to another country

This flag

And so I must look at it again with courage

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And try to remind myself that it is my country
I look at the Green and think to myself
It is not just vegetation
But the green represents the power of being able to push through
soil
To push past limitations and flourish and grow
That's me
My flag

The Yellow yes is about the minerals
But not just the minerals that are in the ground
But the minerals above it
You, me
We are the minerals
We are the value of this land

The Red,
Yes, it's blood
But not just blood
It's passionate blood
It is the will survive
It is the resolve to carry on
It is the want to push through to see the dreams come to pass

This flag

And the Black
The Black is the night sky
That which we emerge from and we shine
It is the brilliant colours
It is the wonderful and lovely fruition of everything that we have
ever hoped for
It needs a black for it to be visible

This flag

It is my country,
My Zimbabwe
We go through so much
We don't look like much even now but there is promise in it
I will fight for it
I will live for it and I will stand for it

This is the time
That a change must happen
Quit standing on the sidelines and watching this flag fly

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And wishing for a future that you are not at all wanting to get involved in

This flag

Everyday that it flies it's begging for you to get involved

It's begging for you to say something

It's begging for you to cry out

And say why must we be in the situation that we are in

This flag

It's your flag

It's my flag

This flag.

After watching the video, Zimbabweans from around the world started posting selfies with the flag on Twitter and Facebook. Following the overwhelming response, Mawarire started a challenge that he called the **ThisFlag Challenge**. He would post a video to Facebook updating Zimbabweans on activities being carried, flag donations he was getting and the progress of the *movement*

Follow up videos

Response from politicians

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Prof Jonathan Moyo
@ProfJNMoyo



Follow

The fad or thing is not Zim but your political stunt which has nothing to do with the flag. Politics. Handei tione!

#ThisFlag @PastorEvanLive

The tragedy Zim has become is hardly a fad or a thing. The integrity of #Thisflag has been compromised & we ask why? [twitter.com/ProfJNMoyo/sta...](https://twitter.com/ProfJNMoyo/status/654123456789)

RETWEETS
5

LIKES
10



10:41 PM - 8 May 2016



In response to the campaign, [Zanu-PF](#) politician [Jonathan Moyo](#) said

The fad or thing is not Zim but your political stunt which has nothing to do with the flag. Politics. Handei tione!^[4]

Death Threats

Mawarire said that after the posting of the initial #ThisFlag video, he received death threats via telephone, with one caller threatening to strangle him with the Zimbabwean flag:

You think you are clever? The flag you are holding can be used to strangle you. Are you a politician, an activist or pastor? Come clean and tell us where you really stand so that we can fight you on the correct turf.^[5]

Mawarire said he was living in fear after the threats.

Summoning by the Police

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On 11 July 2016, Mawarire posted a video on his Facebook page confirming that he had been summoned by the Criminal Investigations Department. He also encouraged Zimbabweans to take part in a stay away that was scheduled for Wednesday 13 July 2016 and Thursday 15 July 2016 since the government had not responded to the ultimatum they had given for them to deal with issues such as corruption, poverty and police brutality. Mawarire also said that he would hand himself to the police for questioning on Tuesday 12 July 2016.

Arrest

Mawarire was arrested when he handed himself over to the police for questioning on the morning of Tuesday 12 July 2016. He was charged with Section 36 of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act Chapter 9:23 for "inciting public violence and disturbing peace". The announcement was made via a pre-recorded video that Mawarire himself recorded so it could be released if he got arrested or abducted.

Trial and Verdict

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Mwarire appeared before a Magistrate on Wednesday 13 July 2016. One hundred lawyers from the [Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights](#) offered to represent him. There were delays to the commencement of the trial as the investigating officer left the affidavit at Harare Police Station and had to go back for it. Mwarire was also brought to court but was returned to the police station amid fears that the crowd that had come to support him would turn violent. He was secretly brought back in a white corolla with tinted windows. The trial which was scheduled to start at 11am eventually started at 2:15pm. On the day of the trial the charges were changed from "inciting public violence and disturbing peace" to subverting a constitutionally elected government. His lawyer Harrison Nkomo cited unprofessionalism and ambush by the State. The State opposed bail and advised Mwarire to approach the High Court since his case had become a 3rd schedule one. Mwarire appeared in court with the Zimbabwean flag on his shoulders. Mwarire's case was dismissed by the Magistrate presiding over the case as it was a violation of the [Constitution of Zimbabwe](#).

People from all racial backgrounds and social standing, especially those from the church came to show support for the cleric during his trial. Popular figures such as [Tehn Diamond](#), [Takesure Zamar Ncube](#), [Tudor Bismark](#), [Shingi Munyeza](#), [Nelson Chamisa](#) and [Jestina Mukoko](#) were part of the crowd. Prayers were made for the Pastor and religious songs were sang through out the court proceedings. There was also heavy police presence amid fears that violence would break out but people were encouraged to desist from violence in respect of what Mwarire advocated for. When Mwarire was released the gallery broke into song singing a church hymn of thanking God. Here's the video of the court room:

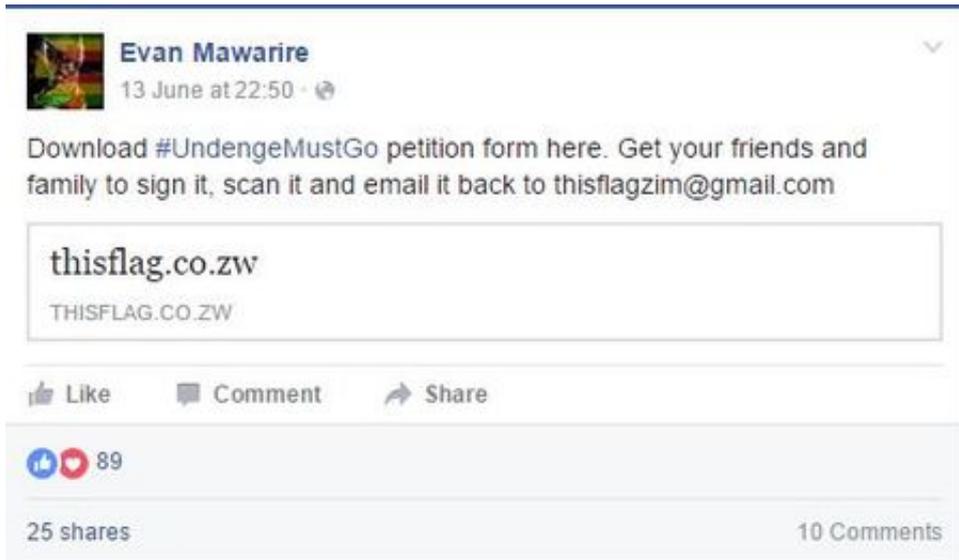
After his release Mwarire addressed and thanked the crowd that had come in solidarity and reminded them that they should not tire as they were building a country for their children. Thousands shouted "Pastor! Pastor! Pastor!" as Mwarire's vehicle drove off. You can watch the video of him addressing the crowd below:

He then left the country to go visit South Africa where he was heralded by different TV stations such as ANN7 and CNBC Africa seeking to know his plans about his campaign and the state of his safety due to recent events in his life.[\[3\]](#)

Despite all the rumours he continues to urge the #This flag movement to spread to all cities in Zimbabwe with great anticipation that prayer meetings to save the country shall be undertaken by churches.[\[4\]](#)

Undenge Must Go Petition

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500

On 13 June 2016, Mwarire invited disgruntled citizens to sign an online petition to force Energy and Power Development minister [Samuel Undenge](#) to step down over allegations of mishandling public funds through tender irregularities. In a Facebook post Mwarire said,

"Download #?UndengeMustGo? petition form here. Get your friends and family to sign it, scan it and email it back to thisflagzim@gmail.com"

[6]

Meeting with RBZ Governor

In June 2016, Mwarire together with other citizens, met with [Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe](#) governor [John Mangudya](#) concerning [bond notes](#). Mwarire gave the opening remarks at the meeting and reiterated that the citizens of [Zimbabwe](#) did not want the bond notes.

6 July Stay Away

On 6 July, he successfully organised a national stay away with the majority of working Zimbabweans, formal and informal, around the country heeding his call to stay away from work in a bid to make government respond to pleas for better governance. Mwarire called for people to stay away from work peacefully and to not engage in any violence. The stay away was however marred by some acts of violence especially in [Bulawayo](#) where vehicles and some government property (the section of a abandoned train) were burnt. Demonstrators also burnt tyres on the roads.

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After the stay away, Mwarire announced that he was asking Zimbabweans to heed his call for a further 2 day stay away from Wednesday 13 July to Thursday, 14 July 2016. On 12 July, a day before the second stay away, Mwarire was arrested and charged with Section 36 of the Criminal Law (Codification and reform) Act Chapter 9:23. for "inciting public violence and disturbing peace".

Message To Urge Support To The Head Of [Tajamuka](#)

Pastor Evan shared his concern on social media after encouraging the support of activist [Linda Masarira](#) who is facing trial for inciting public violence after the *July 6 Stay Away*"

[\[5\]](#)

Outside Influence

The United States urged Zimbabwe to end arbitrary arrests and intimidation of political players as the country braced for the trial of prominent preacher Evan Mwarire for alleged treason.#ThisFlag's Mwarire was initially arrested in 2016 after he led one of the most successful job boycotts in recent memory, protesting against corruption and economic problems in the country. "The United States is monitoring the trial of Pastor Evan Mwarire, and calls for an end to arbitrary arrests and intimidation for political purposes," the US embassy said in Harare "We support freedom of expression and the right of peaceful assembly. "We support freedom of expression and the right of peaceful assembly. <ref="B24">[Trumps administration is monitoring the trial of Evan Mwarire](#), *Bulawayo 24*, published: September 25, access dated: September 29, 2017</ref>

September 2017 Release

The High Court on Tuesday 26 September 2017 released Pastor Evan Mwarire of #ThisFlag movement, who was arrested Sunday, for urging Zimbabweans to rise up and fight against the deteriorating economic situation in the country.

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Mawarire's attorney Harrison Nkomo said charges laid against him defied logic.

Speaking to reporters outside the High Court in Harare, Nkomo said, "The state intended to place Evan Mawarire on remand but the court refused on the basis that there was a violation of his constitutional rights, which basically was for him to appear before a competent court within a period of 48 hours. They delayed by three hours and the court rejected to participate in an illegal process.

"He's free ... If the state wants to try him they should send summons upon him on the same charge and then invite him to the High Court for trial but they cannot detain him in custody.

Asked if he was happy about the outcome of the court case, Nkomo said, "I don't think that I am happy, we were not supposed to be here in the first place. If you look at the charge laid against him, totally nothing is incriminating."

The state claimed that his utterances in a video posted on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter undermined the sitting government as he attacked the ruling elite for causing economic problems faced by most Zimbabweans.

In similar charges laid against him following nationwide protests he masterminded in 2016 in conjunction with Tajamuka Sesijikile Campaign, the state claimed that Mawarire allegedly attempted to subvert a

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constitutionally-elected government and incite public violence by leading public protests and making stinging remarks about the deteriorating economic situation in Zimbabwe through social media.

Zimbabweans are currently buying goods in bulk following reports that they are expected to be in short supply due to the deteriorating economic situation in the country.

Fuel shortages have hit some towns and cities amid reports of steep price increases.

The government has threatened to take stern measures against people allegedly spreading propaganda about price hikes and shortages of basic commodities.^[7]

Exoneration

On the 28th of November 2017, Evan Mawarire was acquitted of all charges at the [High Court](#). Mawarire had been facing charges of attempting to overthrow the constitutionally elected government of former President [Robert Mugabe](#) after he allegedly organised demonstrations against the government. The case was dismissed at the end of the State's case. [Pastor Evan Acquitted Of Attempting To Overthrow The Government](#)

Trivia

Pastor Evan Mawarire was lined up to carry out a presentation at the 10th Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy in Switzerland on February 20, 2018. Mawarire was among some of the rights activists from across the world who was expected to speak at the Geneva Summit.^[8]

Books

- What he wants
- What she wants
- Dream big and make it happen

About Pindula

Pindula is a place to find information about local things on the internet. We do it a lot like Wikipedia, except everything is hyper-local. We started work on Pindula because we needed something like it. There's so little useful information about local things online and we're working to change that

To join the Pindula community of editors, please go to <https://contribute.pindula.co.zw/> or just get in touch with us on **WhatsApp: +263 77 770 7852**.

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