



Legal and Human Rights Centre



GREETINGS FROM LHRC

Greetings and Happy New Year 2025!

With the dedicated efforts of our staff and generous support from our development partners, the embassies of Sweden, Norway, and Ireland, LHRC is pleased to present the February 2025 edition of the Mlinzi wa Haki Newsletter.

This month, we were honored to welcome visitors from Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA) management. The purpose of the visit was to introduce their new leadership to LHRC and engage in discussions on key democracy issues in this critical election year. We also hosted a feedback session with female students from the University of Dar es Salaam who had the privilege to attend a thought-provoking discussion on the challenges hindering women's participation in politics and leadership.

During this month, we celebrated a groundbreaking decision of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights addressing discrimination against persons with albinism, the right to life, and state responsibility. This ruling marks a significant step forward in the fight for justice and equality. The decision signifies our tireless ongoing efforts to advocate for the rights of persons with albinism (PWA) in Tanzania.

We have continued to document and condemn human rights violations in Tanzania. These included alarming cases of abduction and enforced disappearances of civilians, including the reported abduction of a notable political opposition leader in Mwanza by unidentified individuals.

These interventions justify our commitment to promoting justice, human rights, and the rule of law in Tanzania.

Dr. Anna Henga (Advocate)
LHRC Executive Director



LHRC empowers young female leaders in leadership and democratic participation

Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) continues to play a pivotal role in nurturing and empowering young leaders, particularly women, to enhance their meaningful participation in leadership and democratic processes.

As part of this commitment, female youth leaders from the Human Rights Organizations of the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM-HRA) and the Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE-HRA) recently visited the LHRC headquarters. During their visit, they engaged in a fruitful discussion with the Youth and Children Officer, Mr. Ally Seif Ramadhani.

These young women were among the participants of a significant meeting organized by the Embassy of Ireland, focusing on the theme of "women's participation in politics." The event, held at Johari Rotana Hotel in Dar es Salaam, was part of Tanzania's broader efforts to promote gender equality and empower women in leadership.



The meeting aimed to reflect on the critical challenges hindering women's full participation in politics and leadership roles. Key discussions centered around identifying and formulating strategies to address these barriers, ensuring that women aspiring for leadership positions receive the necessary support and opportunities.

LHRC remains dedicated to advocating for gender equality and creating a conducive environment where young female leaders can thrive and contribute effectively to the democratic and political landscape of Tanzania. The engagement of UDSM-HRA and DUCE-HRA representatives underscores the importance of youth involvement in shaping a more inclusive future.



Bridging Leadership and Inspiration, Minister Dorothy Gwajima, Irish Ambassador Nicola Brennan, and Senior Irish Leader Frances Fitzgerald engage with University of Dar es Salaam students in a robust discussion on women's political participation at Johari Rotana.

A landmark victory for persons with albinism: the African Court delivers justice

On February 5, 2025, in Arusha, a groundbreaking moment unfolded at the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (AfCHPR). After years of advocacy, legal battles, and the unrelenting pursuit of justice, persons with albinism (PWA) in Tanzania finally saw a beacon of hope. The Court delivered a landmark ruling in the case of Centre for Human Rights, Institute of Human Rights and Development in Africa, and Legal and Human Rights Centre v. United Republic of Tanzania (Application No.019/2018), a decision that not only acknowledged the suffering of PWA but also held the Tanzanian government accountable for failing to protect them.

A long road to justice

The case was brought forward by three human rights organizations: the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria, the Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa (IHRDA), and the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) in Tanzania. For years before 2006, these organizations had documented horrifying violations against persons with albinism in Tanzania such as brutal killings, mutilations, social exclusion, and lack of access to justice. Across various districts in Tanzania, PWAs were hunted down for their body parts, driven by superstitious beliefs that their limbs carried magical powers. Families lived in constant fear, hiding their children to protect them from traffickers and murderers.

Despite the government's claims that it had taken action, PWA continued to be marginalized, abused, and killed. The human rights groups refused to stay silent. They took their fight to the African Court, determined to seek justice for those who had been silenced.

The court's ruling: A resounding victory

When the African Court took up the case, the Tanzanian government initially pushed back, arguing that the alleged violations dated back to the early 2000s, before Tanzania had officially recognized the Court's jurisdiction. However, the judges ruled that the violations had persisted well beyond that time, with evidence showing that attacks on PWA continued up to 2016 and beyond. The court firmly established that it had the authority to hear the case.

As the trial progressed, chilling details emerged. Survivors and their families spoke of loved ones who had been abducted and murdered. Some shared how they had lost limbs in violent attacks, only to be abandoned by a justice system that failed to investigate or prosecute the perpetrators. The Court found that the Tanzanian government violated multiple human rights protections under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Among its key findings, the Court ruled that:

- The Tanzanian government had failed to protect PWA from discrimination and violence.
- The government had not done enough to prevent and investigate the ritual killings of PWA.
- Victims were denied access to justice, as many cases went unresolved.
- Children with albinism were placed in overcrowded shelters with inadequate living conditions, violating their rights to dignity, education, and healthcare.

The court's orders: A new beginning for PWA

In a powerful move, the court did not just condemn these violations; it ordered concrete actions to rectify them. The Tanzanian government was instructed to:

- Establish a compensation fund with TZS 10,000,000 for moral damages suffered by PWA.
- Amend laws to explicitly criminalize and punish acts of violence against PWA, treating them as *aggravated offenses*.
- Revise the outdated Witchcraft Act of 1928, which had contributed to harmful practices against PWA.
- Implement a national plan of action in line with the African Union Plan of Action to End Attacks and Other Human Rights Violations Targeting Persons with Albinism in Africa (2021-2031).
- Improve PWA's access to education and healthcare, ensuring they receive necessary accommodations such as visual aids and medical support.
- Launch nationwide awareness campaigns to dispel myths surrounding albinism and promote inclusion.
- Reduce overcrowding in shelters and work toward family reunification where possible.

The court also demanded that the government publicize the judgment on official websites and submit an implementation report within two years. If compliance was lacking after three years, the court would hold an implementation hearing to hold the government accountable.

A Step Forward, But the Fight Continues

For many PWAs in Tanzania, this ruling represents long-overdue recognition of their suffering. It is a historic moment that acknowledges their humanity and affirms their right to live without fear. However, the battle is far from over. The success of this ruling will depend on its enforcement, and activists remain vigilant, ensuring that the government follows through on its commitments.

As the news of the ruling spread, there was a sense of cautious optimism among the PWA community and human rights defenders. Many saw this as the beginning of a new chapter, one where PWA could walk freely in their own country without the shadow of violence looming over them.



A picture showing advocates from the Centre for Human Rights, the Institute of Human Rights and Development in Africa, and Legal and Human Rights Centre at the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights in Arusha, celebrating a landmark victory for persons with albinism.

LHRC and BBC Media Action engage Youth and Women in Tanzania's Electoral Process

Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), in collaboration with BBC Media Action and WiLDAF, convened a high-level meeting at the Protea Hotel in Upanga, Dar es Salaam, bringing together donors and partners from various organizations to discuss and reflect on Tanzania's 2024 local government elections. The primary focus of the meeting was on enhancing youth and women's participation in the electoral process.

The gathering provided a platform for stakeholders to assess interventions from the 2024 elections and strategize on ways to increase youth and women's engagement ahead of the 2025 general elections. Advocate Maduhu William, Human Rights Monitoring and Response Manager at LHRC, presented an overview of the local government elections held on November 27, 2024. His presentation shed light on critical issues concerning civic space in Tanzania, including the unlawful arrest and detention of politicians, activists, and human rights defenders.

The meeting facilitated insightful discussions on the involvement of youth and women in Tanzania's electoral processes. Stakeholders analyzed lessons learned from the 2024 local government elections and reviewed findings from a mini-ethnography study that examined barriers to effective participation.

Key discussion points included the level of youth and women's involvement in various electoral stages such as voter registration, leadership candidacy, campaigning, and voting. Participants also examined the successes, challenges, and gaps observed during the 2024 local elections. Additionally, the discussions explored the social and gender norms that impact and, in many cases, hinder the full participation of youth and women in electoral processes.



The meeting further delved into strategies aimed at eliminating these barriers and fostering an environment that supports equitable political engagement. By addressing these challenges, stakeholders hope to create a more inclusive and representative democratic process in Tanzania as the nation prepares for the 2025 general elections.

The engagement highlighted the importance of continued dialogue and collaboration among electoral stakeholders to ensure that youth and women are not only participants but also key drivers of Tanzania's democratic future.



Advocate Maduhu William, LHRC's Human Rights Monitoring and Response Manager, shares key insights on local government elections at Protea Hotel, Dar es Salaam.

LHRC hosts new CHADEMA leadership.

On February 28, 2025, CHADEMA, led by its Chairman, Honorable Tundu Lissu, visited the headquarters of the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) in Kijitonyama, Dar es Salaam. The delegation included the Mainland Vice Chairman, John Heche, Secretary-General John Mnyika, Deputy Secretary-General for Mainland Amani Golugwa, and other party members.

The purpose of the visit was to introduce themselves to LHRC following their assumption of leadership roles in the party, as well as to discuss key issues affecting Tanzania in this election year. The discussions primarily focused on the state of democracy, various elections in the country, and the implementation of political rights.

Speaking during the visit, CHADEMA Chairman Hon. Tundu Lissu commended LHRC for its significant work in advocating for human rights in Tanzania.



“LHRC is the leading institution for human rights advocacy in our country. I want you to know that even if you don’t hear from us, we closely follow the great work you are doing. We promised to visit human rights defenders, and today we have fulfilled that promise,” said Lissu.

LHRC continues to be a key stakeholder in the advocacy for human rights, particularly in matters concerning political rights, civil rights, and legal reforms affecting democracy in the country.



Honorable Tundu Lissu, alongside a delegation from CHADEMA, engages with LHRC at its headquarters in Kijitonyama, Dar es Salaam, to discuss key human rights and governance issues.

From despair to hope, grandmother reunites with abducted granddaughter thanks to LHRC's legal aid.

Ms. Khadija Saidi Majela visited LHRC offices in Dodoma to express her gratitude for the legal aid she received after her granddaughter was abducted by unknown individuals from Kondoa District, where Ms. Khadija resides. The child was found through the cooperation between LHRC and the Social welfare offices in Dodoma Municipality.

Currently, the girl has returned to school and has begun her studies in Form One. LHRC urges the community to continue safeguarding children's rights and to promptly report any violations to law enforcement authorities to receive legal assistance when needed. It is a great joy for LHRC to see the young girl resume her education and return to a safe environment.



LHRC's Advocacy Manager Raymond Kanegene (right), Advocacy Officer Hidaya Haonga (left), and Khadija Saidi Majela (center) during her visit to the LHRC Dodoma Office.

Our development partners.



EMBASSY OF SWEDEN



Norway

Wellspring
Philanthropic Fund



Ambasáid na hÉireann
Embassy of Ireland

**Ford
Foundation**



LEGAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE, HEADQUARTERS

Justice Lugakingira House,
Block 44, Plot 508/509
P. O. Box 75254, Kijitonyama
Dar es salaam, Tanzania.
Tel: +255 (0) 2773038/48

THE LEGAL AID CLINIC

Justice Mwalusanya House,
Isere St. House No.660,
P. O. Box 79633, Kinondoni, Dar
es salaam, Tanzania.
Tel: +255 717 143 784

ARUSHA OFFICE

Dr. Helen Kijo-Bisimba House,
Olerian Street Plot No 116/5,
P. O. Box 15243, Sakina Kwa
Idd, Arusha, Tanzania.
Tel: +255 782 277 569
Tel: +255 626 281 244/5

DODOMA OFFICE

Chimuli Street, Plot No:20,
P. O. Box 2289, Area D
Dodoma, Tanzania.
Tel: +255 (0) 262350050
Tel: +255 655 444 828

Mlinzi wa HAKI



+255 22 2773038/48



www.humanrights.or.tz

