

EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS NETWORK

Public Statement

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KAMPALA: EHAHRD-Net CONDEMNS ATTACK ON JOURNALISTS IN TANZANIA

Once revered as one of Africa's most stable countries, Tanzania has recently slipped into the brackets of countries harassing the media. Two editors of *Mwanahalisi* a privately owned newspaper were attacked on Friday night at their offices in the Dar es Salaam suburb of Kinondoni, and seriously injured with acid and machetes by yet unknown assailants.

According to the Legal and Human Rights Centre, EHAHRD-Net's Focal Point in Tanzania, Editor Saeed Kubenea sustained acute acid burns and has been flown to India for further medical attention, while consultant Editor Ndimara Tegambwage who received over 15 stitches on his body, has just left hospital but is still in great pain. LHRC further reports that unknown persons had previously attempted to burn Saeed's car and that he received threats through his phone on a number of occasions.

Mwanahalisi is known to be a very critical newspaper widely covering sensitive issues of corruption involving big people in government. It is said that on the day of their attack, the newspaper was about to unearth a scandal about a powerful politician and an MP who started up a private company without following proper Channels. "Such attacks are not common in Tanzania. That's why this has come as a great shock," said Helen Kijo Bisimba, LHRC Executive Director.

"It is very absurd to hear of such a deadly attack on journalists in Tanzania, and we demand that the relevant authorities investigate and bring the perpetrators to justice. The attack on Saeed and Ndimara is an attack on an institution whose noble cause is to ensure checks and balances in public institutions. This cause is not only provided for in the Tanzanian Constitution, but in regional and international human rights instrument. Thus, media freedom must not only remain on paper but has to be duly respected, and upheld," says Hassan Shire Sheikh, Chairperson EHAHRDP/Net.

APPEAL

EHAHRD-Net appeals to the Tanzanian government authorities to immediately institute an investigation into the attack on the journalists, and ensure that the perpetrators are duly punished.

We also appeal to the government to jealously guard the reputation it has held over the years and provide adequate security not only to the media, but all other HRDs within the country

EHAHRD-Net calls upon all members across the sub-region to write to the Tanzanian authorities calling on them to ensure due justice in this case.

Send appeals to:

1. The Prime Minister,
Prime Minister's Office
Fax: +255 22 2112850
Tel: +255 22 2117249-56
P. O. Box 3021
DAR ES SALAAM
TANZANIA
2. The Vice President
Vice President's Office
Fax: +255 22 2116990
Tel: +255 22 2116919
P. O. Box 5380
DAR ES SALAAM
TANZANIA
3. The Minister,
Ministry of Home Affairs
Fax: +255 22 2120486
Tel: +255 22 2119050
P. O. Box 9223
DAR ES SALAAM
TANZANIA
4. The Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs,
Fax: +255 22 2113236
Tel: +255 22 2118178
P. O. Box 9050
DAR ES SALAAM
TANZANIA
5. The Inspector General of Police (IGP),
Ministry of Public Safety and Security,
Fax: +255 22 213655/ 2134462
Tel: +255 22 2113461
P. O. Box 9141
DAR ES SALAAM
TANZANIA

6. The Chairman,
Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRGG),
Fax: +255 22 21352 26
Tel: +255 22 2135211
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P. O. Box 2643
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TANZANIA

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