

**JOINT STATEMENT BY ZAINA FOUNDATION,
THE ASSOCIATION FOR PROGRESSIVE
COMMUNICATIONS (APC), AND THE
TANZANIA DIGITAL RIGHTS COALITION ON
THE BLOCKING OF X PLATFORM IN
TANZANIA**

Date: June 13, 2025



We, the Zaina Foundation, the Association for Progressive Communications (APC), and the Tanzania Digital Rights Coalition, express our deep concern over the ongoing blocking of the X platform (formerly known as Twitter) in the United Republic of Tanzania since May 20, 2025.

Background

For more than three weeks, users across Tanzania have reported being unable to access X through most major internet service providers. This blocking has occurred without any official statement or legal justification from the government.

According to credible sources, including civil society monitoring and media reports, the decision was directed by the Ministry of Information, Communication and Information Technology, in coordination with the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) the national agency

responsible for regulating communication services.

Evidence from the Open Observatory of Network Interference (OONI) confirms that this is not a technical issue but a deliberate act of interference.

OONI data shows clear signs of intentional blocking of the X platform on multiple networks within Tanzania, reinforcing what many citizens have experienced on the ground.

The Timing: A Democratic Concern

This disruption is particularly concerning because it comes at a sensitive time, as Tanzania prepares for its general elections scheduled for October 2025. Free, open, and reliable access to digital platforms is essential during any electoral period. Social media platforms such as X are critical for:

- Sharing electoral information, updates, and civic education;
- Enabling open public dialogue and political engagement;
- Giving space to marginalized voices, including women and youth;
- Promoting transparency and real-time election monitoring;
- Allowing journalists, observers, and citizens to report incidents and concerns.
- Driving digital innovation, entrepreneurship, and job creation.

Blocking access to such a vital communication tool during a pre-election period raises serious red flags about the openness, fairness, and transparency of the electoral process. It threatens to silence public participation and diminish trust in the democratic system.

Lack of Transparency and Accountability



The blocking of X has not been accompanied by any official explanation, public communication, or legal basis. This lack of transparency violates both the public's right to information and the principles of accountable governance. It also creates fear and uncertainty, particularly for those who rely on online platforms to speak out, organize, and advocate.

Such actions are inconsistent with Article 18 of Tanzania's Constitution (1977) and with international human rights commitments, including; Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR-1966), and Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and the Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), all which guarantees the rights to freedom of expression and access to information.

Our Call to Action



In light of these serious concerns, we respectfully urge the Government of Tanzania to:

1. Immediately restore access to the X platform across all internet service providers and networks;
2. Provide a public explanation outlining the reasons for the disruption and any legal grounds for such action;
3. Ensure that the rights to freedom of expression, access to information, and media freedom are fully respected, both online and offline, especially in the lead-up to the October 2025 elections;
4. Engage in open, inclusive, and transparent dialogue with civil society, the media, technical experts, and citizens to develop rights-based digital policies;
5. Refrain from any further internet shutdowns or platform disruptions and commit to protecting an open, inclusive digital environment in Tanzania.

Broader Implications

This incident reflects a growing global trend of internet censorship and platform disruptions, often seen during politically sensitive moments. Such actions are often justified under vague claims of national security or public order, yet in practice, they suppress dissent, limit civic space, hinder transparency and disrupt economic activities and growth.

Tanzania stands at a critical juncture. The decisions made now will have lasting consequences for the credibility of its democratic processes, the health of its information ecosystem, and the future of digital rights in the country.

Our Commitment

As Zaina Foundation, APC, and the Tanzania Digital Rights Coalition, we reaffirm our commitment to promoting an open, inclusive, and secure digital environment. We are prepared to support dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and capacity-building efforts to help strengthen digital governance in Tanzania.

We urge the Government of Tanzania to seize this moment as an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and commitment to democratic values. We stand in solidarity with the people of Tanzania who are calling for transparency, accountability, and the right to be heard and informed especially during this crucial pre-election period.

Let us work together to protect digital rights, safeguard democracy, and ensure that the internet remains a space for free and open expression.

#DigitalRightstz

#DigitalRightstz

Signed,

1. Zaina Foundation
2. Association for Progressive Communications (APC)
3. Tanzania Digital Rights Coalition
4. Tanzania Building Future Organization
5. Binti Salha Foundation
6. Integrating Capacity and Community Advancement Organization- ICCAO
7. Comprehensive Support to Persons Disabilities (COSUPED)
8. Transforming Life
10. Patronage for Persons with Disability (PPD)
11. Civic and Legal Aid Organization (CILAO)
12. Tanzania Media Women Association (TAMWA)
13. Action for Rural Women
14. Macho kwa Jamii
15. Tanzania Climate Catalyst Foundation (TCCF)
16. Zanzibar Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC)
17. Children Education Society (CHESO)
18. Caring Hearts (CAHE)
19. Jumuiya ya Maendeleo ya Elimu kwa Watoto Pemba (JUMAEWAPE)
20. I Care Foundation
21. Tanzania Community Media Coalition
22. Alliance for democrats change
23. Bridge for change (BFC)
24. Adela Foundation (AF)
25. Green Leaf Organization
26. Caring Hearts (CAHE)
27. Mtwara Economic Rights Organization for Disability (MERODI)
28. Youth With Disability Organization (YoWDO)
29. Tanzania Wote Equality Alliance (TAWEA)
30. Support for Future Foundation
31. Sofa Foundation
32. Tanzania For Envirotour (TAFOE)
33. Mpakani Tunaweza Organization
34. Her Uraia Clickers
35. The Popular Inspiring and Relief Organisations (PIRO)
36. Organization for Human Investment and Development (OHIDE)