

MALAWI HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSON



PRESS STATEMENT

INTERNATIONAL ALBINISM AWARENESS DAY (IAAD) 2021

Every year, all United Nations (UN) member states commemorate the International Albinism Awareness Day (IAAD) on 13 June. The **International Albinism Awareness Day (IAAD)** was declared following a resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 2014. This landmark resolution reaffirmed the international community's commitment to albinism advocacy. This year's theme at international level is ***"Strength Beyond All Odds"***. Malawi will commemorate the Day on 26 June in Nkhotakota District under the theme ***"Exposing the positive lives of persons with albinism"***.

The theme was identified (i) To highlight the good qualities of people with albinism around the world (ii) To show that people with albinism were made to defy all odds (iii) To celebrate how people with albinism worldwide meet and exceed expectation in all domains of life and (d) to encourage everyone during this time of global pandemic and to join the global effort to ***#BuildBackBetter***.

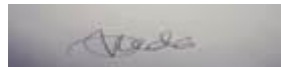
According to the 2018 National Statistics Office Census Report, Malawi has a population of 134,636 of Persons with Albinism. Since 2014, Malawi has registered 195 cases of human rights violations on person with albinism according to Standing Voice. This makes Malawi the second highest in Africa from Tanzania who have since registered 200 cases. These human rights violations range from killings, abductions, exhumation of bodies believed to be of a person with albinism, unmet health needs, unmet educational needs, poor housing, inadequate security and lack of empowerment. These challenges have contributed to them being marginalised and excluded in every social and economic sphere and are unable to contribute effectively to the country's national development efforts.

Nevertheless, the Commission commends Government for its proactiveness in putting in place mechanisms towards addressing these atrocities through the National Action Plan for Persons with Albinism. In this financial year, Government has allocated some considerable financial resources towards

addressing the housing challenge by People with Albinism. Government also initiated directives towards empowering persons with albinism through provision of boarding spaces and employment quota. Additionally, the Commission commends all stakeholders working in promoting and protecting rights of persons with albinism for their collective efforts, in mounting engagement meetings with traditional leaders, healers and community awareness meetings at grassroot level for communities to understand Albinism.

The Commission, therefore, would like to call upon all Malawians to join government efforts and be vigilant in protecting lives of persons with albinism. Critically, we call upon the justice sector to complete pending cases, finalise investigations and update the nation on cases concluded. It is important to note that given an opportunity, persons with albinism, can make a difference in our country. Collectively, we should therefore be able to achieve the targets for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the notion of "Leaving No One Behind"

On behalf of the Commission



**Scader Louis
Chairperson**

Dated this 14th day of June, 2021