

**Joint Submission to the Universal Periodic Review Fourth Cycle
(53rd Session): Human Rights Situation of Persons with Albinism in
Tanzania**

By



Africa Albinism Network (AAN)

Email: info@africaalbinismnetwork.org

Website: www.africaalbinismnetwork.org



Tanzania Albinism Society (TAS)

Email: info@tasmorogoro.or.tz

Website: www.tasmorogoro.or.tz

Submitted on 18th March 2026

Executive Summary

This joint submission assesses the human rights situation of persons with albinism in Tanzania from the last Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in November 2021 through 12 March 2026. It focuses on: (1) education, including reasonable accommodation for low vision; (2) health, including skin cancer prevention, sunscreen access, and non-discriminatory service delivery; (3) employment and safe/appropriate working conditions; (4) violence and personal security, including prevention, investigation, prosecution, and victim support; and (5) discrimination and social exclusion driven by stigma and harmful beliefs.

The submission is anchored in primary sources and physical consultation with the Tanzania Albinism Society (TAS). First, the African Court judgment of 5 February 2025 constitutes a legally authoritative determination that Tanzania violated multiple rights of persons with albinism, including the right to non-discrimination and failures concerning children's rights, education, accommodation, and health access. The Court ordered reparations and reforms, including the establishment of a compensation fund, legislative amendments to treat albinism-targeted violence as aggravated circumstances, amendment of the Witchcraft Act (1928), sustained public awareness campaigns (at least two years), and reporting on implementation within two years.

Second, Under The Same Sun (UTSS) documentation as of 23 January 2026 records 214 reports of attacks and related violations in Tanzania (including 79 killings, 102 survivors, 27 grave exhumations, and other categories), reflecting both the severity of the issue and the likelihood of underreporting. While stakeholders acknowledge progress in periods where reported incidents decreased, the persistence of severe violations and the African Court's findings demonstrate that structural prevention, accountability, and service-delivery reforms remain necessary.

This submission recommends that Tanzania: (a) implement the African Court judgment in full; (b) fully fund and operationalize the National Action Plan on the Rights and Welfare of Persons with Albinism (2024/25–2028/29), including robust data systems; (c) ensure reasonable accommodation and non-discrimination across education, health, justice, and employment; and (d) establish transparent monitoring and reporting mechanisms to demonstrate measurable progress during the UPR cycle.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Executive Summary | 2 |
| Questions to the Government | 4 |
| Introduction and Methodology | 5 |
| Methodology | 6 |
| Education..... | 7 |
| Health | 7 |
| Employment..... | 8 |
| Violence and personal security | 8 |
| Discrimination and social exclusion | 9 |
| Recommendations..... | 10 |
| Conclusion..... | 12 |

Questions to the Government

Stakeholder States may consider asking Tanzania to clarify:

1. What budget and implementation structure is assigned to the National Action Plan (2024/25–2028/29), and how is the progress publicly monitored?
2. Has Tanzania established the African Court-ordered compensation fund and deposited the seed amount (TZS 10,000,000)?
3. What legislative steps will be taken to criminalize albinism-targeted violence as aggravated circumstances and to amend the Witchcraft Act (1928), and what is the timeframe?
4. How many cases of attacks against persons with albinism were investigated, prosecuted, and resulted in convictions between 2022 and 2025, and will these data be published annually?
5. What mechanisms ensure that persons with albinism consistently receive regular sunscreen and dermatological care, and what proportion of registered persons with albinism is covered?
6. What minimum standard of reasonable accommodation is mandated for learners with albinism in mainstream education, including assistive devices (spectacles/low-vision aids) and learning materials?
7. What concrete measures is the Government of Tanzania taking to improve access to employment and economic opportunities for persons with albinism?

Introduction

Africa Albinism Network (AAN) is a regional non-governmental organization focusing on the rights of persons with albinism. The Tanzania Albinism Society (TAS) is a national civil society actor representing and supporting persons with albinism in Tanzania

According to the 2022 Population and Housing Census disability monograph for Tanzania, the country has a total of 74,273 persons with albinism, representing approximately 0.12% of the national population. When disaggregated by sex, 42,686 are male (0.15%) while 31,587 are female (0.10%), indicating a higher prevalence among males than females. This national distribution highlights both the presence of albinism as a recognized disability category in the census and the importance of sex-disaggregated data for policy planning, particularly for targeted health and protection interventions for persons with albinism.¹

Further disaggregation by geographic location shows that most persons with albinism reside in Mainland Tanzania, where 71,631 individuals (0.12%) were recorded, compared to 2,642 persons (0.14%) in Tanzania Zanzibar. In Mainland Tanzania, the population includes 41,203 males (0.14%) and 30,428 females (0.10%), while in Zanzibar, there are 1,483 males (0.17%) and 1,159 females (0.12%)². Although the absolute number is significantly higher in Mainland Tanzania due to its larger population size, the proportion in Zanzibar is slightly higher, suggesting regional differences in prevalence patterns that may require tailored policy responses.

We want to acknowledge that since the last UPR review, the legal and policy context has been significantly shaped by two developments:

1. **National Action Plan (2024/25–2028/29)**. Tanzania has adopted and published a National Action Plan on the Rights and Welfare of Persons with Albinism. The plan includes objectives related to strengthening identification and producing accurate statistics on persons with

¹ National Bureau of Statistics and Office of the Chief Government Statistician, The Contemporary State of Persons with Disabilities in Tanzania (Ministry of Finance and President's Office – Finance and Planning 2025) available at [https://www.nbs.go.tz/uploads/statistics/documents/en-1752866636-Disability%20Monograph.pdf#:~:text=One%20of%20the%20publications%20resulting%20from%20the,use%20of%20Information%20and%20Communication%20Technology%20\(ICT\).](https://www.nbs.go.tz/uploads/statistics/documents/en-1752866636-Disability%20Monograph.pdf#:~:text=One%20of%20the%20publications%20resulting%20from%20the,use%20of%20Information%20and%20Communication%20Technology%20(ICT).)

² As above

albinism (including disaggregation), reflecting recognition that data gaps hinder effective service delivery and protection.

- 2. African Court judgment (5 Feb 2025).** The African Court found that persons with albinism experience discrimination tied to harmful beliefs and that State initiatives fell short of applicable standards. The Court found violations affecting non-discrimination, children's rights (including trafficking/abduction protections and best interests), education (including lack of assistive devices), and health (availability/accessibility/acceptability/quality deficits and discriminatory attitudes). The Court ordered a compensation fund, legal amendments to treat albinism-targeted violence as aggravated, amendment of the Witchcraft Act (1928), sustained awareness campaigns for at least two years, and a government report on implementation within two years.

This is a commendable step from the United Republic of Tanzania.

Methodology

This submission is based on desk research; the methodology used is qualitative in nature. Data was obtained from both Primary and secondary sources. The report consultation the following documents: (a) Tanzania's prior UPR documentation (national report and Working Group report); (b) the African Court judgment on merits and reparations; (c) UN compilation materials reflecting treaty body and special procedure concerns; (d) UTSS documented attack data; and (e) publicly available demographic data (Tanzania 2022 census key findings) and peer-reviewed health evidence relevant to skin cancer prevention and service design.

The report made use of Focus Group discussion through a round table consultation during the Zimbabwe Learning Forum organised by the Africa Albinism Network, where we brought Human Rights defenders with Albinism from different African Countries, and we were able to train them on the UN Human Rights mechanisms. During the training, we drafted the report, reviewed it, and added inputs. We directly had first-hand information from representatives of Albinism organisations in Tanzania who attended the learning Forum

Reported incidents of attacks are widely acknowledged as undercounted due to fear and stigma, and there is no consistently published national time-series on sunscreen coverage, prosecutions, or education enrolment for persons with albinism. Where exact figures are not publicly available, the submission labels them as unspecified and proposes measurable indicators and administrative reporting structures aligned to the National Action Plan and African Court orders.

Education

Children with albinism often require reasonable accommodation for low vision to access education on an equal basis. The African Court provided Tanzania-specific confirmation of accommodation failures by finding that schooling in shelters did not meet right-to-education standards and citing lack of assistive devices such as spectacles.

Key barriers identified through the Court's findings and stakeholder evidence include: (a) non-provision of low-vision devices and adapted learning materials; (b) weak accountability standards for accommodation in institutional settings; and (c) risk that protective measures (e.g., shelters) may undermine education quality and inclusion when overcrowded or under-resourced.

The Government should ensure, at a minimum: spectacles and low-vision aids; large-print and high-contrast learning materials; seating and lighting adjustments; teacher training on low vision; and school-level accommodation plans for learners with albinism.

Tanzania should publish annual data on enrolment, retention, access to assistive devices, and exam outcomes for learners with albinism, disaggregated by sex and region, consistent with the National Action Plan's focus on improved data.³

Health

Persons with albinism face a heightened risk of sun-induced skin damage and skin cancer, a long-documented issue in Tanzania. The African Court found that Tanzania violated the right to health for persons with albinism,

³ MPANGO KAZI WA TAIFA WA HAKI NA USTAWI KWA WATU WENYE UALBINO (MTHUWWU) NOVEMBA 2024-2024/2025 – 2028/2029 available at <https://www.kazi.go.tz/uploads/documents/en-1735281794-MTHUWWU%20.pdf> accessed on February 17th 2026

citing failures in the availability, accessibility, and acceptability of primary healthcare and discriminatory attitudes by providers.

Sunscreen access. Tanzania's 2021 national report stated that the State reviewed taxes to make sunscreens, dermatological products, and low-vision assistive devices available at little to no cost. Stakeholders, however, reported inconsistent sunscreen distribution and concerns that many persons with albinism did not receive lotions, indicating that affordability reforms must be matched with reliable supply chains and budgeted distribution.

Service delivery improvements. Tanzania has promising initiatives that can be scaled, including local sunscreen production programs and research on skin cancer detection innovations. This is an opportunity to commit to measurable coverage targets (e.g., monthly sunscreen provision for all registered persons with albinism; annual skin screening rates; referral pathway performance).

Employment

Employment participation is constrained by stigma, discrimination, low-vision accommodation needs, and health risks from prolonged sun exposure in outdoor work. While robust national employment statistics specific to persons with albinism are not publicly available in the primary sources reviewed, Tanzania can adopt UPR commitments that require: (a) non-discrimination in recruitment; (b) workplace accommodations; (c) vocational training adapted for low vision; and (d) occupational safety measures to prevent sun-related harm.

A minimum UPR-standard package should include: guidance for employers on reasonable accommodation; prioritized placement in safer indoor work options where desired; access to protective clothing and sunscreen in outdoor work; and enforcement pathways through labor inspection and grievance mechanisms.

Violence and personal security

UTSS data (as of 23 Jan 2026) record 214 reports of attacks and related violations in Tanzania, including 79 killings and 102 survivors, plus grave exhumations and other categories. The African Court confirmed there is

no doubt that persons with albinism have suffered targeted killings for ritual purposes, demonstrating ongoing threats to life and security.

Tanzania has stated that perpetrators are charged and prosecuted and has reported a reduction in crimes against persons with albinism. Stakeholders have documented specific conviction outcomes (e.g., life imprisonment sentencing) but also highlight the chilling effects of fear, poverty, and weak protection systems. The African Court's requirement to amend laws to treat albinism-targeted violence as aggravated circumstances indicates that stronger legal tools and deterrence are required.

The Working Group report narrative claims children returned from shelters to families. Yet UN compilation materials and the African Court underscore that fear persists, shelters have been used, and conditions can violate best interests of the child (including overcrowding and inadequate services).⁴ Tanzania should adopt a rights-based protection framework that prioritizes family unity with robust security, social support, and service access.

Discrimination and social exclusion

The African Court found that discrimination against persons with albinism is driven by superstitions and harmful beliefs and that State efforts fell short of required standards. The Court ordered sustained awareness campaigns for at least two years, providing a ready-made, measurable UPR commitment for stigma reduction.

Social exclusion also impairs access to education, health, employment, and justice. UPR recommendations should require measurable outcomes for example, reductions in stigma indicators or increases in uptake of services paired with community-level interventions and media standards.

In the third cycle, Tanzania supported multiple recommendations aiming to combat discrimination and violence against persons with albinism, to ensure that children with albinism have access to education and health, to address trafficking in body parts, and to prioritize specialized health services.

⁴ OHCHR compilation report for UPR 39 – UN bodies' concerns and Independent Expert observations on albinism, shelters, witchcraft-related practices available at https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2061043/A_HRC_WG.6_39_TZA_2_E.pdf

Implementation since 2021 shows mixed progress:

- Tanzania reported initiatives such as tax reviews to reduce the costs of sunscreen and assistive devices and the establishment of an albinism clinic in Zanzibar.
- Tanzania adopted a National Action Plan in November 2024 for the protection of the rights of persons with Albinism.
- Stakeholders reported inconsistent sunscreen coverage and ongoing threats.
- The African Court in 2025 found continuing violations and ordered specific remedial actions, highlighting implementation gaps and the need for structural, monitored reforms.

Recommendations

Short-term (0–12 months)

A. Establish and operationalize the compensation fund.

Deposit the ordered seed amount (TZS 10,000,000) and adopt transparent eligibility criteria, application pathways, and oversight (including civil society). Indicator: fund established; number of beneficiaries receiving compensation; published annual audit. Responsible actors: Ministry of Finance; disability affairs ministry; independent oversight body.

B. Emergency service package for health and protection.

Immediate nationwide sunscreen availability through public health facilities and/or voucher systems for registered persons with albinism; establish non-discrimination protocols in primary care and grievance mechanisms. Indicator: % of registered persons receiving monthly sunscreen; number of facilities stocked; complaints resolved. Responsible actors: Ministry of Health; local government authorities; relevant hospitals and clinics.

C. Education accommodation minimum standard.

Provide assistive devices (spectacles/low-vision aids) and learning material adaptations for all learners with albinism in shelters and public schools, and issue enforceable guidance. Indicator: % of identified

learners receiving devices; school compliance audits. Responsible actors: Ministry of Education, school inspectorate, and local authorities.

Medium-term (1–2 years)

D. Legislative reforms per the African Court.

Enact amendments to criminalize and punish violence targeting persons with albinism as aggravated circumstances; amend the Witchcraft Act (1928) to clarify ambiguities and prevent harmful practices; ensure trafficking and related offenses are comprehensively addressed. Indicator: amendments enacted; enforcement guidance issued; prosecutions tracked and published. Responsible actors: Parliament, Attorney General's office, and law reform bodies.

E. NAP financing and monitoring system.

Fully cost the NAP (2024/25–2028/29), create a multi-stakeholder monitoring committee, and publish a quarterly dashboard with indicators across security, education, health, and employment. Indicator: costed plan; budget execution rates; published dashboard. Responsible actors: lead disability affairs ministry; national statistics authority; civil society, including AAN and Tanzanian partner.

F. Prosecution transparency and victim support.

Publish annual statistics on attacks, investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and victim services. Expand witness protection and survivor support (medical care, psychosocial services, relocation where necessary) consistent with Court guidance on coordinated shelter reform and child welfare strategies. Indicator: annual public report; victim support coverage. Responsible actors: Police, prosecutions, social welfare, and judiciary.

Long-term (3–5 years)

G. Institutionalize reasonable accommodation across institutions.

Embed enforceable standards for reasonable accommodation in schools, health facilities, workplaces, courts, and policing (e.g., low-vision accessible formats, priority handling, communication supports). Indicator: standards adopted; institutional audits; satisfaction outcomes. Responsible actors: cross-ministerial coordination; national disability and human rights bodies.

H. Sustainable health system integration for albinism-related care.

Integrate skin cancer prevention and low-vision services into routine primary healthcare, including regular screening and referral pathways, possibly leveraging technology-supported screening innovations and local sunscreen production. Indicator: annual screening coverage; stage at diagnosis; supply chain continuity. Responsible actors: Ministry of Health; training institutions; specialized centers.

I. Evidence-based stigma reduction.

Implement and evaluate multi-year awareness and behavior change campaigns (minimum two years continuous, per African Court order) and integrate accurate information on albinism into health and education curricula. Indicator: campaign coverage and evaluation; stigma indices; reduced discrimination complaints. Responsible actors: relevant ministries, public media regulators, and civil society.

Conclusion

Tanzania's Fourth Cycle review occurs amid a pivotal accountability moment: UTSS monitoring continues to document severe violence, while the African Court's 2025 judgment provides legally binding guidance on what must be done: legislative reform, compensation, sustained awareness, and measurable delivery of education and health rights. The UPR process provides a structured pathway for peer States to translate these obligations into specific, time-bound commitments aligned with the National Action Plan (2024/25–2028/29) and the Court's compliance timelines.