



The Benenson Society

13 June has been named by the United Nations as International Albinism Awareness Day to highlight the plight of albinos especially in Africa.

While we generally associate human rights violations with political power and ideologies, occasionally much simpler issues present themselves. In a number of African countries superstitions surround albinos and alleged magical properties to their bodies parts. Thus albinos, and especially albino children, can be maimed or killed for body parts that are used in ritual ceremonies.

On February 20 a five-year-old albino girl was killed and dismembered in Burundi.

On May 5 the severed head of a nine-year-old victim was discovered 20km from his home in Malawi. Indeed, the UN has warned that Malawi's albinos are at risk of "total extinction" amid escalating attacks against them for their body parts.

In Tanzania, too, albinos have been killed in recent years, though the government has taken some action to protect them.



It is difficult to know how to speak up for this small community of albinos, which has no political significance and whose plight is so easily overlooked in a world abounding in 'big' issues.

There is an organization, Under the Same Sun, which promotes the cause of people with albinism (PWA), and it has a website and Facebook page (along with some good videos. .

While Malawi is a very small country with little diplomatic representation you might seek to make contact where possible **urging the Malawi government to immediately take steps to ensure the safety and security of people with albinism and their families, especially in border districts, and provide much needed protection for this vulnerable group who are increasingly being targeted for their body parts.**

Malawi does have a Mission to the European Union.

In Australia there is a Consulate;

493-495 Little Bourke St
Melbourne 3000
Consul@malawi.com.au
03 99887766

Or you might like to contact the **African Union**, an organization representing all African nations, and register your concern about the plight of Albinos in a number of its member states, especially in Malawi – go to its website and then to Contacts and there is provision to email a message.