All communications to be addressed to the Director-General

P. O. Box 33812, LUSAKA

Tel : +260-21-1- 251 327/57

Fax : +260-21-1-251 342

Human Rights Commission

Head Office

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PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CONDEMNS ACTS OF VIOLENCE WITHIN THE SUPREME COURT PRECINCTS

The Human Rights Commission ("the Commission") has noted with grave concern reports of violence perpetrated by suspected political party cadres within the precincts of the Supreme Court of Zambia.

The Commission condemns this act in the strongest terms. The Judiciary is the cornerstone of the rule of law, the protection of human rights, and the administration of justice. Any act of violence, intimidation, or disorderly conduct within court premises constitutes a direct attack on judicial independence, the rule of law, and the constitutional rights of all persons to access justice in a safe and dignified environment.

Under Articles 11 and 118 of the Constitution of Zambia, and international human rights instruments to which Zambia is a party, the State has an obligation to guarantee the safety, security, and independence of the courts and all persons within them. Violence and disorderly conduct within court premises undermines public confidence in the justice system and erodes democratic governance.

In this regard, the Commission wishes to state that:

1. Violence has no place in a democratic society, and more so within the precincts of the highest court in the land;
2. All persons, regardless of political affiliation, are equal before the law and subject to due process;
3. The Zambia Police Service must conduct prompt, thorough, impartial, and transparent investigations into the incident and ensure that all the identifiable perpetrators of violence are immediately held accountable in accordance with the law; and

4. Political party leadership should exercise restraint and ensure their members and supporters respect the authority and independence of judicial institutions.

The Commission further calls upon the Judiciary and the Zambia Police Service to strengthen security measures around court premises to prevent recurrence, and urges all stakeholders to refrain from any acts that may be perceived as interference with judicial processes.

About the Human Rights Commission

The Human Rights Commission is an independent National Human Rights Institution established under Article 230 of the Constitution of Zambia and operationalised through the Human Rights Commission Act, No. 4 of 2024 and the Access to Information Act, No. 24 of 2023. Its mandate includes promoting and protecting human rights, investigating human rights violations and abuses, monitoring the observance of human rights, and conducting human rights education. For more information, visit www.hrc.org.zm.

(Original Signed)

Dr Pamela Towela Sambo
CHAIRPERSON
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION