

AAN/AS/2026/013

14/10/2026

Under The Same Sun OBS493

Africa Albinism Network Statement during the 89th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

Honourable Chairperson, Honourable Commissioners, distinguished delegates,

Under The Same Sun, Africa Albinism Network and over 200 organisations of persons with albinism across Africa wish to draw the attention of the African Commission and all member states present to the disproportionate impact of climate change on persons with disabilities, including persons with albinism.

Across Africa, extreme heat, droughts, floods and water scarcity threaten life, health, education and livelihoods. These threats deepen existing inequalities for people already facing discrimination, poverty and inaccessible services.

For persons with albinism, climate pressures compound an existing vulnerability to ultraviolet radiation and skin cancer. Longer journeys to collect scarce water increases sun exposure, while climate emergencies interrupt access to essential healthcare and sun protection.

Persons with disabilities also encounter inaccessible early warnings, evacuation systems, shelters and water points. Women and girls face additional barriers involving safety, menstrual hygiene and caregiving responsibilities.

Honourable Commissioners,

Skin cancer remains a leading cause of morbidity and mortality among persons with albinism in Africa. Almost every day, we receive reports of persons with albinism battling skin cancer and seeking support from civil society organisations to access life-saving treatment. The situation is deeply concerning, particularly as many of these deaths could be prevented through adequate sun protection, early detection and timely treatment.

AAN/AS/2026/013

14/10/2026

Under The Same Sun OBS493

Allow me to emphasize that skin cancer may be claiming more lives among persons with albinism in Africa than all reported cases of violent attacks combined. Yet, despite the scale of this public health concern, access to affordable sunscreen, skin cancer screening and treatment remains severely limited across the continent.

Climate action must give real effect to the rights guaranteed in the African Charter: the right to life, to health, to equality and non-discrimination, and to a general satisfactory environment. It must also respect the obligations of States under the Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa.

We therefore call on the Commission to urge Member States to:

First, integrate disability, albinism and gender considerations into climate adaptation, disaster preparedness, and water and sanitation programs. Allocate dedicated funding and ensure accessible services, with meaningful participation by persons with disabilities including persons with albinism, particularly women and young people.

Second, countries not yet using the Washington Group Set of Questions should incorporate them into national censuses and surveys to strengthen disability disaggregated data. These should be complemented by a separate question on albinism.

Third, adopt, fund and implement national action plans on albinism in line with the African Union Plan of Action on Ending Attacks and other human rights violations targeting Persons with Albinism, 2021–2031. These plans should explicitly address climate risks, sun protection, accessible healthcare and social protection, with clear responsibilities and measurable targets.

We commend Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania for adopting national action plans, and we urge them to fund these plans adequately and implement them with persons with albinism and their representative organisations. We call on Kenya, Namibia and South Africa to finalise and adopt their

AAN/AS/2026/013

14/10/2026

Under The Same Sun OBS493

draft plans without further delay, and on Uganda to review and renew its expired plan.

Finally, translate WHO's 2025 inclusion of therapeutic broad-spectrum sunscreen in its Model Lists of Essential Medicines into national action. Include sunscreen in national essential medicines lists, allocate procurement budgets and ensure continuous, affordable access for persons with albinism, alongside protective clothing, skin screening and timely cancer treatment.

Honourable Commissioners,

We are gravely concerned by reports that at least 13 persons with albinism, including ten children, have been killed in Madagascar in 2026. We call on the Commission to urge the Government of Madagascar to act now: prevent further attacks, dismantle the networks behind them, and ensure independent investigations and fair trials for everyone responsible, including organisers, financiers and complicit officials. Survivors and affected families must receive protection, support and effective reparations. We further urge Madagascar to adopt and fund a national action plan on albinism in line with the AU Plan of Action, developed with persons with albinism and their representative organisations.

We urge the Commission to monitor these commitments through State reporting and its relevant mechanisms.

Thank you.