
Banned from study for fighting for freedom, student continues his studies at CU

Banned from study for fighting for academic and other freedoms, student continues his studies at CU

“As the leader of Zimbabwean students who stood up to the regime, I wasn’t allowed to continue my studies at any university in the country. My only option was to leave for the Czech Republic,” says Kurayi Garnet Hoyi, one of the former leaders of the Zimbabwe National Students Union. In his country he has fought for, amongst other things, the upholding of academic freedoms. For this, he was persecuted by local repressive organisations, detained by police several times, and even expelled from his course. Only a special grant of the government of the Czech Republic allowed him to return to university, and he has now been attending the [CU Faculty of Science](#) for a month.



Kurayi Garnet Hoyi is now twenty-six years old. Until the age of nineteen, when he entered the National University of Science and Technology in the city of Bulawayo in Zimbabwe, he wasn't very interested in the world around him. At university, however, his eyes were opened and he immediately started fighting for freedom and democracy in a country that has been firmly in the grip of President Robert Gabriel Mugabe since 80's. However, he was punished for his political activism and leadership of student protests and demonstrations by expulsion from his studies.

He has only been able to return to his studies this year thanks to a grant he has received from the government of the Czech Republic, intended for applicants for university study from developing countries. He travelled to the Czech Republic last year, when he started learning Czech at the Charles University Institute for Language and Specialised Preparation. He admits that it was only by chance that he came to the Czech Republic, a country more than twelve thousand kilometres from Zimbabwe.

"I didn't choose Prague or the Czech Republic. I came here because it was my only option in Europe. The Czech Republic helped me to leave my country and continue my university studies so that I can return to Zimbabwe and help to improve my native country," he added.

During his first year in the Czech Republic, Kurayi has, apart from his study of Czech (which he admits is giving him big problems), also got involved in the [Kamenožrout](#) geological correspondence course, which is organised by a

team of enthusiasts from the CU Faculty of Science. Last year, Kurayi was one of the most successful participants, his rewards for which was, amongst other things, the possibility to enter one of the bachelor's courses in geology at the CU Faculty of Science without having to sit an entrance exam. "Before I came to the Czech Republic, I studied industrial and manufacturing engineering for three years, and because I chose geotechnology as my subject, I can now build on what I learned before," he explains.

Even though it is one of the poorest countries in the world, Zimbabwe has a massive amount of mineral wealth, and studying in this field is highly profitable. However, Kurayi has other plans. "When you're a child, you and all your needs are taken care of by your family and you're not interested in what's going on around you. However, as soon as I entered university I realised that everything is bad in Zimbabwe. That's why I became a political activist; I wanted to change things, that's why I want to enter the Parliament of Zimbabwe. I see my future primarily in politics; that's where I think I could benefit my country. Zimbabwe is, for me, a wonderful country with great potential. I want the state to start building better conditions for the life of its citizens so that they can live a normal, happy life," he sighs and adds: "For now, though, I just want to be a normal student."