



STATEMENT ON CONDEMNING CHEAP PROPAGANDA BY PARTY CADETS ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Human Rights Defenders Coalition (HRDC) would like to condemn in strongest terms possible the continued intimidation and character assassination targeted at our comrades. It has once again come to our attention that DPP operatives, in a desperate but not so surprising cheap and baseless attempts to discredit HRD Comrades, have shamelessly stooped so in peddling outright lies on social media aimed to tarnish the image of our members. In question is picture that has gone viral on social media of our chairperson Mr. Timothy Mtambo with a caption alleging that he is out enjoying life sponsored by opposition parties' funds that he gets as payment for organizing and leading demonstrations.

We would like to emphasize and assure all Malawians that HRDC and her comrades remain very steadfast on the independent, objective, impartial and apolitical lane. Contrary to what these cadets would like Malawians to believe, our chairperson Mr. Timothy Mtambo is currently in South Africa on official duties under the sponsorship of the Southern African Human Rights Defenders Network (SAHRDN). Malawians would also wish to know that Mr. Mtambo is the sitting Vice Chairperson of (SAHRDN).

We therefore wonder as to where these cadets are drawing the link between our chairperson's trip to South Africa and being sponsored by opposition political parties. To say the least, we contend that is yet another clear desperate and embarrassingly dull tactic aimed at nothing but to soil the reputation of our chairperson and that of the HRDC. We need to retaliate that as HRDC while we share in some of the issues that the opposition political parties champion, we remain very independent and apolitical.

We take this opportunity to call upon the DPP led government and all its sympathizers to train their resources on addressing the issues as raised in 27th April and 21st September 2018 petitions. Malawians need nothing but concrete and practical responses to the issues contained in the petitions. Malawians do not have time to entertain cheap propaganda. Actually there is no room whatsoever to accommodate

cheap propaganda aimed at diverting peoples' attentions away from real issues affecting them.

It is certain that the DPP operatives will stop at nothing in using the same tired propaganda tactic of lying to Malawians that each time HRDC comrades travel abroad on human rights assignments, they shamelessly claim we have been sponsored by the opposition parties. We still remember how they peddled the same lie soon after 27th April demonstrations when some of our comrades left for Islamic Republic of Mauritania to attend the 62nd session of African Commission on Human Rights.

We therefore call upon government to stop harassing and intimidating Human Rights Defenders and rather bring forth solutions affecting our country. We need answers to our petitions.

Lastly we would like to assure Malawians and the DPP led government that as Rights Defenders, we will stop at nothing to hold duty bearers accountable. We will continue our struggle for better Malawi.

SIGNED BY

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Released in Lilongwe on 27th September 2018