



NEWSLETTER

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TANZANIA HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS COALITION (THRDC) 10TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Conducted on: 8th December 2021

Mode: Physical and Online Meeting

Participants: 144 member organizations (Represented by 54 female and 90 males)



EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

Happy New Year 2022!

It is our sincere hope that 2021 was full of achievements for you and your organizations. For us as THRDC, our team managed to end the year on a high note where we managed to conduct an Annual General Meeting on 8th December 2021. During the meeting, our member organizations got a platform to contemplate on various challenges which face them as human rights defenders while at the same time inaugurating the new Board elected; among other activities conducted by Members were to endorse the 2021 financial report, annual activities report from the board as well as to endorse new members who had applied for membership to the Coalition.

The year 2021 has been successful and despite the challenges, members have been able to play their role well to address human rights violations in their areas. It is our greatest hope as a Coalition that 2022 will be better. Allow me to drop my pen and as usual, invite you to take a glance and write a line or two in case you need to tell us something in regard to the newsletter.

Enjoy your reading,

**Advocate Onesmo Olengurumwa,
THRDC National Coordinator.**

THRDC conducts its AGM On 8thDecember, 2021.

On December 8, THRDC conducted an Annual General Meeting for its members within the United Republic of Tanzania (Tanzania mainland and the Zanzibar archipelagos). During the meeting, members managed to contemplate through all the agenda, endorsing minutes from the previous AGM, as well as seeing the status of implementation from the previous agenda, and the financial report for the year 2021. Other agendas were to endorse a board report for the year 2021, inaugurating a new branch from the Zanzibar archipelagos to include Pemba and Unguja as well as to endorse a new elected board while at the same time awarding outgoing board members. Among discussions conducted were on the aftermath of THRDC after the closure of its accounts last year. THRDC has more than 200 members within its 11 zones namely the East Coast, Central, Southern Coast, Southern Highlands, Southern, Western, West Lake, East Lake, Northern as well as the Zanzibar (Pemba and Unguja zones) respectively. The AGM was the 10th ever since the inception of the Coalition where it brought together 144 members with 54 being female while 90 were male.



THRDC members proudly display the 2021 THRDC board report during the 10th Annual General Meeting

Former Rt Judge of the High Court of Tanzania to chair THRDC Board for 3 years

Rtd. Hon. Joaquine De-mello, retired Judge and former commissioner for the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG) in Tanzania is now the new Chair for the THRDC Board of Directors. De-mello, a renowned human rights activist in the country, will serve the Coalition for three years, subject to renewal.

The former Rt Judge will take charge of eight (8) other board members, four (4) among them being new members in the team. The chair will be viced by Mr Hassan Khamis Juma, who has more than 40 years of experience in management positions in Civil Society Organizations and the Public Sector. Mr. Hassan is the current Executive Director of **Association of Non Governmental Organization of Zanzibar (ANGOZA)**.

The four (4) new members are Angela Benedicto, an ardent advocate for domestic workers' rights also known for her stance to address human trafficking in the Lake Zone through her organization named '**WoteSawa**'. Angela Benedicto brings with her more than 10 years' experience in the field of human rights. Mr. Edward Porokwa, an activist with a good track record in advocating for pastoralists rights within the Maasai community. Porokwa has more than 20 years' experience in the field of human rights through his organization named '**The Pastoralists Indigenous Non Governmental Organization's Forum**'. Dr. Rose Reuben, a gender activist and a media Guru is also one of the board members with more than 20 years of experience as a journalist and gender activist. Dr. Rose is currently an Executive Director of **Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA)**. Mr. Silas Nyumba is also within the newly elected board members and is a human rights activist who brings with him experience as an accountant and an expert in financial management among others. Mr. Silas is currently the head of finance and administration at **Tanzania Women Lawyers Association (TAWLA)**.

Others to serve as board members are Maxence Mello (Executive Director - Jamii Forums), Edwin Soko (Journalist and Chairperson of Mwanza Press Club), and Jamila Juma (Executive Director of the Zanzibar Female Lawyers Association (ZAFELA)).

The Board of Directors plays a supervisory and advisory role on the day-to-day activities of the Coalition. The other role is to hire and fire the Secretariat as well as to provide a strategic direction for the organization.

One must be a staunch human rights activist with an excellent track record before they can become board members within the Coalition.



THRDC new board members listen attentively to Hon Dr. John Jingu, Permanent Secretary within the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (not in pic) as he issues his remarks during the 10th Annual General Meeting. Seated from left are Silas Nyumba (Board member), Hassan Juma (Board member), Onesmo Olungurumwa (THRDC National Coordinator), Hon. Joaquine De-mello (Board Chairperson), Angela Benedicto (Board member), Edwin Soko (Board member), and Rose Reuben (Board member).



THRDC's new board of directors in a group photo with Hon Dr. John Jingu during the 10th Annual General Meeting. Standing from the left are Silas Nyumba (Board member), Hassan Juma (Board member), Onesmo Olungurumwa (THRDC National Coordinator), Dr. John Jingu (Permanent Secretary-MoHCDGEC), Hon. Joaquine De-mello (Board Chairperson), Angela Benedicto (Board member), Edwin Soko (Board member), and

Board pays homage to partners for support during trials

The outgoing Board of Directors has paid homage to development partners and members for being there for the Coalition during their trials last year when the government froze its accounts for eight (8) months, leading to suspension of all of its activities.

Outgoing Board Chairperson, Ms. Vicky Ntetema showered praise and gratuity to the latter while issuing her remarks to grace the 10th Annual General Meeting in Dar es Salaam on December 8, 2021.

“I would like to thank our development partners as well as Members who were there during our trials last year. Members were resilient where they continued to promote and protect human rights where some have won an accolade despite all the challenges that we faced in the year 2021,” said Ntetema.

She utilized the platform to thank the THRDC secretariat, inclusive of the National Coordinator for the resilience and tolerance during the eight months when their organization was forced to halt due



Ms. Vicky Ntetema an outgoing board chairperson

In another move, the Government has hailed NGOs for being a voice for the voiceless, being a link between the government and citizens.

Dr. John Jingu, Permanent Secretary within the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children made the call during his concluding speech at the end of the AGM. ***“We are building one house, so it is ideal that we work together. CSOs are a very important sector in the nation’s development, lets collectively work efficiently in our areas to add to the country’s development,” said Jingu.***

Dr. Jingu stressed upon the need for CSOs to adhere to the laws and regulations of the country in their work, saying failure to do so would see them get into trouble.

THRDC awards its outgoing Board of Directors

Outgoing Board Members of the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition have won an accolade for their outstanding performance and resilience within their 6 years' tenure. The call to that end was made by the Chairperson for the Board of Directors, Ms. Vicky Ntetema, while gracing the 10th Annual General Meeting. "Serving the Coalition has been quite a milestone where I am proud that we are leaving at a time where the Coalition is stronger than ever. My special gratuity should go to all board members for their advice and support during the 6 years of our service," said Ms. Ntetema. She paid a special tribute to the Board's vice Chairperson, Mr. Michael Kyande who she said has been representing her in the meetings during her stay abroad. During the AGM, the THRDC gave special awards to the 4 Board Members who officially retired their service on that day. The Board has been there through trials where last year, the Coalition suffered eight months ban where their accounts were frozen, halting all of its activities. THRDC is a membership organization in the United Republic of Tanzania inclusive of the Zanzibar Archipelagos with over 200 members, mainly human rights defenders. Under the THRDC Constitution, the Board serves for 3 years subjected to renewal for one term.



Musa Juma (L) receives an award behalf Deogratus Nsokolo who is an outgoing board member (L) from Dr. John Jingu Permanent Secretary within the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children. Flanking them is the THRDC Coordinator Advocate Onesmo Olungurumwa.



Michereli Machumbana (L) receives an award on behalf Christina Kamili who is an outgoing board member from Dr. John Jingu Permanent Secretary within the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children Flanking them is the THRDC Coordinator Advocate Onesmo Olungurumwa.



Alfred Mboya displays an award he received on behalf of Kenneth Simbaya who is an outgoing board member within the THRDC during the AGM



Odero Charles Odero (L) receives an award on behalf Ms. Vicky Ntetema who is an outgoing board chairperson from Dr. John Jingu Permanent Secretary within the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children Flanking them is the THRDC Coordinator Advocate Onesmo Olungurumwa.



An outgoing board member, who was a vice chairperson of the board, Mr. Michael Kyande in a flamboyant mood after he received his award for his services as a board member of THRDC.

Public told to take care of children, elderly, women

The public has been called upon to protect collective rights of children, elderly and women. Dr. John Jingu, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children made the remarks in Dar es Salaam recently while concluding an AGM conducted by the THRDC. “Our role as a Ministry is to work with the government and other stakeholders to promote and protect our interests, one of which is to protect human rights. Human rights are in various ways, individual and collective, for children, elderly and women. Children have got the right to be taken care of but as adults we cannot demand the same. The elderly has got the right to be taken care of, to be protected,” said Dr. Jingu.

He paid an accolade to the retired judge Joaquin D’mello for being nominated as the Board chairperson saying it was food for thought for elderly persons. “Retirement doesn’t mean being tired as some tend to become weak upon retirement and it is normally not because of falling sick but rather the psychological aspect. Retirement means changing your position and finding time to do what you wish while working means working on something that one wants. I believe the judge is here because she wants to be there. We all must prepare ourselves to retire,” stressed Dr. Jingu.



Dr. John Jingu Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children issues his remarks to THRDC members, board members, and secretariat as he was invited as a guest to the 10th Annual General Meeting of the Coalition.

For her part, outgoing Board of Directors’ Chairperson Vicky Ntetema said despite the several achievements, all has not always been well within the CSOs saying the government has in recent years come with draconian laws which have seen the latter fail to operate with ease. ***“The Coalition plans to convene meetings between the government and CSOs to enable them to discuss the various challenges which face them ranging from taxation and laws in place,”*** said the outgoing Board Chair. The outgoing Board Chair has served the organization for 6 consecutive years.

Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) called to beef up efforts to protect children's rights

HRDs have been called upon to add more efforts to address child abuse, a vice which has taken toll in the country in recent days. Dr. John Jingu (Permanent Secretary – Ministry of Health; Community Development Department) made the call recently during his concluding remarks at an AGM conducted by the THRDC.

“Child abuse is one of the major challenges in the country in terms of human rights. We need to collaborate to address it as children are the future of today's and tomorrow's society. Tanzania has got a law on children but the law itself is not enough. Let those who violate human rights know that doing so is wrong. NGOs are key stakeholders as they are the voice for the voiceless,” **said Dr. Jingu.**

He called upon the need to increase efforts to do away with harmful traditional customs such as **Chagulaga Mayo**, a custom where young girls masqueraded on the street for men to pick a bride at any age that they should be at school. *“CSOs should work hard to address harmful tradition customs such as female genital mutilation. As human rights defenders, you should also make sure that you respect the rule of the law as you conduct your activities. You should also involve the government as failure to do so leads to lack of trust,”* **said Dr. Jingu.**



A group photo of children shows a sign of winning violations in their societies, the children are attended by a member organization named Hope for Girls and Women located in Mara region.



THRDC members listen attentively to the ongoing discussions during the AGM

HRDs have been praised for taking precautionary measures against the COVID- 19 pandemic. Vicky Mtetema, outgoing Board Chairperson showered the praise recently during her speech to officiate the 10th AGM in Dar es Salaam. According to the outgoing chairperson, members have been in the forefront to take precautionary measures to protect themselves against the COVID- 19 infection where they have been engaging in awareness creation campaigns on the vice while at the same disseminating brochures on the same.

The outgoing chair used the platform to pay tribute to the secretariat for its move to establish an office in Zanzibar while at the same time thanking members and all well-wishers who had made a contribution to support prisoners in Zanzibar.

Among activities conducted in 2021 by the THRDC is publication of compliance toolkits. [NGOs Compliance Toolkit](#) as well as a [CSOs Tax Toolkit](#) to create members' awareness on various laws and regulations guiding the sector from its registration to reporting stage. The toolkits were prepared during the year 2021 to create members' awareness on

the governing laws and regulations as well as to keep them abreast on any amendments done in the year. The move according to the outgoing board Chairperson is part of the advocacy strategy to create law reforms especially on draconian pieces through a dialogue with all involving parties, CSOs on the other hand and the government where the duos can discuss the challenges on the said legislations.

Additionally, Ms. Ntetema noted with appreciation over the increased collaborations between the Coalition, the Government entities, and Human Rights stakeholders. She said, "2021 was a year of strengthening collaboration and engagement with the government authorities. The Coalition coordinated more than 300 institutions and jointly drafted a [Result Based Action Plan](#) for an Implementation of the Five Years National Development Plan 2021]22 – 2025]26 Phase iii, which stands as a Tanzanian CSOs roadmap, congratulations for that".