

26 March 2018

### Update: Human rights defender Abdul Nondo charged

On 21 March 2018, **Abdul Nondo** was charged on two counts after being detained by police since 8 March 2018.

[Abdul Nondo](#) is a human rights defender and Chairperson of **Tanzania Students' Networking Programme (TSNP)**. He is also a third year student at the University of Dar Es Salaam. TSNP is a non-governmental organisation based in Dar Es Salaam which works with students on capacity building and advocacy programmes to enable them to advocate at the local, national and international levels to promote human rights and democracy. Most recently, Abdul Nondo has been particularly critical of the police and the Tanzanian authorities regarding the extra-judicial killing of a student at a rally on 16 February 2018.

On 21 March 2018, Abdul Nondo was transported by police from Dar Es Salaam and taken to the Resident Magistrate Court in Iringa as this was where he reported the abduction he had been subjected to by unidentified persons just one day prior to his detention by police. The human rights defender was charged on two counts: "publication of false information" contrary to Section 16 of the Cyber Crimes Act, No. 14 of 2015 and "giving false information to the person employed in the public service", contrary to Section 122 (a) of the Penal Code.

Abdul Nondo had been abducted by unknown assailants on 7 March before being released in a remote area 500km from where he was taken the following day. He alerted his friends to his abduction by sending a WhatsApp message saying "I am at risk".

On 8 March 2018, Abdul Nondo reached a police station in Iringa to call his family and let them know his whereabouts. The human rights defender was not allowed to leave the police station in Iringa and was transported to Dar Es Salaam to be detained by the Director of Criminal Investigations. Neither his family nor his lawyers have been allowed to visit him.

The police are claiming that Abdul Nondo was not in fact abducted but went to Iringa to visit his girlfriend and that sending the private WhatsApp message to his friend was intended to deceive the public.

Other members of TSNP have also been harassed by police and were required to report to the police station on 14 March 2018 for questioning. On 15 November 2017, Director of the Law Department at TSNP, [Bob Chacha Wangwe](#), was [sentenced](#) to 1.5 years' imprisonment or a fine of 5 million Tanzanian shillings by Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court in Dar Es Salaam. The human rights defender had been found guilty of "publication of false information" under Section 16 of the Cybercrimes Act 2015 in relation to comments he had posted on Facebook questioning the respect of procedures in the 2015 elections in Zanzibar. He is currently appealing his sentence.

Front Line Defenders expresses serious concern at the charges facing Abdul Nondo as it believes it to be part of a larger [pattern](#) of harassment against human rights defenders in Tanzania.