

**STATEMENT BY UNDER THE SAME SUN TOGETHER
WITH THE AFRICA ALBINISM NETWORK AT THE 47TH
SESSION OF THE AFRICAN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS
ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD
(ACERWC)**

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Honourable Chairperson, Distinguished Members of the Committee, representatives of state parties, National Human Rights Institutions, Child Rights Organisations, and Esteemed Delegates,

Under the Same Sun, together with the Africa Albinism Network and over 200 albinism organisations in Africa, appreciates this opportunity to address the 47th Session of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. We commend the Committee for its continued efforts to advance the rights and welfare of children across Africa, particularly through its engagement with vulnerable and marginalized groups. We particularly commend the Committee for hosting a day of General discussion on children with albinism during its 43rd session and also adopting the Guiding Note on reporting on children with albinism in Africa at its 46th session

My name is Mwape Chimpampa, and I am a 16-year-old young person with albinism from Zambia. I thank the Committee for giving young people with albinism the opportunity to speak for themselves during this session.

I speak today not only for myself, but for thousands of children and young people with albinism across Africa whose voices are too often ignored.

Growing up, school and community life were not always easy. In school, some teachers were kind and supportive, but others made me feel as though I did not belong. Some classmates refused to sit with me. Sometimes I sat on the floor because nobody wanted to share a desk with me. I was often mocked,

humiliated, and made to feel different simply because of my skin colour and appearance.

Outside school, children in the community would call me rude names when I walked to school, to the market, or anywhere else. Even today, many children with albinism continue to experience bullying, stigma, isolation, and fear.

Beyond discrimination, children with albinism across Africa continue to face serious threats to their safety and lives. Over the past decade, more than 800 reported attacks against persons with albinism have been documented across over 30 African countries, including killings, mutilations, abductions, and trafficking.

In Zambia, while the situation has improved in recent years due to government and civil society efforts, cases of attempted abductions, grave desecrations, and trafficking linked to harmful beliefs about albinism have still been recorded, reminding us that children with albinism remain at risk and require sustained protection measures.

Honorable Chairperson, one of the greatest challenges facing children with albinism is the lack of access to sunscreen. Sunscreen is not a luxury. Sunscreen is medicine. It protects our skin from sunburn and skin cancer.

I lost my father, who also had albinism, to skin cancer when I was only seven years old because sunscreen was too expensive and not easily available. No child should have to lose a parent because of something that can be prevented.

This challenge is now being worsened by the impacts of climate change. Rising temperatures, increased UV radiation, and prolonged periods of extreme heat across many parts of Africa are significantly increasing the risk of skin damage and skin cancer among persons with albinism. Children with albinism, especially those in rural and low-resource settings, are disproportionately affected because they often lack access to adequate sun protection, shade, and healthcare services.

More than half of persons with albinism in Africa live in rural communities, yet these are often the places where sunscreen is hardest to find. As climate change intensifies, the lack of consistent access to sunscreen and protective care is no longer only a health issue, it is a growing climate justice and child rights concern.

As the Committee continues its important work to protect the rights of African children, we respectfully propose the following considerations:

1. Encourage Member States to include sunscreen as an essential medicine for persons with albinism, promote and invest in its local production, and ensure that it is freely or affordably available in hospitals, clinics, schools, and rural communities.
2. Urge Member States to adopt national action plans that align with the African Union Plan of Action on Albinism (2021–2031) and protect children with albinism from discrimination, violence, trafficking, and harmful practices. We commend Zambia for launching their National Action Plan on Albinism on 17th April 2026.
3. Encourage Member States to strengthen inclusive education systems by ensuring that children with albinism are protected from bullying, provided with reasonable accommodations including large-print learning and examination materials, additional time during exams, and appropriate assistive devices and are treated equally within the school environment.
4. Promote public awareness campaigns to challenge myths and misconceptions about albinism and to foster respect, dignity, and inclusion for children with albinism.
5. Encourage Member States to expand dermatological, low vision, psychosocial, and rehabilitation services for children with albinism, particularly in rural and underserved communities.
6. Finally, we call on the African Union to expedite the appointment of the Special Envoy on Albinism, as this role is critical to ensuring sustained attention, coordination, and protection of the rights of children with albinism across the continent.

The Africa Albinism Network reaffirms its commitment to working with the Committee, Member States, children and young people with albinism to ensure that every child with albinism can live in safety, dignity, equality, and good health.

Thank you.