



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**May 04, 2016**

### **VANCOUVER, CANADA & DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA**

**Realizing the Dream:** Under The Same Sun commends His Excellency President Dr. John Pombe Magufuli for appointing Dr. Abdallah Possi as the first Deputy Minister of State with albinism in Tanzania charged with Persons with Disabilities in the Prime Minister's Office. This is very encouraging and it is in line with the UTSS dream that persons with albinism will take their rightful place in every level of the society. We at UTSS congratulate Dr. Abdallah Possi on his new appointment! He is a role model for many persons with albinism in Tanzania. We believe that as a member of the cabinet and Member of Parliament he will start mobilizing change for a better today for persons with disabilities!

**ATROCITIES AGAINST PWA:** While we celebrate a new chapter in the history of Tanzania, atrocities against persons with albinism remind us that we still have a long way to go to ending stigma and discrimination. The following brothers and sisters were attacked since January 2015:

1. Karim Kassim (M, 4): Jan 06, 2015: Kassim narrowly escaped abduction in the Nyakato area, a suburb of Mwanza City, north-western Tanzania.
2. Yohana Bahati (M, 1.5): Abducted on Jan 15, 2015; Found mutilated and murdered on Jan 17, 2015.
3. Baraka Cosmas (M, 6): Right hand severed on March 07, 2015 in Rukwa Region, western Tanzania.
4. Limi Luchoma (F, 30): Right arm chopped off on May 14, 2015 in Katavi Region, western Tanzania.
5. Margareth Khamis (F, 6): Abduction and attempted selling of the girl with albinism on June 16, 2015 in Ugembe Ward of Tabora Region, western Tanzania.
6. Mohammed Said (M, 35): Attacked and sustained head and right ear injuries on October 21, 2015 in Mkuranga town of Mkuranga District, Coast Region, eastern Tanzania.
7. Ester Togolai Maganga (F, 70): Attacked and left thumb chopped off on December, 08, 2015 in Lushoto, Tanga Region, north-eastern Tanzania.
8. Said Abdallah (M, 47): Missing since January 31, 2016 from Mtipule Village, Mkuranga District of Coast Region, eastern Tanzania.

**PWA Attacks in Malawi:** UTSS notes that attacks against persons with albinism are not confined to Tanzania only. These atrocities have been recorded in 25 countries of Africa. We are very concerned with the current wave of attacks in Mozambique and Malawi. Our partners in Malawi – Association of Persons with Albinism in Malawi (APAM) have recorded about 65 attacks (also documented by the police) since December 2014.



13: murders; 5: missing PWA; 47: attempted abductions and grave robberies.

We condemn these atrocities against PWA. Recently the UN Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of Human Rights for PWA, I.K. Ero who toured the country warned that “persons with albinism face total extinction” in Malawi.

**AU Report:** UTSS would like to bring to your attention the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) report on the centers for internally displaced persons with albinism in Tanzania.

### **(ACERWC) Conclusion and recommendations**

“Looking at the situation of children with albinism in Tanzania, particularly those who are staying the Buhangija Centre, the delegation from the ACERWC appreciates the various challenges the Government, the children and their families face, and concludes that the children are in an extremely vulnerable position, which makes them easy targets for witchcrafts and the consumers of witchcraft. The attacks and killings against children with albinism are widespread and are affecting a whole range of human rights of the affected children. The Government of Tanzania, despite some efforts to tackle the situation, has largely failed to comply with its obligation under the African Children’s Charter and other international and regional laws in fulfilling and protecting the rights of the child with albinism.

“The Committee concludes that though the Government of Tanzania established the Temporary Holding Centers to protect the children from further attacks and killings, the shelters are no longer temporary and they are not serving the best interest of the children. In fact, the Committee is of the view that they feature more like detention centers than safe houses. They are also providing a convenient escape mechanism for parents wanting to divest themselves of the responsibility to care for their children with albinism. Mechanisms and plans must therefore be devised to reunite the affected children with a family environment and to end the permanent nature of the Temporary Holding Centers.

“The Committee is also of the view that both the procedures followed in bringing the children to the Centers and the current situation of the children are contrary to the provisions of the African Children’s Charter and other international instruments.

“Moreover, the Committee realizes that the stigma and discrimination against children with albinism are structurally embedded, and the marginalization and social exclusion of these children have to be reported as a worrying human rights problem in Tanzania. It is the Committee’s belief that it is only when the challenge is considered as a national problem emanating from deeply entrenched societal prejudices against persons with albinism, that a functional and effective solution can be devised to permanently stop the violations.” (ACERWC Report on Investigative Mission on the Situation of Children with Albinism in Temporary Holding Shelters – Tanzania – March 2015).



**Bright Future:** Despite all these challenges Under The Same Sun (UTSS) is hopeful for a brighter future! Our Education Programme (EP) is bearing fruits. Of the 320 that we have been sponsoring since 2010 when we launched EP, 72 have completed their studies and are either in employment or pursuing another level of education:

- Employed Graduates: 54
- Self-employed: 9
- Graduates in Job Placement: 5
- Graduates in Further Education: 4

**Educated PWA will bring positive changes in Tanzania! They are future models within their own society of what PWA can be when given an opportunity. They are the strongest voice against discrimination and the most powerful message about the humanity, dignity and capability of PWA; educating and advocating their own culture towards change.**

**We are beginning to see these changes even at government level with the appointment of Dr. Abdallah Possi as Deputy Minister of State.**

THE PRESS RELEASE HAS BEEN ISSUED BY UTSS

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