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# Human Rights Commission

*Head Office*

**13<sup>th</sup> February, 2025**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION WELCOMES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIANA NALUPYA CENTRE FOR CIRCUMSTANTIAL CHILDREN**

The Human Rights Commission commends the Government for establishing a Centre in Lusaka where circumstantial children and their incarcerated mothers will be kept away from the female correctional facility which has a living environment that is unsafe to the physical and mental well-being of the children. A circumstantial child is a child under the age of four years who is born in a correctional facility or brought into the facility by virtue of the mother's incarceration.

The Commission has been advocating for enhanced care for circumstantial children and support to their mothers, including pregnant inmates, as the correctional facilities in which they are accommodated, together with other female inmates, are overcrowded and not suitable for their wellbeing.

The Commission has observed that correctional facilities were not built to accommodate female inmates and their children and that this has a bearing on the mental development of children whose behaviour is influenced by the negative environment to which they are exposed. The Commission is concerned that the experiences of these children in their formative years will have significant impact on their future development and adult lives.

Therefore, the step taken by the Government to establish the Diana Nalupya Centre as an alternative for the custody and care of female inmates and circumstantial children is commendable as it will allow the children, like other children in the community, to live with their mothers and grow up in an environment that is safe. The Commission is hopeful that the facility will be adequately supported to address all the needs of the circumstantial children, including education, health care, nutrition and recreation.

The Commission urges the Government to expedite the setting up of more child care centres and places of safety as provided for under the Children's Code Act, No. 12 of 2022, for purposes of enhancing the protection of children, especially those that may be victims of abuse and other human rights violations.

*(Original signed)*

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**HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**