

THE ASSASSINATION OF TWO LEADING CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS

This evening, two leading human rights defenders, Mr. Oscar Kamau King'ara and Mr. John Paul Oulu (also known as GPO), both of Oscar Foundation, were executed in cold blood by a group of men in two vehicles. The two were driving to meet Mr. Kamanda Mucheke of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights at his office. Eyewitnesses have said that the assassins were policemen. In fact, the minibus driver was in police uniform.

An eyewitness at the scene was also shot in the leg and was later taken away from the scene by policemen. We are calling upon the police to reveal the whereabouts of this man since he might be the only one who can positively identify both the assassins and their vehicles. Therefore, we fear for his life.

Oscar was a trained lawyer and a human rights advocate who was the Chief Executive Officer of Oscar Foundation. He was a member of the Law Society of Kenya.

Mr. GPO Oulu was a former student leader, and an educationist who has worked for many human rights organizations, including the Youth Agenda. He left the Youth Agenda recently to join the Oscar Foundation as the Communications and Advocacy Officer.

Oscar Foundation is a registered charitable organization that offers free legal services to the poor. Some of its major projects include organizing caravans to offer free legal aid to the poor around the country. They have a strong track record researching corruption in the police force, the prisons, and police brutality against the urban poor. The latest activity was researching and documenting cases of enforced disappearances and extra-judicial killings.

The Oscar Foundation has been a major source of information to Parliament on atrocities playing out against the poor in the country. On February 18, 2009, before Parliament debated the motion on extra-Judicial killings, he presented Oscar Foundation's findings on ongoing extra judicial killings to Hon. Peter Mwathi, the motion's mover. Their last engagement with Parliament was a presentation to the Kioni Committee investigating organized gangs a couple of days ago.

We believe they were killed because of the sensitive information they had shared with both the Prof. Philip Alston the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, and with the MPs.

Where we are in Kenya today is where the Jews were in Nazi Germany shortly before the Holocaust. The Nazis stage-managed a smear campaign that made the public hate the Jews and allow for their extermination.

During the Emergency the colonial government hired collaborators to commit atrocities which they blamed on the Mau Mau to give them a bad name so that they could exterminate them.

We hold the Government Spokesman Dr. Alfred Mutua complicit in the two murders for making wild allegations that the Oscar Foundation was a civil society front for Mungiki, and they were going to deal with it. What does he know about the assassinations? Was this what he meant by dealing with the Oscar Foundation?

As we condole with the families of the deceased, we assure them, and the nation that their deaths are not in vain.

Signed:
