



## African Albinism Network<sup>1</sup>

### Statement on the Situation of Children with Albinism in Africa

38th Session (Virtual) of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child  
(ACERWC), 15-26 November 2021

Thank you, Chairperson,

The African Albinism Network is deeply concerned about the ongoing attacks involving children with albinism in Malawi, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zambia. Since our last presentation to this committee in March this year, there have been at least five incidents involving children with albinism. These included incidents of trafficking, mutilation, and murder. Here are the five cases:

1. In Malawi, on March 26 this year, a 20-month-old baby with albinism was snatched from her mother while asleep in Chikwawa District. Although arrests have been made, the child remains missing.
2. In Tanzania, on May 3 this year, the brutally mutilated remains of a 5-year-old boy with albinism were discovered by villagers in the bushes of a rural area of Tabora region.
3. In Zambia, on July 13 this year, a nine-year-old boy with albinism by the name of SL was brutally attacked and had a finger cut off for ritual purposes in Chasefu District, Eastern Province.
4. In Zambia, on September 1, a 12-year-old boy with albinism was attacked and had his right hand chopped off in Mpulungu, Northern Province.
5. And finally, in Mozambique last month, on October 22, 2021, police detained three individuals who confessed to murdering a 12-year-old boy with albinism in Nampula province.

To date, the masterminds behind these violent crimes have not been unmasked, prosecution remains slow and accused persons are often killed in custody particularly in Malawi, leading not only to additional violation of human rights but also loss of potential evidence for prosecution. Moreover, victims of this violence are yet to be compensated for the injuries they incurred from the violence.

Cross border crimes also remain a concern. In 2020, the remains of a 10-year-old boy with albinism were found in Malawi, after being abducted from his home in Zambezia Province, Mozambique. In another case from Mozambique in 2020, the parents of an 8-month-old baby with albinism were arrested after attempting to sell their child in Monica Province, near the border of Zimbabwe, to Zimbabwean buyers.

We reiterate our call to the Governments of Malawi, Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia, to immediately put in place protection measures by adopting and implementing national action plans on albinism. These should be guided by the Africa Union Plan of Action and Implementation Matrix to End Attacks and Other

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<sup>1</sup>This statement is delivered on behalf of **Africa Albinism Network**, a consortium of organizations working to promote – through human rights advocacy – the rights and welfare of persons with albinism in Africa. The Network aims to ensure that the African Union Plan of Action to End Attacks and other Human Rights Violations Targeting Persons with Albinism (2021-2031) is implemented at the national level. For more, see [actiononalbinism.org](http://actiononalbinism.org)



Human Rights Violations Targeting Persons with Albinism in Africa. These plans must have a multi-year budget and include concrete and effective measures to protect children against these crimes.

We, therefore, recommended that the government of Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia:

- a. Prioritise the adoption and implementation of National Action Plans on Albinism.
- b. Allocate a dedicated budget to ensure the effective implementation of the National Action Plan on Albinism and other programme interventions on albinism.
- c. Take steps to align the National Action Plan on Albinism with the recently adopted Africa Union Plan of Action and Implementation Matrix to End Attacks and Other Human Rights Violations Targeting Persons with Albinism in Africa (2021–2031).

We recommend that the government of Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia in relation to violence against children with albinism:

- a. Continue to strengthen efforts in prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution and punishment of violent crimes affecting children with albinism in their country.
- b. Ensure that victims and family members have access to appropriate remedies. Provide victims of attacks and their families with full medical care for injuries sustained, psychiatric counselling, monetary compensation and, reallocation to safer areas of residence where necessary.
- c. In this regard training of actors in the justice system, including police, courts, tribunals, national human rights institutions, ombudspersons, forensic investigations and other mechanisms on the human rights of children with albinism is paramount.

The African Albinism Network (AAN) extends its gratitude to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child for its historic and continued active engagement on the rights and welfare of children with albinism in Africa, and looks forward to its interventions in this ongoing tragic, deplorable disgraceful problem of attacks against children with albinism.

Thank you.