

## **PUBLIC STATEMENT**

### **A YEAR ASSESSMENT OF THE EVENTS OF 29TH OCTOBER 2025: DEMANDING TRUTH, ACCOUNTABILITY AND JUSTICE**

29th October 2026, Dar es Salaam

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Today, 29th October 2026, we remember those who lost their lives in the events of 29th October 2025, during and after the General Election. We stand together with the survivors, the injured, the families of those still missing, and everyone who was affected. Seeking the truth about what happened, making sure that justice is served, and helping them rebuild their lives must be a priority for the Government and for the nation. Many people have returned to their daily routines, and life appears to have gone back to normal. But that does not mean the healing has come. The pain and the need for justice remain.

In our joint statement of 7th November 2025, we condemned the human rights violations and called on the Government to allow an independent investigation, to hold those responsible accountable, to enable families to identify and honorably lay to rest their loved ones, to provide compensation, and to protect human rights. One year later, we return to those demands to assess the steps taken and their outcomes for victims and their families.

#### **2.0 Assessment of the Current Situation and Actions Taken**

##### **2.1 Human Impact and the Situation of Affected Families**

One year after the events of 29th October, families who lost their loved ones are still waiting for the truth about the circumstances of the deaths, the whereabouts of the bodies, and the action taken against those responsible. The report of Justice Chande Commission recorded 518 deaths. It also stated that approximately 700 people were unaccounted for, and that about 39 bodies had been identified by relatives at health facilities but could not be located afterwards. These figures show the gravity of the problem and the importance of continuing investigations that enable every family to receive answers.

In our assessment, we, the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), have not seen sufficient information to show that the Government has established and implemented a comprehensive national program for compensation, medical care, mental health services, legal assistance and social support for all affected families. The CSOs therefore call on the Government to make public the steps

taken, the families that have benefited, the criteria for assistance, and how the remaining claims will be addressed.

## 2.2 Accountability and Legal Action Against Perpetrators

Although Justice Chande Commission reported 518 deaths and described the scale of the harm, its report did not clearly name the individuals or authorities responsible for the deaths, those who ordered or permitted the use of excessive force, or the institutions and leaders who failed in their duties. Nor did it give sufficient direction on how the evidence gathered should be referred for investigation and prosecution, so that legal accountability is pursued fairly and impartially. To date, there is insufficient information to show that criminal action has been taken against those responsible for the violations.

The CSOs were not satisfied with the decision to establish another Commission, known as the Justice Lila Commission, after Justice Chande Commission had completed its work. Our position was not one of opposition to a thorough investigation or to the search for truth. It concerned the necessity, legitimacy and effectiveness of creating another body whose mandate could overlap significantly with matters that had already been investigated. In the view of the CSOs, establishing another Commission risked duplicating work, consuming further time and resources, and delaying direct steps toward legal accountability.

The fundamental question is why the issues raised by Justice Chande Commission were not addressed by submitting the existing evidence and recommendations to the bodies with legal authority, and by ensuring that further investigation is carried out where necessary, instead of establishing another Commission with a largely similar scope.

## 2.3 The Truth About the Number of Deaths, Injuries and Missing Persons

The CSOs acknowledge that the Justice Chande Commission reported 518 deaths. However, the CSOs' analysis of the Commission's work found that it relied largely on official sources such as the police and health facilities, even though some of these institutions had been named in complaints about the use of force, the removal of the injured and the dead, and the withholding of information. The Commission itself acknowledged that some deaths and injuries may not have been reported. The CSOs therefore consider that this figure cannot be treated as a final count in the absence of independence and thorough verification.

Verification should draw on hospital and health facility records, accounts from families, burial records, witness testimony, medical evidence, and digital material that can be authenticated. Cases of missing persons and unrecovered bodies

should be investigated separately and as a matter of urgency, with the safety, privacy and dignity of families protected. Discrepancies between the figures given by different sources should be resolved through transparent and scientific methods and should not be used as grounds for dismissing the claims.

### 3.0 Continued Restriction of Civil and Democratic Rights

We, the CSOs, remain concerned about the violations and the shrinking of civic space that have continued even after the events of 29th October 2025. We have continued to witness excessive use of force, particularly by state organs, arrests that disregard the law, abductions and disappearances, and the suppression of media freedom. We were saddened by the events leading up to the Saba Saba commemorations of July 2026, in particular the statement of the Minister for Home Affairs dated 26th June 2026 suspending permits for public rallies of political parties, and the arrest of at least 130 people who were charged with terrorism offences.

This situation shows the importance of ensuring that citizens can express political opinions, assemble peacefully, access information and hold leaders accountable without fear of arbitrary arrest, intimidation or the unlawful use of force. The Government should ensure that any restriction relating to human rights is grounded in law and is proportionate to a legitimate aim.

### 4.0 Position and Recommendations of the CSOs

For approximately one year now, we, the CSOs, have seen no significant change on the fundamental issues of truth and accountability. There is still insufficient transparency about the steps taken to follow up on the evidence, to identify and hold accountable those responsible for the deaths and other violations, or to give families answers about the missing and the bodies that have not been recovered. The establishment of another Commission has not brought a clear and measurable change in legal accountability. The public needs to see specific actions grounded in evidence, not a proliferation of processes without clear outcomes.

In view of the scale of the harm and the state of accountability, we, the CSOs, make the following recommendations:

1. **Compensation for survivors and affected families:** The Government should establish a Special Compensation Fund for survivors, particularly those left with permanent disabilities, and for families who lost their loved ones. The Fund should provide appropriate compensation, medical care, assistive devices, psychological and social support, mental health services and legal

assistance. The criteria for receiving compensation should be clear, the claims process should be simple, and the use of funds should be independently audited.

2. **Truth, accountability and independent investigation:** The report of the Justice Chande Commission and the evidence gathered should be submitted to the relevant constitutional and legal authorities for appropriate action. All those found responsible for killings or the use of excessive force should be held accountable in accordance with the law and without bias.
3. **An independent Commission for Truth, Accountability and National Reconciliation:** The CSOs call for an independent and inclusive process to establish the truth, to make public what happened, and to strengthen national reconciliation. The process should be led by people of integrity who are trusted by all sides, and should involve victims, families, political parties, CSOs, religious institutions, youth and other social groups. Reconciliation should not be a substitute for criminal accountability where evidence shows that wrongdoing occurred.
4. **A National Day of Remembrance and mourning:** 29th October of every year should be declared a national day of remembrance and mourning for the victims of the 2025 events, in honor of those who lost their lives and the families affected.
5. **Searching for the missing and providing answers to families:** A special, independent and accountable mechanism should be established to investigate allegations of abductions and disappearances, to determine the whereabouts of those missing, and to clarify the circumstances of their disappearance.
6. **Constitutional and electoral reform:** The Government should address the root causes identified by the Justice Chande Commission, including the demands for a new Constitution and for free, fair, transparent and credible elections. The reform process should be inclusive, follow a clear timeline, and be carried out with the participation of citizens and all stakeholders. The CSOs emphasize the importance of reaching a national consensus and of addressing accountability for the 2025 events alongside preparations for long-term reform.
7. **Protecting civic freedoms and the rule of law:** The Government should ensure that the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, access to information and participation in democratic processes are protected. The media and human rights defenders should be able to work without

intimidation. Arrests, restrictions on gatherings and security measures should comply with the law, due process and human rights standards.

8. **National dialogue and international cooperation:** The Government should initiate sincere and inclusive dialogue with political parties, CSOs, religious institutions, victims and other key groups in order to rebuild trust and solidarity. The international community should continue to support efforts toward truth, justice, healing and reform in a manner that respects the voice and ownership of Tanzanians.
9. **Urgent action and transparency in implementation:** The Government should make public an accountability implementation plan that identifies the responsible institutions, the steps to be taken, the timeframe for implementation, and how the public will be informed of progress. Implementation reports should be issued regularly and should include progress on investigations and accountability measures; the number of claims concerning missing persons that have been processed and the responses given to families; the number of families and injured persons who have received support or compensation; and the steps taken to protect freedom of expression and assembly.
10. **Digital rights:** The Government should make public the legal basis and the authority that ordered the internet shutdown in October 2025, and should give a clear written commitment that it will not again shut down the internet or block networks in general, in line with the call of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (Resolution No. 640 of 2025) to ensure that the internet is available without restriction during elections. In addition, the Electronic and Postal Communications Act and its regulations should be amended so that any restriction on communications has a legal basis, is necessary and proportionate, is limited in time, is publicly announced together with its reasons, and can be challenged in court.

## 5.0 Conclusion

One year after the events of 29th October 2025, Tanzania still faces a moral and legal obligation to give answers to families, to establish the full truth, to hold those responsible accountable, and to restore public trust.

We, the CSOs, emphasize that justice and reconciliation must go together. True reconciliation requires that the truth be made known, that victims be respected and supported, that perpetrators be held accountable in accordance with the law, and that structural reforms be carried out to protect human rights and prevent such events from recurring. May 29th October not only be a remembrance of pain,



but a catalyst for building a Tanzania of justice, accountability, equality and the rule of law.

**Signed by:**

1. Legal and Human Rights Centre
2. Twaweza
3. Foundation For Civil Society
4. JamiiAfrica
5. Msichana Initiative
6. Tanganyika Law Society
7. Internet Governance Tanzania Working Group