

**PRESS STATEMENT ON THE BREAK-IN INTO THE HOME OF HUMAN RIGHTS  
DEFENDER MR. KHELEF KHALIFA**

**26 October 2016**

The Kenya Police Service should promptly, thoroughly, and transparently investigate the break-in into the home of the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Muslim for Human Rights (MUHURI), Mr. Khelef Khalifa's whose house's was broken into at 4 am on 25 October 2016, in Mombasa County.

The intruder(s) removed the burglar proof grill, accessed the living room of the house and made away with three mobile phones belonging to family members. It is not yet known what else may have been taken away. At the time of the incident, Mr. Khalifa was not at home, however other family members were at home.

In the recent week, Mr. Khalifa has received threats on his phone, on social media and publicly by senior police officers, and he has expressed concerns over his life due to his demand for accountability by the police for their response to the growing threat of terrorism and radicalization in the Coast, that have included enforced disappearances and extra judicial killing of Muslim clerics and youths.

The most recent case is the killing by police of three girls at the Central Police Station in Mombasa on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2011. Police described them as terrorists.

MUHURI is among other human rights organizations that have publicly condemned the killing of the three girls that according to the police attacked a police station in Mombasa on 9 September 2016. MUHURI has called for thorough investigations including independent postmortem of the bodies before burial to ascertain the cause of their death.

The police described the three girls as terrorists that were killed when they attacked the police station. But there has been conflicting report regarding the exact circumstances leading to the killing by the police. Because of the position MUHURI has taken, their staff members and other vocal human rights organizations have raised concern over surveillance of their movements and work.

This comes against the background of Mombasa County Governor, Hassan Joho's remarks, against Father Gabriel Dolan, also a board member of MUHURI, that, Fr. Dolan was not interested in development that was why he, along with other Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) in Mombasa moved to court to challenge the construction of the multimillion housing project in Mombasa.

Kamau Ngugi of the National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders – Kenya stated that MUHURI has remained a target of the State since 22 March 2015, when their offices were broken into and the intruders took away files and electronic equipment and shortly thereafter, on April 8 2015, the Inspector General of Police through a Kenya Gazette communicated notice of the intention to list MUHURI and HAKI Africa among 85 organizations as "terrorist entities" under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (2012). During this period the organizations accounts were frozen, medical covers suspended and were investigated by both the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) and the NGO Coordination Board for unspecified breaches. MUHURI moved to court challenging the legality of the administrative obstacles, and the Mombasa High Court ruled in their favor.

We, the undersigned condemn the ongoing persecution of MUHURI staff and their directors and consider these actions as an attempt to intimidate and silence them when they are engaged in legitimate activities.

**We therefore call for:**

1. Thorough investigations into the break-in, secure the family of Mr. Khalifa and prosecution of those found culpable.
2. The State to desist from the continued harassment and intimidation of MUHURI and realize that the work carried out by the organization is in complementarity to the States obligations.
3. The government take extra measures to protect human rights defenders at risk.

**Signed**

Amnesty International

Defend Defenders

HAKI Africa

Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU)

Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)

Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI)

National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders – Kenya (NCHRD-K)