

**SPEECH BY HON. PRINCIPAL JUDGE (Retired) AMIRI
RAMADHAN MANENTO, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOOD GOVERNANCE
DURING THE MEETING WITH THE SPECIAL
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-
GENERAL ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN ON 18th
SEPTEMBER, 2011 AT HAKI HOUSE DAR-ES SALAAM -
TANZANIA.**

**Honourable,
Special Representative of the Secretary-General (UN) on Violence against Children,
Commissioners of the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance,
Permanent secretaries
Distinguished Representatives of UN agencies,
CHRAGG Staff,
Invited Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

On behalf of the Commission for Human Rights and, Good Governance and, on my own behalf, it is a great pleasure for me to welcome you here this morning. I thank all of you who have come to join hands with us to receive our guest and discuss issues that surround and affect our children in our country. The fact that, all of you have taken the time to be here reflects your commitment in promoting and protecting children's rights and their welfare in our country.

Hon. Guest, SRSG,

As you are aware, the Commission for Human Rights and, Good Governance (CHRAGG) is an independent government department, established under the Paris Principles as the National focal point institution for the promotion and, protection of human rights and, duties as well as principles of good governance in Tanzania. The

Commission was established under Article 129 (1) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of 1977 as amended by Act No. 3 of 2000. The Commission became operational as of 1st July 2001 after the coming into force of the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance Act No. 7 of 2001.

CHRAGG is both the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) and the office of the Ombudsman, with broad mandate to promote human rights and, principles of good governance, through public education, human rights training, advocacy and, research in collaboration with key stakeholders.

Hon. Guest, SRSG,

Among the roles of the Commission for Human Rights and, Good Governance is to ensure that the general public including children is not subjected to violation of human rights and, principles of good governance committed by both public and private authorities and individuals. Promotion and protection of children's rights is very essential because rights of children are also human rights. We need not over-emphasise the fact that the Commission gives utmost priority to the promotion and protection of children's rights in accordance with national laws, regional and international treaties and conventions. The Commission has endeavored to remain vigilant in the fight against abuses and violations of children who are more than often amongst the most vulnerable groups in society and almost half the country's population. In its endeavour to meeting the obligation of promoting and protecting children's rights more effectively CHRAGG, has established within the Commission, a children's desk working closely with national and international agencies dealing with children. This is however, in line with the 2002 CRC General Comment on recommendations, requiring the establishment of these desks.

A number of complaints from children themselves and, from adult on behalf of children have been and continue to be received totaling one hundred and thirty one (131). Most of the complaints registered are based on **Physical, Sexual and Emotional Violence**.

Hon. Guest, SRSG,

The Commission in collaboration with UNICEF has conducted an extensive research on children in places of detention, prisons and remands. The findings of the report which will be availed to you has revealed shortfalls and challenges to be addressed by the government on the best way of handling and dealing with children in conflict with the laws.

The Commission has launched different programs including yearly commemorations of human rights days 10th December in which different themes concerning children's rights displayed. For example, last year's theme was "*Children rights are human rights*". This measure helped the Commission to create awareness in the society in as far as protection of children rights in concerned.

Hon. Guest, SRSG,

Owing to limitations pertaining to mindsets, culture and traditions amongst the public the Commission, conduct awareness and sensitization campaigns via the media, TV and Radio programs inclusive

Commission has conducted public inquiries on children abuse in eleven districts in Tanzania mainland and six in Zanzibar. It has also conducted public enquiry on elimination of child labour in three 3 districts.

Commission has conducted capacity building to staff and other stakeholders on child rights to equip and enhance their knowledge and competencies. The participatory process of Child Act of 2009 drafting saw the Commission in the forefront and now its existence and implementation.

With profound gratitude the Commission enjoys great support from UNICEF, in supply of books which are user friendly to children, let alone financial resources in terms of funding.

Hon. Guest SRSG,

Challenges facing the Commission are:-

- Inadequate financial resources have affected the Commission in fulfilling its functions, due to dependency of government on limited budgetary allocation.
- Harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), unsafe circumcision for girls and boys, early marriages and early pregnancy are also rampant in the country thus deterring efforts in enhancing children's rights.
- The mishandling of children in detention places and the entire juvenile systems is still wanting and needs to be timely addressed.

Hon. Guest, SRSG,

Last but not least, allow me to thank you again for agreeing to meet with the staff of the Commission irrespective of the fact that you have just arrived in the country. . Secondly, I thank the employees of the Commission and the media for attending this welcome meeting of our guest on a public holiday when they were supposed to attend their personal and individual functions.

To conclude, I look forward to work hand in hand with all of you to make sure that child abuse, violence against children is eliminated and provide better environment for Tanzanian Children. Let us join force in the spirit of making this world a better place to be.

Thank you for listening.