



The UIA Institute for the Rule of Law

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**Jacqueline R. Scott**

*Director General - UIA-IROL (Institute for the Rule of Law)*

*Directrice générale - UIA-IROL*

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Paris, April 10, 2020

**Minister of Constitutional and Legal Affairs**

**Hon. Dr. Augustine Mahiga**

**Ministry of Constitutional and Legal affairs**

**Government City, Mtumba**

**P. O. Box 315 Dodoma**

**UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

*Transmission by email and fax: [km@sheria.go.tz](mailto:km@sheria.go.tz)*

*+255 26 2321679 (2 pages)*

Dear Minister of Constitutional and Legal Affairs,

**RE: Arbitrary suspension of Ms Fatma Karume**

The UIA-IROL has been informed of the situation of Ms Fatma Karume, former president of the Tanganyika Law Society and a current senior partner at the law firm, IMMMA Advocates in Tanzania.

We are concerned to learn that Ms Karume was indefinitely suspended from practicing law, in September 2019, within the jurisdiction of mainland Tanzania by the High Court of Tanzania.

We share concerns expressed by legal organization and independent observers that the suspension of a lawyer without notice and the failure to ensure an expeditious and fair hearing in the matter are violations of regional and international law standards and undermine the safeguards meant to ensure the independence of the legal profession and, ultimately, the rule of law in Tanzania.

We have taken note of the joint declaration issued by Lawyers for Lawyers, IBAHRI, AIJA, Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales, Southern Africa Litigation Center, SADC on Mrs Karume<sup>1</sup>.

We support this joint statement and agree that international standards also provide that the immediate suspension of a lawyer from the bar must be reserved for exceptional cases, such as situations in which the alleged misconduct poses an immediate threat to the public or to the administration of justice.

We therefore agree, along with the above-mentioned legal organizations, that Ms Karume's suspension should be immediately lifted pending the hearing of the case before the Advocates' Disciplinary Committee. We urge you to take all measures within your power to ensure the lifting of this suspension.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ibanet.org/Article/NewDetail.aspx?ArticleUid=2466c93b-bf6c-4b01-af34-d4dd5f05026b>

We also urge you to take all measures to encourage the courts to desist from exercising authority to discipline lawyers and recommend the establishment of a fully self-governing regulatory body of lawyers.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.R. Scott', with a stylized, cursive script.

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Jacqueline R. SCOTT  
Director General - UIA-IROL