



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia
to the United Nations in Geneva

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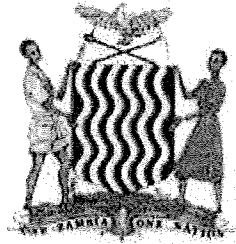
The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva and Vienna presents its compliments to the Special Procedures Branch, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to submit a Report in response to the letter from the Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of Human Rights by Persons with Albinism concerning allegations of discrimination and violence against persons with Albinism in Zambia.

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

Geneva, 29 July, 2026



Special Procedures Branch
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
GENEVA



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

**REPORT ON THE EXHUMATION OF THE REMAINS OF
A PERSON WITH ALBINISM IN SENANGA DISTRICT,
WESTERN PROVINCE IN ZAMBIA**

**TO THE UNITED NATIONS INDEPENDENT EXPERT ON
THE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY PERSONS
WITH ALBINISM**

JULY, 2026

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1.0. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Government of the Republic of Zambia, received correspondence in May, 2026 on alleged desecration of the grave, exhumation and theft of the remains of a woman with albinism in Ngundi Village of Chief Nalonge, Senanga District, Western Province.

Upon receipt of the communication, the Government initiated consultations with relevant institutions, including the Zambia Police Service, the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services through the District Social Welfare Office in Senanga, organizations representing persons with albinism, and other stakeholders, to establish the facts surrounding the reported incident.

Government continues to prioritize coordinated and targeted interventions that address the needs of vulnerable populations. In this regard, particular attention is given to ensuring that persons with albinism are fully protected, empowered, and able to participate meaningfully in all aspects of national development.

Zambia remains committed to protection and promotion of human rights in its constitution, policy and legal frameworks. This entails that any person who takes the life of the other person should be charged of murder under Section 200 of the Penal Code Cap 87 of the laws of Zambia. Article 23 Sub Article 3 of the constitution Cap 1 of the Laws of Zambia provides for protection against discrimination. And Sub Article 3 of the Zambian Constitution provides that, discrimination means affording different treatments to different persons attributable, wholly or mainly to their descriptive descriptions by race, tribe, sex, place of origin, marital status, political opinion, color or creed whereby persons of one such description are subjected to disabilities or restrictions to which persons of another such description are not made subject or are accorded privileges or advantages which are not accorded or persons of another such description.

2.0. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

Multi-sectoral consultative meetings involving Government institutions, law enforcement agencies, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders were convened regarding the Senanga case.

The consultations noted that the existing legislation criminalizes offences relating to grave desecration and related crimes, including trafficking or possession of body parts of persons with albinism where such motives may be established. Further, Part 3 of the constitution of Zambia Chapter 1 of the Laws of Zambia provides for the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual in specific Article II Sub Article (a) to (d) which provides inter alia life to life which includes any person including the right of persons with albinism.

Stakeholders further recommended continued implementation of the National Action Plan on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Albinism and consideration of legislative reforms aimed at strengthening protection and accountability.

The Government has taken note of these recommendations and will continue to review the adequacy of existing legal and policy frameworks, in consultation with relevant institutions and

stakeholders, with a view to strengthening the protection of persons with albinism, consistent with constitutional principles and Zambia's international human rights obligations.

3.0 FINDINGS

2.1. Police Investigations

On 8th January 2026, Senanga Police Station received a report from a named relative to the deceased concerning the alleged unlawful exhumation of the grave of his late sister, a woman with albinism, whose remains together with the coffin had allegedly been removed by unknown persons.

The matter was recorded under Occurrence Book (OB) No. 141/26. Police officers immediately visited the scene and confirmed that the grave had been unlawfully disturbed and that the remains together with the coffin were missing. Consequently, a criminal investigation was instituted immediately.

The Zambia Police Service confirmed that investigations into the matter remain active. Following receipt of the report, police officers visited the scene, documented the incident and commenced investigations.

At the time of compiling the report:

- No suspect has been apprehended;
- Intelligence-led investigations remain ongoing;
- Investigators continue to pursue all available leads;
- Members of the public continue to be encouraged to provide information that may assist with investigations.

The Government wishes to emphasize that this matter is being treated as a serious criminal offence and that investigations will continue until all available investigative avenues have been exhausted.

2.2. Social Welfare Assessment

The Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, through the District Social Welfare Office, conducted a welfare assessment of the affected household.

The assessment established that the deceased was a woman with albinism who had lived with a prolonged mental illness and had been cared for by her brother and his family. The deceased developed mental illness in 2016 and later died on 3rd October, 2025 and was buried on the 4th October 2025. On 8th January 2026, the family discovered that the corpse was exhumed from the grave which was just 10 meters away from the family house.

The family survives mainly through brick molding and had benefited from Government social protection interventions, including the Emergency Cash Transfer due to their vulnerability. Following the reported exhumation, trained Community Case Managers provided psychosocial counselling and emotional support to the family while encouraging continued cooperation with

law enforcement agencies. The Ministry continues to monitor the welfare of the affected household and remains available to provide additional social support where necessary.

2.3. Organizations Representing Persons with Albinism

The Government engaged organizations representing persons with albinism as part of gathering information on the incident. These organizations expressed concern regarding the psychological impact of the incident on the bereaved family and the wider community of persons with albinism. They also advocated for strengthened prevention measures, enhanced community awareness, continued collaboration with law enforcement agencies and sustained protection of persons with albinism.

The Government appreciates the important contribution made by civil society organizations in promoting awareness, supporting affected families and complementing Government efforts to safeguard the rights of persons with albinism.

3.0. EXISTING LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

The Government remains committed to protecting the rights of persons with albinism through existing constitutional, legislative and policy frameworks.

These include:

- The Constitution of the Republic of Zambia, which guarantees equality before the law, non-discrimination, dignity, liberty and security of the person;
- The Persons with Disabilities Act;
- The Penal Code, which criminalizes grave desecration;
- The National Policy on Persons with Disabilities;
- The National Social Protection Policy;
- The National Action Plan on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Albinism; and
- Zambia's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other international human rights instruments.

3.1. The National Action Plan on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Albinism

- In an effort to promote and protect the rights of persons with albinism, the Government in collaboration with stakeholders developed the National Action Plan (NAP) for the protection of persons with albinism.
- The National Action Plan for protection of persons with Albinism 2026-2030 which is Zambia's current strategic framework which coordinates government, civil society and traditional leaders to address stigma, discrimination, violence, health, education and justice gaps.
- Its key priority is to protect human rights violations, protection of life, education, accountability, equality and non-discriminations.

4.0. MEASURES TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT

In response to the incident and as part of its broader commitment to protecting persons with albinism, the Government has undertaken and continues to undertake the following measures:

- Instituted criminal investigations through the Zambia Police Service;
- Conducted a social welfare assessment of the affected household;
- Provided psychosocial support and counselling to the bereaved family;
- Continued monitoring of the family's welfare;
- Engaged organizations representing persons with albinism and other stakeholders;
- Continued implementation of programmes promoting disability inclusion and protection;
- Strengthened community awareness initiatives aimed at addressing stigma, discrimination and harmful beliefs affecting persons with albinism.
- Continued implementation of the National Action Plan on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Albinism.

5.0. CHALLENGES

- The Government recognizes that investigations of this nature are often complex, particularly where offenders remain unidentified; and
- The persistence of harmful myths and misconceptions surrounding albinism also continues to pose challenges that require sustained community education, strengthened law enforcement, enhanced coordination among institutions and continued collaboration with civil society organizations.

6.0. WAY FORWARD

The Government remains committed to:

- Ensuring that investigations continue until with those responsible for such acts are identified, and prosecuted in accordance with the law;
- Providing continued psychosocial support and social welfare services to the affected family;
- Strengthening coordination among Government institutions, law enforcement agencies, traditional leaders, civil society organisations and organisations of persons with albinism;
- Intensifying public education programmes aimed at eliminating harmful myths, stigma and discrimination against persons with albinism;
- Continuing implementation of the National Action Plan on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Albinism;
- Considering, through appropriate Government processes, the adequacy of the existing legal framework in responding to emerging forms of violence and harmful practices affecting persons with albinism; and
- Continuing constructive engagement with United Nations human rights mechanisms, including the Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of Human Rights by Persons with Albinism.

7.0. CONCLUSION

The Government of the Republic of Zambia remains steadfast in its commitment to protecting the rights, dignity and security of persons with albinism, preventing discrimination and harmful practices, strengthening the legal and policy environment, and ensuring that perpetrators of criminal acts are held accountable in accordance with the law.

Further, the Government reiterates that it treats the alleged unlawful exhumation of the remains of a woman with albinism and any other similar cases with the utmost seriousness. The matter remains under active investigation by the Zambia Police Service, and all investigative leads continue to be pursued. At the same time, the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services provided psychosocial support and continues to monitor the welfare of the affected family.

The Government appreciates the mandate of the Independent Expert in promoting and protecting the rights of persons with albinism and reaffirms its unwavering commitment to upholding the dignity, equality, security and fundamental human rights of all persons without discrimination, including persons with albinism