



### **THRDC Statement on the Unlawful Detention of Wachokonozi Podcast Founders**

On 20th June 2025, Mr. Joseph Mrindoko and Mr. Jackson Kabalo founders of the podcast *Wachokonozi* were arrested by the Police in Arumeru District, Arusha Region. Following their arrest, their personal property, including mobile phones and cameras, were confiscated. Alarming, no family members or associates were informed about their whereabouts or the specific Police station where they were being held.

In response, the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC), in collaboration with the President of the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS), instructed Arusha-based advocates Ally Mhyellah and Simon Mbwabo to urgently intervene and locate the detained individuals for purposes of legal representation. Despite confirmation by the Regional Police Commander (RPC) of Arusha Region that Mr. Mrindoko and Mr. Kabalo were in Police custody, efforts by relatives, friends, and lawyers to access the two detainees were persistently obstructed. Police officers repeatedly refused to disclose the place of detention.

It was only today, 26th June 2025 after nearly a week of detention that Advocate Ally Mhyellah after meeting with the RPC and the Deputy Regional Crimes Officer. He was then granted access to the detainees, who were being held at Diplomatic Police Station in Arusha. Advocate Mhyellah has since made concerted efforts to secure their release on Police bail. However, Police officers declined the request, alleging that Mr. Mrindoko and Mr. Kabalo will be arraigned in court tomorrow, 27th June 2025, on charges related to cyber offences.

THRDC expresses deep concern over the blatant violation of due process and the constitutional rights of Mr. Kabalo and Mr. Mrindoko. Their prolonged and secretive detention without charge or access to legal counsel for nearly a week violates the Criminal Procedure Act, which stipulates that no person shall be detained in Police custody for more than 24 hours without being brought before a court of law or released on Police bail. Such conduct is also contrary to the Police General Orders, the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, and regional and international human rights instruments to which Tanzania is a signatory, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

#### **We therefore:**

1. **Strongly urge** the Tanzania Police Force to release Mr. Kabalo and Mr. Mrindoko unconditionally and immediately;
2. **Call upon** the Inspector General of Police (IGP) to investigate and hold accountable those responsible for this unlawful detention;
3. **Remind** the Police Force of their obligation to respect due process and uphold the rule of law in line with both domestic and international legal frameworks;

4. **Appeal** to human rights institutions, civil society organizations, the media, and the general public to stand in solidarity in defending the rights and freedoms of journalists, content creators, and all citizens.

THRDC remains committed to the protection of human rights defenders and the promotion of justice, transparency, and accountability in Tanzania. THRDC believes that justice delayed is justice denied, human rights are not a privilege they are a guarantee.

Issued by:

*Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC)*

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

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