

Zimbabwe union fights Vavi's deportation

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A Zimbabwean high court judge has reserved judgment in a case in which the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) is challenging government's decision to bar Zwelinzima Vavi, the Cosatu secretary general, from entering the country.

Aleck Muchadehama, the defence lawyer, argued that Vavi's deportation in May this year was unprocedural as no papers declaring him a prohibited immigrant had ever been served. "No such prohibition ever existed because he was not given any notice of prohibition, he was not served with any papers and they did not produce any proof of such service."

The outspoken Cosatu leader was deported on arrival at Harare International Airport as he led a delegation that was due to meet the ZCTU leadership to express solidarity.

Muchadehama added that when government initially barred the Cosatu official from entering the country in 2004, Vavi was already in South Africa and they did not accord him the chance to give his side of the story. He says government's reasons are unclear. "The minister refused to disclose reasons for his prohibition and he actually issued a ministerial certificate to that effect."

Vavi has accused the Zimbabwean government of infringing workers rights and failing to abide by the rule of law.