

Violence against persons with albinism and older women: tackling witchcraft accusations in Tanzania

BY

SABBATH M.UROMI (MBA-FINANCE AND BANKING)

Assistant lecturer

TANZANIA PUBLIC SERVICE COLLEGE

P.O.BOX 329

TPSC-TABORA

Cell: 0782-503638

E mail: sabatouromi@yahoo.com

Abstract

In some communities in Tanzania, erroneous beliefs and myths influenced by superstition put the security and life of persons with albinism and old women at risk.

In some countries in Africa, persons with albinism are considered to simply vanish. In Tanzania, they are referred to as apes and a source of money. They are seen as sorcerers, devils or persons suffering from a curse and, in some communities, it is believed that contact with them will bring bad luck, sickness or death. Other frequent myths that threaten the life and physical integrity of persons with albinism include: that sexual intercourse with a woman or a girl with albinism can cure HIV/AIDS; that the sacrifice of persons with albinism can appease “the god of the mountain” when a volcano starts to erupt; or that pulling out the hair of a person with albinism brings good luck. It has been reported that miners use the bones of persons with albinism as amulets or bury them where they are drilling for gold, and that fishermen weave the hair of persons with albinism into their nets to improve their catches. This range of beliefs and superstitions leads to various forms of attacks against persons with albinism in many communities. These include ritual attacks, which usually result in death and which in some cases involve trade in organs, trafficking in persons and sale of children, infanticide and abandonment of children (UN REPORT September, 2013).

According to a 2009 Tanzania Legal and Human Rights Centre report there was a total of 2,585 killings of older women, in eight regions where the practice is predominant, between 2004 and 2009. This means an average of 517 killings per year. Statistics for Mwanza region alone, which has the highest older women killing rates, indicate that 698 older women were killed as a result of witchcraft allegations during that period making an average of 140 killings per year. Witchcraft accusations are a critical factor in the violation of women’s rights in Sukumaland, and are often generated by wider problems in the community.

Keywords: *Everyone is entitled to the rights and freedoms set therein, 'without distinction of any kind, such as, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.'* These guarantees are also found in the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)* and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*.

1.0 Introduction:

1.1 Albinism as a Genetic Condition:

Though albinism occurs around the world, it is most prevalent in Africa. The World Health Organization reports that as many as one in a thousand people are albino among certain African ethnic groups.

Albinism is a genetic condition in which a person lacks the gene for producing melanin -the pigment that protects the skin from ultraviolet light from the sun. Persons with albinism may lack pigmentation in the skin, eyes and hair.

The exact prevalence of albinism in the human race is not clear but estimates say that the ratio is about 1 in 17,000. It is, however, more prevalent in some parts of the world than in others. In Denmark, the prevalence is estimated at a ratio of 1:60,000. In parts of Nigeria, the prevalence is put at 1: 1,100 while in South Africa it is estimated at 1:3900. In Tanzania it is estimated that the prevalence stands at around 1:3,000. Estimates for Tanzania quote the total population of persons with albinism at about 170,000

Statistically, Africa seems to have a high prevalence of people born with albinism. That said, it is important to understand that albinism is found in all races and not just among the people of the black race. Muthee Thuku (2011).

The gene that carries albinism is a recessive gene or a gene that it is not dominant. The recessive gene for albinism becomes expressed only when two parents carrying the recessive genes pass them to the child.

The albinism gene may 'hibernate' for generations only to spring back when a child who carries the recessive genes is born. Gauging the size of Tanzania's albino population is difficult, and estimates vary wildly. The government has undertaken a national survey of albinos but has not released its findings. Albino advocacy groups put the number somewhere above 100,000, out of a total population of roughly 48 million people. The UN report (2013) says simply that there are tens of thousands of albinos in Africa. They suffer from a genetic condition that deprives their skin, hair, and eyes of melanin, making albinos vulnerable to the sun and to bright light. Almost all albinos suffer from poor eyesight and are prone to skin cancer.



Winifrida Rutahiro (2nd left) says she is now scared even to leave her house

Source: BBC NEWS may, 2014

The last adult albino to be murdered - just a few weeks ago - was Nyerere Rutahiro. He was eating dinner outside in his modest rural compound, when a gang of four strangers burst in, and threatened to arrest him. As his wife Susannah looked on helplessly, the men began to hack at Nyerere's arms and legs with machetes. "We want your legs," they shouted, "We want your legs," his wife recalls, still deeply traumatized by what she saw.



Nyerere Rutahiro's body was laid to rest in a cement-sealed grave

1.2 Persecution of old women in Tanzania: An overview

In many parts of the world, older women are still persecuted and accused of witchcraft. Recent media reports have highlighted the problem in Burkina Faso, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malawi Nepal and Tanzania though the problem is much more widespread than this. In most of these countries, belief in witchcraft is common, with people from all sections of society sharing this belief regardless of their level of education, socio-economic group or ethnic origin. It is usually the most discriminated against and marginalized in society who are accused of witchcraft because they are either least able to defend themselves from attack and are therefore easy targets or because they are considered of little value to society and therefore a burden to it in times of hardship. Witchcraft and false beliefs are currently being seen as an excuse to the violence and murder of thousands of persons with albinism and elderly women in Tanzania. Because of this, The Tanzanian government has approved the creation of the Convention of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in the country, as well as an act on issues of gender-based violence. Earlier this year, the country's

president, Jakaya Kikwete, publicly supported the campaign to end violence against women in Africa. Daily News June 17th, 2014



Nyamizi, 73, was accused by a neighbour of bewitching his child.

Source: (Jeff Williams/Help Age International International)

“I received a threatening letter which said, ‘You must leave this village, move 15 villages away from here. If not, the sungu-sungu [a group of men, given the role by their communities of guarding the people and their property] from this village will do something that you will never, ever forget.’ Sometime later I was returning home at night. Suddenly, someone came running towards me – he struck me with a machete and chopped off my arm and slashed my head.” Nyamizi, 73, Tanzania Despite the Tanzanian government’s efforts, killing of people with albinism and elderly women continues, as culture and tradition are aspects of Tanzanian society that are difficult to regulate through campaigns and laws. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201210020477.html>

Who is an older person? Given the fact that the average life expectancy in a country like Tanzania is said to be 51 years (UNDP 2007) it might not be surprising that from a European point of view sometimes the question is raised whether there are older people in Africa at all. We argue that when discussing issues and concepts of ageing and old age in a sub-Saharan context, some words of caution and sensitivity have to be raised. In general it can be said that a universally applicable definition of what constitutes old age is notoriously elusive (Heslop & Gorman 2002). The concept of chronological age as applied undisputedly in industrialized countries has far less importance in “developing” countries. Although the process of ageing is a biological reality it has as well to be seen as a term that is socially constructed and determined by the cultural fabric of a given society. While both the United Nations as well as the Tanzanian government define older people as those aged 60 years and above, we, however, decided for the purpose of this study to set the definition with 50 years of age and above in order to not only consider chronological parameters but also functional and social aspects of age that seem to be more appropriate for an African context. (Help Age International 2001; Heslop & Gorman 2002).

2.0 Causes of Attacks on old women and Albinos Surge in Tanzania

The killing of older Women is due to witchcraft and related beliefs: Between 2007 and 2009 a total of 269 older women were killed in ten districts in Tanzania Mainland. The underlying causes are related to inheritance of land and cattle but together with the illogical witch hunting that associates older women with witchcraft and sorcery (CHRAGG Annual reports 2007/08 -2009/10).

In Tanzania, where witchcraft is an entrenched practice, some segments of society believe people with albinism are less than human - even phantoms, who do not die but simply disappear. Aside

from the discrimination, they face the constant threat of being attacked, mutilated and killed for their blood and body parts for use in witchcraft. Most people believe it is a punishment from God or bad luck and that their “disease” could be contagious which is often the view of even members of the medical and professional community. These misconceptions, coupled with the lack of education are some of the key reasons that albinism is so heavily persecuted. This lack of knowledge around people with Albinism (PWA) means that myth and superstition in the name of witchcraft take place of medical and scientific facts in the minds of many albinos and native Africans which in turn has major effects the social integration of albinos into society. Ninety eight percent of albinos die by the age of forty for reasons which could easily be prevented. African rituals and spiritual ideas around albinism have led to the brutal murder and attacks on innocent men, women and especially children under the influence of witchcraft and superstition and desperation for wealth. These ideas have been around for many generations, however in recent years witch doctors have been teaching misconceived ideas about the promise of wealth, success and power when albino limbs or hair is used in a potion as part of witchcraft practices. This has gained public attention nationally and internationally as these crimes have been reported which are crimes against human rights. “infanticide, kidnapping, amputations, and decapitations, committed for purposes of supplying highly valued body parts used for amulets, which are then sold in underground witchcraft market. (Legal Human Right Centre annual report, 2007).

3.0 Discrimination Violations and Abuses against Persons with Albinism and old women in Tanzania:

3.1 Violence against Persons with Albinism in Tanzania:

According to *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ,Navi Pillay* (2013) report, It should be understood that people living with albinism face several major challenges including horror of a rapidly growing industry in the sale of their body parts, people with albinism have been persecuted, killed and dismembered and their graves dug up and desecrated. Due to misconceptions and myths, persons with albinism in many parts of Africa face stigma and various forms of discrimination and abuses/violations include:

i) Social stigma and derogatory name calling leading to prejudice and discrimination:

In many parts of the world, persons with albinism are largely seen as being incomplete. Virginia L. Small, in her paper *Sociological Studies of People of Color with Albinism* (1998) writes: “Among the few papers being written specifically about the social and psychological status of people with albinism in dark-skinned families and communities was a study published in 1993 in the Dominican Republic. This study and others like it concluded that there was indeed a negative stigma attached to albinism as well as other "special populations". It states that in general, albinism is equated with, and categorized as a blemish, mark, stain, even disfigurement. That is, it is a visual stigma that makes society look at it with suspicion and fear. Unlike any other stigma albinism is the only condition of any type mistaken for mixed race. Muthee Thuku (2011).

ii) Gender based sexual violence

In southern Africa countries, ritual defilement and rape of girls and women with albinism has been reported. Cases are known from Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and South Africa. The myth that having sex with a woman with albinism can cure HIV/AIDS has fueled this form of violence. The shocking

trend has left the victims contracting HIV which complicates their health and psychosocial condition. For women and girls with albinism, sexual violence makes theirs a case of multiple tragedies. Firstly, women rights are yet to be realized in largely patriarchal traditional communities. Secondly, being born with albinism means stigma from birth which is normally accompanied by skin and sight problems and poverty. Being targeted for ritual rape as a cure for HIV/AIDS, and the infections that follow, only aggravates the situation of the victims and this calls for urgent action from governments, communities and international actors. Defilement and rape are infringements on the dignity of a woman and an abuse of the rights to safety and security of the person.

iii) Killings and harvesting of body organs:

Recently, killings of persons with albinism in East Africa and southern Africa, especially in Tanzania, have woken up the world to the threats facing people with the condition. Reports from various sources indicate that about 100 persons with albinism may have been killed in Tanzania and Burundi in the past few years. The killings are done in order to harvest body parts which are used in making of charms by traditional witch doctors. It is believed that charms made with body parts of persons with albinism, especially hair, genitals, limbs, breasts, fingers, the tongue and blood make strong magic portions which sell for more. In Tanzania, organs can go for a high price. Mr Ash of UTSS says, “a leg or an arm can fetch between US\$1,000 and US\$3,000 big money in a country where the annual average income is just \$800”. The killings are known to peak during election times as demand increases for magical portions by politicians seeking election or re-election. Killings have been reported in Kenya, Uganda, Congo and Burundi possibly to sell the organs in Tanzania. The trend has now hit southern African countries with killings reported in Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Similar cases have been reported in Mali, West Africa. Also, people in Benin believe that blood of persons with albinism has magical properties and that it brings prosperity and luck. The fingers of persons with albinism are worn on necklaces around people’s necks as amulets

iv) Lack of appropriate medical attention: Because of lack of melanin pigment, persons with albinism are pre-disposed to health problems of the skin and vision. Skin cancer cases are higher in persons with albinism due to the effect of ultra violet rays from the sun which causes lesions. To lessen the effects of the sun, persons with albinism need to apply sunscreens, wear hats and use special sunglasses which are costly and in most rural areas, unavailable. Many governments have failed to ensure access and affordability of these vital items. The national health systems have failed to factor in the needs of persons with albinism adequately.

v) Discrimination in employment:

Persons with albinism are routinely shunned from employment by both private employers and governments due to their condition. They are thought of as being incapable or as being a burden. Sometimes, they are employed but assigned tasks that require them to work for a long time in the sun which exposes them to the risk of developing skin cancer. The condition also causes sight

vi) Discrimination in education systems:

For years, learning institutions in Africa have put students with albinism under the same conditions as other students without taking into account the visual impairment associated with the condition. In other instances, students with albinism are taken to schools for the blind while they are not blind. Poor vision may cause students with albinism to be slow learners either due to inability to see the black board clearly or inability to read books and other learning materials.

The colours used in writing also matter because students with albinism have a problem with contrast. The text books and exam papers are mostly printed in normal fonts which may be hard for students with albinism to read quickly. Persons with albinism have a medical condition known as nystagmus or pendulous nystagmus. It sometimes makes the words wiggle on the page and makes it hard to focus on small narrow print.

vii) Attacks on persons protecting/defending persons with albinism:

Many persons, especially family members have been harmed or even been killed while trying to stop attacks on persons with albinism. Cases have been recorded from Tanzania and Burundi where attackers brutalized family members of persons with albinism. A Tanzanian journalist, Vicky Ntetema, (also the current Executive Director of Under the Same Sun), was threatened for working to unravel the killing of persons with albinism in Tanzania. She was working on a sting operation to unravel the use of organs from persons with albinism by witchdoctors in Tanzania when she started receiving threats on her life. In her reports to the BBC, she reported that the slaughter of persons with albinism in Tanzania was for ritual purposes and that clients included some police officers, rich people and politicians. She had to flee the country for her life twice. For her investigations, the International Women's Media Foundation gave her the 'Courage in Journalism' Award of 2010

Targeted by witch doctors and underserved by government, East African albinos face many challenges.



Source: Daily news, Photograph by Jacquelyn Martin, AP (Oct, 2013)

Albino children play under mosquito netting inside a dormitory of the Kabanga Protectorate Center, housed in a walled compound for the Kabanga Primary School, in Kabanga, Tanzania.



Source: Photograph by Chika Odua, Oct 2013

Albinos in Tanzania have become targets for body-snatchers seeking to sell them to witch doctor.

Josephat Torner is a prominent activist for the rights of albinos in Tanzania. In his rural Tanzania hometown, some encouraged Torner's parents to poison him, saying an albino baby was a curse.

Today, Torner drives the streets of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's largest city, in a Nissan X-Trail with tinted windows to hide his white skin. He says the threat of violence is still real and that, as an albino, "society doesn't see you as a human being

3.2 Violence against Old women in Tanzania:

The global demographic picture shows that the world population aged 60 years and above is increasing enormously. In most African countries an almost unnoticed but dramatic demographic change will take place in the next decades. In some countries the older population will increase six-fold by 2050. For the United Republic of Tanzania it is estimated that the absolute number of older persons will increase from 1.95 million in 2005 to 7.16 millions in 2050. This equals with an increase of 270 %. The percentage of older people in the population of Tanzania is currently the highest in the East African region (5.1 % in 2005) and will increase up to 10.7 % in 2050 (Aboderin & Gachuhi 2007; United Nations Population Division 2007).

i) **Lack of support from Government:** In Tanzania 64 % out of a total number of 2.5 million orphans are living in a household headed by a person over the age of 55, and there is a strong tendency that the number of children living with grandparents increases in relation to those living with other relatives (Help Age International 2004). A 60 years old woman in a rural research site in Lindi District had this to say:

“Older people do find their own means on how to survive. But no one helps them. Most of them do manual labor in order to get money.

ii) **Lack of access to health service:** the National Guidelines for Home-Based Care Service Providers (Feb 2005), the Curriculum for Training Home Based Care Service Providers (Dec 2006) and the National HIV/AIDS Care and Treatment Plan (2003 – 2008) doesn't ensure they vulnerable children in Tanzania.

iii) Social insecurities: there is poor security for old women in Tanzania due to lack of clear policy and awareness of the community at large on the important and contributions of the old women in the development of the country. The government should act upon it by education the society.

iv) Gender-based violence against older women: the intimidation, isolation, abuse and killings of older women which can result from allegations of witchcraft that are made against old women in Tanzania is more extreme.

v) Property and inheritance: the Tanzanian Government must take immediate action to introduce a non-discriminatory uniform inheritance law that applies equally to all Tanzanians, which does not discriminate against older women, in particular widows, and no longer contradicts the protection of women and widow's rights to access to land and property that already exist in the Land Act CAP 113 RE 2002, the Village Land Act CAP 114 RE 2002 and the Law of Marriage Act 1971 (Help Age International Tanzania report,2008).

4.0 The Call for Special Rights:

Article 1 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) clearly states that 'all human beings are born free and equal in dignity'. **Article 2** that "Every individual shall be entitled to the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms recognized and guaranteed in the present Charter without distinction of any kind such as race, ethnic group, color, sex, language, religion, political or any other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth or other status."

The UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) defines racial Discrimination as 'any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.'

Based on this definition, persons with albinism can contest the discrimination they face on the grounds of skin color due to the reduction or absence of pigmentation.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) defines persons with disabilities as 'those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others'. Persons with albinism qualify to be considered as a special category of persons with disabilities and affirmative action's instituted by States towards their welfare and health.

States have the obligations to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of all persons under their jurisdiction. Failure to ensure that rights and fundamental freedoms are realized even for minorities such as persons with albinism amounts to violation of their civil rights. Failure to take action against perpetrators who discriminate, kill or harm persons with albinism also amounts to failing the concept of due diligence and is an abdication of duty. Normally pigmented persons should not be allowed to abuse the rights of persons with albinism on basis of discriminatory cultural beliefs and stigma.

The guarantee of rights for all human beings should be activated in the call for special protection of persons with albinism. They should enjoy all rights guaranteed in domestic constitutions as well as international and regional human rights instruments. These rights include: right to safety and security of person; freedom from non-discrimination; right to life; freedom of movement and residence; right to employment; right to family; right to health; and right to education. Beyond those

basic rights, people living with albinism should be accorded special treatment and consideration as happens to those with physical disabilities and other minorities. These 'sub-rights' are affirmative action aimed at according full dignity to persons living with albinism in any human rights compliant State.

4.1 Proposed Special Rights and Treatment:

This paper proposes that African States/governments ensure affirmative action for persons with Albinism and old women by according special rights in the following areas:

A) Special rights in education systems (Special considerations in schools and college). This includes:

- i) Allowing students with albinism to sit at strategic positions in the classroom, the use of readable writings and fonts, allowing extra time for students with albinism to complete tasks and increased attention on such students from teachers. Students with albinism should be given extra time to complete exams.
- ii) Exemption from paying fees or offering of subsidies in costs of education and training for skills for persons with albinism, especially those from poor rural areas as an affirmative action.
- iii) Development of special courses for life skills tailored for persons with albinism and old women in order to deal with poverty associated with the condition.
- iv) States to ensure the provision of reading aids such as handheld magnifiers and monocular for students with albinism and old women.



Photograph by Jacquelyn Martin, AP 2014)

Yonge, 4years, was abandoned by her parents at the Kabanga Protectorate Center in Kabanga, Tanzania. Having albinism, a genetic condition characterized by a lack of pigment in the body.

B) Special rights to health:

- i) States to ensure free or subsidized provision of sunscreens, low vision aids and sunglasses for persons with albinism especially for the poor in the rural areas.
- ii) Removing all customs duty for all provisions associated with albinism including sunscreens, sun-protective clothing and sight aids.
- iii) States to provide free treatment for skin cancer cases and free anti for old women retroviral therapy for women with albinism who are infected with HIV/AIDS.
- iv) States to ensure free provision of prosthetics for persons with albinism who have had their limbs amputated by organ harvesters
- v) States to ensure the development of counseling and trauma healing centers for persons with albinism and old women who have undergone traumatic experiences such as defilement, rape, amputations of limbs or who have been infected with HIV/AIDS especially after ritual rape.

C) Special rights to safety and security:

- i) Development of rescue centers in hotspots where persons with albinism are threatened. This includes timely and coordinated rescue for persons with albinism who are threatened by organ hunters.
- ii) Sustained security in hotspot areas where persons with albinism are threatened especially for students with albinism.
- iii) Strict enforcement of laws protecting life including formation of special law enforcement \ teams to deal with cases of murders and mutilations of persons with albinism in hotspots especially in eastern and southern African countries.
- iv) Enacting strict laws to deal with perpetrators who traffic in persons or organs of persons with albinism. States should pass laws to counter trafficking in persons to deter cross border trade in persons with albinism
- v) States to ensure effective redress for victims (and families) who have been traded or have suffered harm, death or discrimination due to the condition of albinism.

D) Special social-economic rights:

- i) States to ensure sustained education of the general population, including those in the medical profession, through all media on the genetic condition of albinism and old women how to integrate persons in mainstream society so as well as to deal with stigma and myths that lead to prejudice and discrimination.
- ii) States to actively ensure that persons with albinism are not discriminated against during employment by both governmental agencies and private employers. This includes the affirmative action of employing persons with albinism in their respective civil service structures. States should undertake affirmative action in order to mainstream persons with albinism in the local and national structures including promoting the active participation of people living with albinism in socio political and cultural processes.
- iii) States to undertake periodic census of persons with albinism and old women in order to ensure availability of data on their population, location and their welfare. This will facilitate timely action and coordinated assistance for both the government and for non-governmental organizations.
- iv) States to undertake sustained education for persons with albinism and old women and their families in order to make them aware of best practices regarding their condition and empower them to make informed life choices

v) The East African Parliament, which has condemned the slaughter and trafficking of persons with albinism and old women in Tanzania, Kenya and Burundi, should work together with member states, and other civil society actors to come up with guiding principles which member states should use to develop mechanisms for the protection of special rights for persons with albinism and old women.

4.2 Responsibilities of Individuals, Media and Non-Governmental Organizations and Agencies:

Individuals, international human rights organizations and aid agencies should also come in to help persons with albinism and old women in Tanzania and Africa at large. They have the obligation to help in funding, lobbying, advocacy and influencing policy and practice changes. This will ensure increased and sustained civic education on albinism and old women so as to do away with myths surrounding the condition.

Increased funding from international agencies should also be geared towards the welfare, education and health of persons with albinism and old women. State actors should also assist persons with albinism to establish their own organizations at local, national and regional levels in order to make their voices heard. With facilitation and capacity building, these organizations run by persons with albinism and old women will become strong instruments in the process of lobbying and advocating for policy and practice change.

The mass media (print and electronic) should educate their readers on the condition of albinism and old women on the need to integrate and embrace persons with albinism and old women as a part of the society.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations:

i) To Tanzania and Other African Countries

I recommend that they:

- (a) Address the root causes of attacks and discrimination against persons with albinism, notably by proactively combating superstition and stigma vis-à-vis albinism and older women due to witchcraft related beliefs, including through education and awareness-raising campaigns;
- (b) Adopt positive and specific measures to protect and preserve the rights to life, to security of person and not to be subject to torture or ill-treatment;
- (c) Take the necessary legislative measures to criminalize harmful practices;
- (d) Evaluate and address the needs of persons with albinism, including through a census of the population and the mandatory registration of birth and death of persons with albinism;
- (e) Increase efforts to put an end to the various forms of crimes affecting persons with albinism and older women due to witchcraft related beliefs, strengthen the legal

response to such crimes and bring perpetrators to justice, through prompt and impartial investigations;

(f) Guarantee the victims' right to justice and redress, and provide medical, psychosocial and legal support to victims of attacks;

(g) Adopt firm measures and policies to address the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination affecting persons with albinism, including by ensuring they have adequate access to health care, social services, employment and education;

(h) Adopt a comprehensive strategy to eradicate violence and discriminatory practices affecting persons with albinism and older women due to witchcraft related beliefs

(i) Develop national institutional mechanisms for the protection and promotion of rights of persons with albinism older women due to witchcraft related beliefs including by ensuring that national human rights institutions effectively address the human rights situation of persons with albinism;

ii) To International and Regional Human Rights Mechanisms

I recommend that:

(a) The United Nations treaty bodies conduct a more systematic review of the situation of persons with albinism and older women due to witchcraft related beliefs when assessing compliance of States parties with their international obligations arising from the relevant treaty provisions;

(b) The relevant mechanism of the Human Rights Council requests a follow-up study on the human rights situation of persons with albinism and older women due to witchcraft related beliefs

(c) The special procedures of the Human Rights Council – particularly the mandates on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; on racism; on health; on education; on violence against women; and on trafficking in persons, especially women and children with albinism and older women due to witchcraft related beliefs must work in practice.

(d) African Union mechanisms pay further attention to human rights violations committed against persons with albinism and older women due to witchcraft related beliefs, including by seeking effective means to combat discrimination and violence against them.

iii) To the International Community

I recommend that it:

(a) Provide financial assistance for the development of technical cooperation activities aimed at supporting measures to prevent and combat discrimination and

attacks against persons with albinism and older women due to witchcraft related beliefs at providing assistance to the victims and their family members;

(b) Strengthen international, regional and bilateral cooperation for the prevention of cross-border crimes affecting persons with albinism and older women due to witchcraft related beliefs, notably trafficking in persons, child trafficking and organ trafficking.

5.2 Conclusion:

All persons are born free and equal in rights and dignity. Persons with albinism and old women are human beings and they deserve all rights and freedoms enjoyed by normally pigmented persons. They are part of the human society and the diversities that make it. When they suffer discrimination, violations, and abuses, the human race suffers too. Their genetic condition requires that the society treats them as a special minority. Special sub-rights to safety, health, education, meaningful employment and non-discrimination should be ensured. Governments, medical profession and organizations, civil society groups, the media and individuals of good will should help people with albinism and old women to achieve their aspirations in consideration of their challenges in terms of health, protection as well as the general stigma that they experience.

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media refer to ritual attacks during electoral periods. As an example, see “Swazi Albinos Plead for Protection Ahead of Vote”, *Daily Nation*, 24 May 2013. Available from www.nation.co.ke/News/world/Swazi-albinos-plead-for-protection-ahead-of-vote/ /1068/1861356/-/item/1/-/blp9q0z/-/index.html.

5. The Committee against Torture considers that the term “redress” in article 14 of the Convention encompasses the concepts of “effective remedy” and “reparation”, entailing the full scope of measures of restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition. See Committee against Torture, general comment No. 3 (2013) on implementation of article 14 by States parties, para. 2.

6. *Through Albino Eyes: The plight of albino people in Africa’s Great Lakes region And a Red Crossresponse* (Geneva, 2009), p.5. Available from www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/general/177800-Albinos-Report-EN.pdf.

7. Cimpric, *Children Accused*, p. 28.

8. See press release, “Pillay condemns ‘abhorrent’ attacks on people with albinism in Tanzania”, March 2013. Available from www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13074&LangID=E.

9. CCPR/C/TZA/CO/4, para. 15, and CCPR/C/KEN/CO/3, para. 17.

10. E/C.12/COD/CO/4, para. 19, and E/C.12/TZA/CO/1-3, para. 5.

11. CRC/C/OPSC/TZA/CO/1, paras. 20 and 21; CRC/C/BDI/CO/2, paras. 33 and 34;

12. CRC/C/GNB/CO/2-4, paras. 28 and 29

13. Legal and Human Rights Centre, Tanzania Human Rights Reports 2009

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15. CEDAW, Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW/C/TZA/CO6, 18 July 2008
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