

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS FORUM

### Press Statement:

#### Condemning Distortion of Communication on April 27 Demonstrations

17<sup>th</sup> April 2018

We, at Human Rights Defenders Forum (HRDF), want to strongly condemn the cheap propaganda being spread by some ill-fated operatives who have added violence to innocent and peaceful messages for the planned April 27 Nationwide Demonstrations. Furthermore, these evil souls are distorting the communication on routes that will be taken by all Malawians of good will during the demonstrations.

As HRDF, we want to refute the contents of such unethical messages and distance ourselves from them. Malawians should know that April 27 Demonstrations are peaceful and that as organisers and patriotic citizens, we will not entertain any recipe for violence during the demonstrations. We want Malawians to know that our audio messages are being aired on various radio stations as opposed to the recent distorted audios circulating on social media.

Briefly, these are the demands being put forward by the coming demonstrations:

- MBC is a Public Broadcaster NOT DPP Broadcaster. Free MBC NOW!
- Enough of blackouts and Genset excuses. We demand electricity NOW
- NO to a corrupt government: DPP govt. initiated corruption, unfulfilled promises, K4 billion 'miracle' money to pro-DPP MPS, delays in investigation on the K263 billion Cashgate occurred during the DPP era, fraudulent activities on K4 billion ADMARC Bailout, dubious awarding of contracts in the LL-Salima Water Project, taxpayers money for DPP's Blue Night...taxpayers money not safe in the hands of a corrupt and thieving government
- The Minister of Finance Goodall Gondwe and Minister of Local Government Kondwani Nankhumwa must either resign or be fired by President Peter Mutharika NOW over their dubious role in the K4 Billion "miracle" money scandal. The disbursement of the K4 Billion dubious funds be completely cancelled NOW as its objectives are not to pursue public interest but rather to reward betrayal of public trust through the rejection of the peoples' electoral reforms
- Anti-Corruption Bureau should investigate both the K4 Billion dubious fund scandal and also the alleged linkage between the rejection of electoral reforms and K4 Billion Scandal
- Table and pass Electoral reforms including 50%+1 electoral system of electing the President in their original form as proposed by the Law Commission. We want a government that is legitimately elected by the majority NOT minority. Pass 50%+1 of electing the President NOW!
- Enough of DPP government's celebration of impunity over extrajudicial killings implicating its cronies. We demand completion of investigations into the murder of Issa Njaunju, Robert Chasowa and July 20, 2011 freedom fighters NOW!
- We demand President Peter Mutharika to reverse his decision of appointing Rodney Jose who was implicated in the murder of Robert Chasowa in 2011- as Acting Inspector General of Police. We demand Parliament to reject such an appointment if brought to it for approval.

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- Dwindling public service delivery in education and health. Shortage of drugs, teachers and learning materials in public hospitals and schools yet the DPP government audaciously plans to waste K4 Billion funds in rewarding MPs that betrayed the public through the rejection of Electoral reforms. We demand action to addressing these problems NOW!
- Enough of mere executive rhetoric on the killings of persons with Albinism. We need action NOW to end the killings of our brothers and sisters!

The theme of the demonstrations remains: **“FOR HOW LONG SHALL MALAWIANS CONTINUE TO BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED? LOSS OF PUBLIC TRUST IN THE GOVERNMENT: TIME TO RECLAIM OUR DESTINY (Section 12[c])”**

The following also are the planned routes:

- **Lilongwe:** Lilongwe Community Centre ground via Mchesi via Kamuzu Central hospital Roundabout via Lingadzi roundabout via Parliament then deliver the petition to the State President Prof. Peter Mutharika at State House
- **Mzuzu:** Katoto Primary School Ground via Mzuzu Tower via Mzuzu High Court round-about and then deliver the petition at Civic Office
- **Blantyre:** Clock Tower via Victoria Avenue and then deliver the petition at Blantyre district commissioner’s office
- **Zomba:** Community ground via Mponda Primary School and direct to the Zomba Assembly to deliver the petition
- **Karonga:** Karonga Roundabout to Karonga District Assembly to deliver the petition

We would like to warn everyone who is involved in this distortion to stop it before the law catches them to face the music. Let’s love our country. Let’s all come en masse on April 27 to peacefully demonstrate for a better Malawi which is corrupt-free and full of transparency and accountability.

**Signed by:**

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**Endorsed by:**

Human Rights Defenders Forum (HRDF)

Northern Region Human Rights Defenders Forum (NRHRDF)

## **HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS FORUM**

Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (CHRR)

Centre for Development of People (Cedep)

Youth and Society (YAS)

Citizens Forum for the Defense of Good Governance

Civil Society Network Transparency and Accountability

Child Rights Information and Documentation (CRIDOC)

Knowledge of the Laws of the Land (KNOLL)

Outreach Scout Foundation (OSF)

Phunzirani Development Organisation

Walita of RRA

Patrick Mwale of COIDA

Trevor Nyasulu of FARO

Ndagha Sikanda HRD

Gibson Chisale of PACE

Rumphi Residents Association

Happy Mhango - Northern Region Human Rights Defenders Forum Chair (HRDF)

Kinnear Mlowoka - Human Rights Defender

Rev. Macdonald Sembereka – Human Rights Activist

Thokozani Mapemba - Human Rights Defender

Makhumbo Mkanavimbundi Munthali - Concerned Citizen