



# LEGAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE

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## PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE BLOCKING OF X (FORMERLY TWITTER)

**Dar es Salaam, 4 June 2025**

Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) expresses deep concern and unequivocally condemns the recent decision by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to block access to the social media platform X (formerly Twitter), as confirmed by the **Minister for Information, Communication and Information Technology, Hon. Jerry Silaa**, during a televised interview.

According to the Minister, the government's justification for this action is based on the platform's updated content policies, which allegedly permit material that contravenes Tanzanian laws and moral standards. While LHRC acknowledges the importance of regulating online content in accordance with national laws, we strongly emphasize that such measures must be proportionate, transparent, and respectful of fundamental human rights particularly the rights to freedom of expression and access to information.

This is not an isolated incident. LHRC notes with concern that **Clubhouse** and **Telegram** have also been inaccessible in Tanzania without the use of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), which themselves are restricted under current regulations. These actions collectively represent a troubling pattern of digital repression that undermines democratic principles and civic engagement.

In the matter of ***Paul Kisabo vs. Minister for Information, Communication and Information Technology and Others (Misc. Civil Cause No. 27860 of 2024)***, the government denied involvement in the restricted access to Clubhouse. However, to date, the platform remains inaccessible, raising serious questions about transparency and accountability.

We further recall that a similar shutdown of Twitter occurred during the 2020 General Elections, a period when access to timely and accurate information was critical for public participation and electoral transparency. The recurrence of such restrictions, especially in the lead-up to the 2025 General Elections, raises serious concerns about the openness of the digital civic space in Tanzania.

It is also troubling that while the Minister has confirmed the government's role in blocking X, government officials and public institutions continue to use the

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platform. This inconsistency confuses the public and undermines the credibility of the government's position.

The blocking of these platforms not only limits citizens' ability to communicate and organize but also stifles the work of civil society organizations, journalists, and human rights defenders who rely on digital tools to monitor, report, and advocate for accountability and good governance.

**LHRC calls upon the Government of Tanzania to:**

1. Immediately restore access to X, Clubhouse, Telegram, and any other restricted platforms.
2. Ensure transparency in digital regulation processes and engage stakeholders in developing content moderation policies that respect human rights.
3. Uphold constitutional and international obligations to protect freedom of expression, access to information, and digital rights.

We urge all stakeholders, including the international community, to remain vigilant and support efforts to safeguard digital freedoms in Tanzania.

Issued by:

**Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC)**



**Mr. Fulgence Massawe (Advocate)**

**Ag. Executive Director**

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