



***APPETITE FOR ALBINO BODY PARTS CONTINUES UNABATED IN
TANZANIA AND BURUNDI:
7 MORE SLAUGHTERED IN JUST WEEKS***

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It is Sunday May 2, 2010 and night has fallen on the quiet village of Cankunko in the Cendajuru District in the country of Burundi, bordering Tanzania.



Attacked February 8th, Twelve month old Fatma Mohammed displays the 10 centimeter long scar left by her attackers

Several hand grenades are strategically launched at a simple homestead, a home where a mother and child with albinism live peacefully. The loud explosion rocks the family from their sleep. Nine armed men rapidly and forcefully engage in a savage rampage. Wielding machetes, they hack off all the limbs they can grab. Their sinister appetite for albino body parts is fueled by a lucrative trade linked to the practice of witchcraft in the region. Yet to be named, wealthy consumers (commonly referred to as

“honorable”) keep this trade alive, believing it will yield them power and wealth. Once the wild, blood thirsty campaign of carnage stops, the murderers emerge with a bag full of fresh and bloody body parts, ready to quickly sell at a handsome profit.

The human toll is steep. Four year old Desire Vyegura has lost his life. The killers now have possession of his tongue, one of his eyes, one of his legs and an arm. Susanna Vyegura, his 28 year old albino mother now lays lifeless, with both legs and arms gone. Both of her breasts have also been violently chopped from her mutilated body. Her non-albino father bravely tried to stop the killers, but was overpowered and brutally murdered on the spot, according to Burundian Police Chief Deogratias Ntahompagaze

A family – wiped out – within minutes – all to supply a sinister industry operating in the area.

In the weeks leading up to this Sunday’s carnage, killers struck 5 more times in Tanzania: On April 26th, a 13 year old girl, Kabula Nkalango, was attacked, having her hand hacked off. Fortunately, she survived.

On April 18th, there was the murder of little four-year old Naimana Daudi. Her body mutilated, robbed of her left arm and leg, she was left to bleed to death.

On April 10th, there was the attempted murder of 41 year old Said Abdallah, a quiet farmer, who had his left hand violently chopped off. He lay unconscious for hours bleeding. He narrowly survived.

On February 8th tiny, innocent, 12 month old baby Fatma Mohammed was attacked, sustaining a 10 centimeter gash along her leg and thigh – in the killer's vile attempt to dismember her. Her mother, Rukia, also an albino, received severe head injuries, in their attempt to also dismember her.



Peter Ash with 12 month old Fatma and her mother Rukia

This brings the total in Tanzania to 57 murders and 6 attempted murders, where victims lost limbs. In Burundi, the total is 14 murders. These are only the documented cases. The numbers are likely much higher – estimates suggesting well over a hundred in the last 2 years.

On this battlefield stands East Africa's people with albinism. Hundreds and Thousands of them living in a state of total fear. Afraid to sleep in their homes. Fearful to walk in their villages. Often unwilling to attend school for fear of threats and attack.

This continuing crisis has been met with loud cries for justice by the United Nations, The United States, the European Union and other nations and civil society groups. Joining these voices is Under The Same Sun (UTSS), an International NGO based in Canada, with operations in Tanzania. UTSS continues to decry these atrocities and to appeal strongly for justice on behalf of the victims. Furthermore, UTSS (www.underthesamesun.com) appeals to these international bodies to become a more unified force, imploring the Tanzanian government to take stronger action in this war which is defiling human dignity.

Sadly, justice has been far too slow in coming. Of the 63 reported cases in Tanzania, a mere 2 have been brought to conviction in the last 2 years. In sharp contrast, 12 of Burundi's 14 cases have led to convictions. UTSS has embarked on a variety of educational campaigns in Tanzania and internationally to confront the discrimination that fuels these crimes against humanity.

This racially driven carnage must end. The perpetrators must be brought to justice quickly. People with albinism must be granted the same basic human rights of dignity, freedom and security. UTSS will not rest until that day comes!



Attacked April 10th, 41 year old Said Abdallah lost his hand and forearm in an attempted murder

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