



# Mlinzi wa **HAKI**



## JANUARY 2024



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***Dear esteemed readers!***

With the dedicated efforts of our staff and the generous support of our developmental partners, including the embassies of Sweden, Norway, and Ireland, LHRC is pleased to extend a warm welcome to you for the January 2024 edition of the Mlinzi wa Haki Newsletter.

In January, LHRC focused on strategic planning to ensure the successful implementation of our mission in Tanzania. While much of the activities centered around planning approaches to human rights and good governance programs, it is important to note that ongoing initiatives did not come to a halt. LHRC continued to carry out various programs, including providing legal aid services – a crucial component in enhancing access to justice.

LHRC actively participated in the commemoration of Law Week 2024, providing essential legal aid services to Tanzanians. LHRC was honored to receive a Certificate of Appreciation from The High Court of Tanzania for our devoted efforts towards Law Day 2024 as a testament to our commitment.

LHRC remains dedicated to providing legal aid services to Tanzanians. Anyone aggrieved and needing legal assistance is encouraged to visit any of our offices, where their concerns will be promptly addressed.

We invite you to read this newsletter to stay informed about LHRC's activities and familiarise yourself with the impactful work being carried out by our organisation. Your continued support and engagement are invaluable as we strive to uphold human rights and promote good governance in Tanzania.

***Dr. Anna Henga (Advocate)***  
***LHRC Executive Director***

## LHRC participates in the public hearing of the Election Bills before the Standing Parliamentary Committee

### NEWS IN BRIEF

On January 8, 2024, the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), Tanganyika Law Society (TLS), Twaweza, Tanzania Constitution Forum (JUKATA), Centre for Strategic Litigation (CSL), and Jamii Forums jointly appeared before the Standing Parliamentary on Governance, Constitution, and Legal Affairs, submitting their recommendations on the three tabled bills, the Presidential, Parliamentary, and Coincolors Elections Bill, the National Electoral Commission Bill, and the Political Parties Affairs Bill, both of 2023.

### The Written Laws (Political Parties Affairs) Bill, 2023: General Comments and Proposed Amendments

#### General Comments:

The proposed amendments to the Election Expenses Act are straightforward and reasonable, representing minor corrections to the procedures for candidates and parties declaring their election expenses to the Registrar of Political Parties. This includes correcting the titles of returning officers and other election officials, shortening the timeframe for expense declarations after by-elections, and clarifying that parties should submit copies of receipts to the Registrar rather than originals needed for audits.



### ***Proposed Amendments to the Political Parties Act:***

The proposed amendments to the Political Parties Act do not introduce major changes but slightly increase the burden on political parties to conduct their affairs in precisely defined ways and report extensively to the Registrar of Political Parties. For instance, parties would be required to maintain a defined list of policy documents. The changes are primarily clarifications or corrections to unclear or imprecise wording in the Act.

However, there are missed opportunities in two significant ways. Firstly, the bill omits key recommendations from the Report of the Presidential Taskforce on Multiparty Democracy led by Professor Rwekaza Mkandala and case law decisions by domestic and regional courts. Secondly, the proposed amendments fail to reverse restrictive clauses from previous amendments (late 2018/early 2019) that significantly expanded the powers of the Registrar, imposing a heavy administrative burden and intrusive regulation on political parties. This shift transformed the role of the Registrar from a mere registrar to a regulator, no longer just maintaining the party register but regulating parties.

Regrettably, the current bill further enlarges the powers of the registrar to regulate political parties, contrary to recommendations by Presidential Commissions and Task Forces and the expectations of democratic stakeholders. Instead of mitigating the problem, the bill exacerbates it.



## LHRC participates in 2024 Law Week

### NEWS IN BRIEF

On January 24, 2024, the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) actively commemorated Law Week 2024 in Dodoma at Nyerere Square. The event served as a platform for LHRC to play a vital role in providing free legal aid services, distributing self-help kits, disseminating information, and enhancing legal awareness among the public. These efforts aimed to improve access to justice by providing legal aid.



*Law week 2024 commemorations in Dodoma.*

Additionally, on January 27, 2024, LHRC contributed to the inauguration of law week with a walk from Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court to Mnazi Mmoja grounds in Dar es Salaam. The theme for this year highlighted the "importance of justice for the nation's well-being: The role of courts and stakeholders in improving the integrated criminal justice system." LHRC invited all citizens to benefit from their free legal aid services.

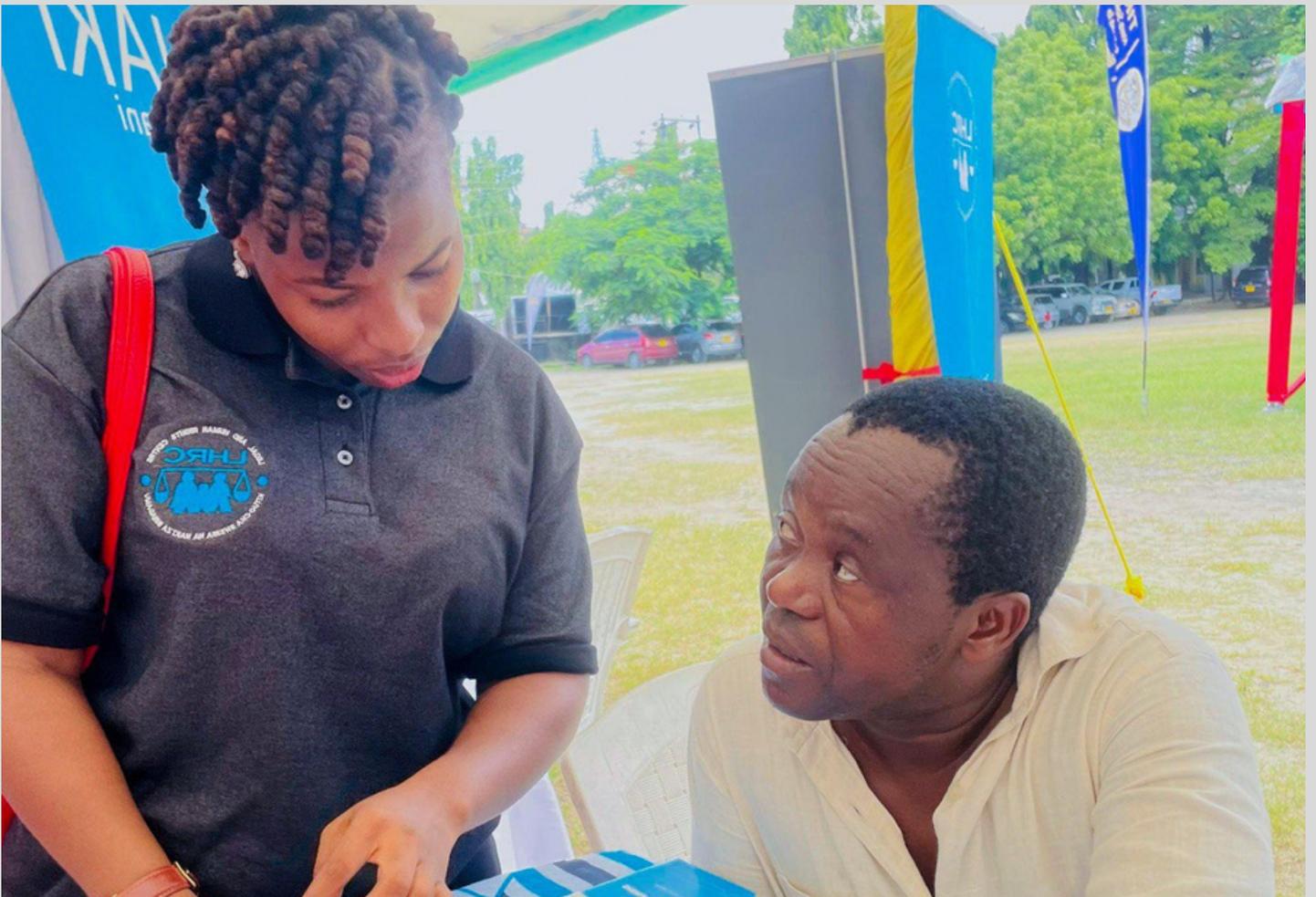
During the law week commemorations, the Dodoma office of LHRC was actively involved in the opening ceremony, which took place at Nyerere Square. The guest of honor for the event was Dr. Tulia Ackson, the Speaker of the Tanzanian Parliament. The week-long celebrations, starting on January 24 and concluding on January 30, featured national events at Nyerere Square in Dodoma, with LHRC participating in all three regions where its offices are located – Dodoma, Dar es Salaam (Mnazi Mmoja grounds), and Arusha (TBA grounds).

The High Court of Tanzania recognized LHRC, the leading human rights organization in Tanzania, by awarding it a certificate of appreciation for its commitment to Law Day 2024. LHRC received the certificate during a celebratory event in Dodoma, expressing gratitude for the acknowledgement and reiterating its dedication to promoting human rights and good governance in Tanzania. ■





Advocate Hidaya Haonga, LHRC Dodoma Branch Office Coordinator, receiving a certificate of appreciation during Law Week commemorations 2024.



Advocate Rose Nyatega, Legal Officer In-charge Kinondoni Office, providing legal aid service during Law Week 2024 at Mnazi Mmoja grounds in Dar es Salaam.



## LHRC presents certificate of appreciation to the Danish Embassy for outstanding social development contribution

### NEWS IN BRIEF

On January 31, 2024, Dr. Anna Henga, the executive director of LHRC, presented a certificate of appreciation to the Danish Embassy in Tanzania. The certificate recognized the embassy's exceptional commitment and support in initiatives aimed at reducing poverty and inequality and ensuring equal access to quality social services.

Dr. Henga handed over the certificate as a token of appreciation to Ambassador Mette Norgaard Dissing-Spandet of the Royal Danish Embassy. The gesture aimed to acknowledge and express gratitude for the embassy's efforts in contributing to these crucial areas of social development.

During the meeting, Dr. Henga also took the opportunity to share insights into the current state of human rights and democracy development in the country. ■



Dr. Anna Henga, the Executive Director of LHRC with Amb. Mette Norgaard Dissing-Spandet of the Royal Danish Embassy during the certificate appreciation.



## LHRC raises concerns over increasing reports of forced disappearance

### NEWS IN BRIEF

**Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) this month raised concerns over increasing incidents of people's disappearance in Tanzania, calling on authorities to take necessary steps to stop the trend.**

LHRC said incidents of forced disappearances violate various human rights, including the right to protection and security.

It reported that over the past two months, LHRC documented five cases of disappearances, as reported by various media outlets. Unfortunately, only one of these cases resulted in the individual being found, but regrettably, they had already lost their life.

The occurrences of people disappearing are contrary to the country's constitution, which explicitly guarantees the right to protection and security, as well as international treaties, LHRC said in a statement.

“The rising number of disappearance cases is alarming, not only because it violates the personal rights of the victims but also undermines the public's trust in institutions established to protect them. Many cases reported to the relevant authorities end without finding the victims,” the organisation said. It urged the Government to take swift and effective measures to address this issue as the number of such cases continues to rise.

“We call for thorough and transparent investigations into each reported case, ensuring the missing individuals are reunited with their families. Additionally, those responsible should be brought to justice, and support should be provided to the victims and their families,” it said in a statement.

LHRC proposed that relevant authorities treat these cases seriously, ensuring impartial investigations through establishing an independent commission or task force with the authority to examine each reported case fairly.

“Perpetrators must be held accountable regardless of their position or relationship. Furthermore, a review of existing laws or the introduction of new legislation should be considered to strengthen the protection of human rights in the country,” LHRC suggested. ■



## Our development partners



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