



HRDC CONDEMNS MR RESTON MULLI'S THREATS ON MR CHARLSE KAJOLOWEKA; CALLS UPON THE POLICE TO TAKE URGENT ACTION

The Human Rights Defenders Coalition (HRDC) is deeply shocked at the threats and demeaning remarks by Mr. Lasten Mulli against Mr. Charles Kajoloweka, a brave and bonafide member of the HRDC. We find such remarks not only undemocratic, but an ill-calculated attempt by Mr. Mulli to frustrate the accountability and transparency break-throughs by Mr. Kajoloweka and many others under the HRDC banner against the wanton abuse and plunder of public resources.

We unreservedly condemn such elements of barbarism and call upon the Police to take immediate action on Mr. Mulli. As HRDC, we believe Mr. Kajoloweka, like any other well-meaning tax payer under the Constitution and laws of the country, has the right to seek justice on how the case on involving tax-payers' resources is handled. We do not agree with those who hold that as bonafide citizens and tax payers we do not have sufficient interest to seek justice and accountability from those Executive thieves who are busy stealing our hard earned taxes.

We view such death threats as not only an infringement to right to life but also a deliberate attempt by Mr Mulli to silence the voice of the reason on the matter. Malawians have every right to demand transparency on any matter that concerns their tax payers money and in cases where they suspect some clandestine attempts to defraud public tax payers money they have every right to ask the necessary questions. No any form of threat will therefore stop Malawians in demanding transparency and accountability especially in a context characterised by patronage, clientelism and patronage.

The HRDC is at pains to learn that Mr Mulli -as quoted in Nyasa Times of 25th August 2p18-called Mr Kajoloweka a pig simply for demanding transparency. We found such words as not only an insult to human dignity but also a clear insult to all poor Malawians who continue to demand transparency and accountability on how their taxes are used. The "rich man" Mulli further makes insinuations in his response to Nyasa Times that the "poor" Kajoloweka has no ground to hold him accountable because he has nothing in the society. This is an insult of the highest order for someone to suggest that the majority of Malawians by virtue of being poor have no mandate to demand transparency, and in cases where they do so they reduce themselves to such labels as pigs. When did a tax payer become a pig simply for demanding transparency? Where does the "rich man" Mulli get the audacity to call those who protect the tax payers money from "executive thieves" and their cronies pigs?

Mr. Kajoloweka's comment on the K8 billion claim from a civil cause number 474 of 2012 where Mulli's Chombe Foods Limited and Sunrise Pharmaceuticals Limited are involved, should, therefore, not be misconstrued as "mixing political activism with business issues" as Mulli claims. Neither is this tantamount to prejudicing the case.

We, thus, ask Mr. Mulli to refrain from issuing empty threats and demeaning remarks against Mr. Kajoloweka or any other citizen who expresses interest to understand the issues surrounding the K8billion compensation he is seeking from Malawians. The HRDC will not stop demanding accountability from Mr Mulli and or anybody because we believe that Malawi must change for the betterment of all not only the selfish few. We will take up the dubious MK 8 billion compensation saga including the MSB scam in which Mr Mulli owes accountability to Malawians.

The HRDC would like to call upon the Inspector General of Police to publicly assure human rights defenders in the country of maximum legal protection. For a long time, human rights defenders have been receiving threats from various quarters, including government and ruling party zealots. Despite reporting such threats to Police, our law enforcers have treated such reports with indifference.

We expect the Police to start operating independently and impartially as per their mandate in the democratic Malawi.

Most importantly, we reiterate our call upon government, specifically the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to kick-start the process of formulating the legislation to protect the human rights defenders in the country in line with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders. As HRDC we believe the current legal framework is not sufficient enough to protect human rights defenders who have to brave their way to ensuring accountability and transparency in the country.

Further Demands

1. We would like to demand the Malawi Police to immediately arrest Mr Leston Mulli for the life of Charles Kajoloweka is in danger following his issuing of death threats. As HRDs we cannot just sit and watch impunity taking its ground under the guise of being connected to the regime of the day.
2. We demand the Mutharika government and Police to reassure protection to HRDs and other public intellectuals in the context of this life-threatening threat instigated by people like Mr Mulli.
3. We call upon Mr Mulli to immediately apologise and withdraw such inhuman, primitive and demeaning remarks he made on Mr Kajolobeka specifically and the poor and suffering Malawian at large.

Signed by

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