

22 January 2021

Tanzania: Killing of human rights defender Paschal Raymond

On 19th January 2021, LGBTIQ+ rights defender **Paschal Raymond** was brutally killed by unknown assailants in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

[Paschal Raymond](#) was an LGBTIQ+ rights defender who supported the LGBTIQ+ community in Dar es Salaam, in the Mwananyamala, Kindoni area. One of his main areas of human rights work was helping homeless LGBTIQ+ people by hosting them in his own home and supporting them in solving conflicts with their estranged or homophobic families so they could reunite.

Paschal Raymond's support for homeless LGBTIQ+ and sex worker community members was especially critical during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the virus itself and the state responses to it affected queer and sex worker communities in ways that exacerbate existing systems of classed, gendered, sexualized and racial injustice. Paschal Raymond provided life-sustaining support for LGBTIQ+ people and sex workers in Dar es Salaam until the day he was killed.

The body of Paschal Raymond was discovered in a sewage drain in Mwananyamala, Dar es Salaam, in the early morning of 20 January 2021. The human rights defender's body was found without his phone or money. His eyes had been repeatedly stabbed.

Police in Mwananyamala in Dar es Salaam have launched an investigation into the killing of Paschal Raymond, and have held two suspects for questioning as part of this investigation. Based on the information available, the human rights defender received a phone-call which led him to go to a local shop during the night of 19 January 2021.

Paschal Raymond's colleagues believe he was violently "hunted" because of his well known work defending the rights of LGBTIQ+ people in Dar es Salaam. At the time of his killing, the human rights defender was housing two homeless community members in his home. Front Line Defenders [recent investigation](#), **LGBTIQ+ and Sex Workers Rights Defenders At Risk During COVID-19**, published December 2020, documented a sharp rise in attacks on the homes of LGBTIQ+ and sex worker rights defenders during the pandemic, after it became known locally that they were housing LGBTIQ+ people or sex workers at risk of homelessness, hunger and police violence on the streets. The [report](#) includes several cases of physical and sexual assaults on LGBTIQ+ and sex worker community members living with HRDs in Tanzania.

Front Line Defenders strongly condemns the killing of Paschal Raymond, which it believes was a direct result of his powerful human rights work, and calls for an immediate end to state and non-state attacks on LGBTIQ+ and sex worker rights defenders in Tanzania.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Tanzania to:

1. Immediately investigate the death of Paschal Raymond and bring those responsible to justice, as Front Line Defenders believes that Pascal was targeted for legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights;
2. Immediately secure the lawful protection of LGBTIQ+ people and sex workers who defend the rights of others, as Front Line Defenders believes that they are being attacked because of their legal and legitimate human rights activities;

3. Cease all defamatory statements about LGBTIQ+ and sex worker rights defenders, including but not limited to baseless claims that HRDs spread COVID-19, and incitements to violence against HRDs who are known to be sheltering homeless community members;
4. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Tanzania can carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment and killings.

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