



HakiElimu Statement Regarding the Ministry of Education and Culture Circular Number 5 of 2005

5 October, 2005

This statement has been issued in response to numerous calls from citizens, civil society, media and interested parties to understand HakiElimu's position regarding the above mentioned circular.

1. The said circular interdicts HakiElimu from "undertaking and publishing any articles/studies regarding Tanzania Schools". This action is said to have been taken because HakiElimu is said to have a) been "disparaging the image of the education system and teaching profession through media promotion" and b) "repeatedly failed to conform with directives given by the Ministry of Education and Culture". Furthermore, the circular directs chief inspectors of schools to take stern measures against any school/college which does not adhere to the Ministry's directives in the circular.

2. HakiElimu works within the laws of the land. Our engagement is consistent with fundamental constitutional articles and the memorandum of our incorporation, as well as the roles accorded to civil society organizations under MKUKUTA and PEDP/MMEM. These include "mobilizing and enhancing community participation", "advocating for accountability of its members and government to the people", "share information", "effectively collect and communicate educational information from and to schools", and "conduct education policy analysis and advocacy". Independent analysis, right to access and impart information, transparency, public debate and citizen accountability of government are bedrocks of good governance and democratic accountability; and these are the principle approaches that guide our work.

3. HakiElimu members, Board and staff are carefully studying the circular as well as a letter from the Minister of Education and Culture regarding the interdiction and a set of conditions for lifting it. Because we respect the rule of law, we have also sought further legal advice. We will respond to the Minister in due course.

4. HakiElimu seeks and continues to enjoy good working relations with the Government. We serve on a number of Government consultation bodies and collaborate regularly with a wide range of Government actors at national and local levels, including the Ministry of Education and Culture. In this spirit, we call upon the public, media and all concerned parties to focus on the critical issues and challenges facing the wellbeing and freedom of the people of Tanzania, and the key principles at stake here, rather than the friction between two parties.

5. Finally, we take this opportunity to thank the large numbers of ordinary citizens, teachers, NGO staff, public servants, analysts, trade union officials, development partners and others who have conveyed their support to us. We appreciate your solidarity, encouragement and guidance. Together, we can build a better educated and more democratic society for all.

Signed,

Rakesh Rajani
Executive Director
on behalf of the Board of Directors