



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
GENEVA

NOTE: 153/14

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to refer the latter to the communication number AL ZMB 2/2014 regarding a joint communication sent by the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders dated July 2014 and requests the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to advise the Joint Special Rapporteur herein mentioned of the response from the Government of Zambia on the alleged intentions by the government of Zambia to deregister two International Non-Governmental Organisation namely Dan Church Aid and Norwegian Church Aid for failing to register under the NGO Act No.16 of 2009 within the stipulated time frame. The following are the circumstances that transpired:-

As the Office of the High Commissioner may be aware, so will be the joint Special Rapporteurs, the Government through the Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health commenced the registration of Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) under the NGO Act on 15th July, 2013 for an extended period of 90 working days, which then expired on 11th November, 2013. This was followed by two more extension periods which ran through to 5th May, 2014, as the final deadline upon which NGOs operating in Zambia where expected to have migrated from other regulatory bodies and re-registered under the new law.

Following the expiration of the final extension, the Ministry in accordance with the provisions of the Act in Section 10 (1 & 2) on the prohibition of operation by an NGO not registered in accordance with the NGO Act, communicated to all existing Non-Governmental Organisations (over 100) which had not complied, requesting them to give reasons why they did not register. Failure to which the law was to take its course as provided for in the Act. This move received overwhelming response from the affected NGOs out of which about sixty (60) responded positively indicating the reasons why they failed to register on time and expressed their willingness to comply with the law.

Subsequently, the NGO Registration Board accepted the exoneration of all the organisations that responded and gave approval for them to initiate the registration process. No organisation has, therefore, been deregistered to date as there was

generally no sign of deliberate failure to comply by most of the affected organisation. All the organisations have continued operating whilst working on their re-registration without any disruption of their activities.

In this regard, the two organisation in question; Dan Church Aid and Norwegian Church aid were in fact written to together with all the others and the intention, as may be seen from the above, was never to deregister any organisation, but a procedure demand which required that such follow up be made to ensure that the requirement of the law were adhered to by all organizations concerned.

The Permanent Mission of Zambia will appreciate that this correspondence will settle the issue while the organizations concerned in the spirit of cooperation will adhere to the requirements of the Zambian law.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights at Geneva, the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 22nd September, 2014

The Secretariat
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations Office
Geneva

