



Statement on the situation in Tanzania: “Rule of law and the freedom of political activity in Tanzania must be guaranteed”

The International Democrat Union IDU and the Democrat Union of Africa DUA are gravely concerned about latest developments in Tanzania, where a political-motivated court ruling has attempted to hinder the activities of CHADEMA, the leading opposition party in the country.

On Tuesday night, a court in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania convicted legislators from our member-party CHADEMA, including parliamentary opposition leader and Chairman Freeman Mbowe, Secretary General John Mnyika, the Deputy Secretary General, the head of the women’s wing, and other legislators for making “seditious” statements and imposed three-years jail terms or fines totaling 350 million Tanzanian Shillings (US\$152,000).

This court ruling is the latest in a series of measures against CHADEMA by the regime of President Magufuli for the purpose of silencing political dissents. In recent years, CHADEMA and its members have faced blackmail, obstruction of political activity, killing of members, abductions, torture, and even an assassination attempt against Vice Chairman Tundu Lissu.

The Tuesday court ruling is connected to an incident in February 2018 when, at a by-election in Dar Es Salaam, CHADEMA’s election observers were denied the ability to register and to observe the electoral process. Instead, various obligations were imposed on the CHADEMA leadership, which were intended to obstruct their political activity, stifle political dissent, and intimidate the democratic opposition in Tanzania.

The IDU and DUA stand with the people of Tanzania and its friends and partners from CHADEMA in support of their demands for full participation in a free and fair election. IDU Chairman Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper: “We ask all of our members to closely monitor political developments in the months to come, and to support CHADEMA in their fight for an open and free Tanzania. Rule of law and the freedom of activity in Tanzania must be guaranteed.”

The IDU is the world’s leading association of conservative, Christian-democratic, and centre-right political parties. With more than 80 member-parties around the world, the IDU connects conservatives globally in support of freedom and democracy. The DUA is IDU’s regional organization on the African continent. www.idu.org