



PARIS

Tournons La Page condemns the unlawful arrest of Mr. Sylvester Namiwa of CEDED in Malawi

3RD AUGUST 2026

Tournons La Page (TLP), an international human rights coalition, strongly condemns the unlawful arrest of Mr. Sylvester Namiwa, Executive Director of the Centre for Democracy and Economic Development Initiatives (CEDED) in Malawi.

Mr. Namiwa was arrested following a press briefing in which he called for accountability and transparency regarding the rapid accumulation of wealth by public officials. He has been charged with treason and publication of false news.

TLP considers this arrest to be a clear violation of democratic principles and an infringement of fundamental human rights. It is also an attack on the essential role of civil society in exercising democratic checks and balances.

Freedom of expression and the right to demand accountability from those in public office are guaranteed under the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Malawi is a state party.

In a democracy, citizens and civil society organizations must be free to raise concerns about governance, corruption, and public integrity without fear of reprisal. The arrest of Mr. Namiwa sends a worrying signal about the shrinking civic space in Malawi. Such actions undermine public trust, weaken democratic institutions, and contradict Malawi's commitments to human rights and the rule of law.

Tournons La Page therefore calls upon:

- 1. The Government of Malawi and the Malawi Police Service to immediately and unconditionally release Mr. Sylvester Namiwa and drop all charges related to the exercise of his right to freedom of expression;**

- 2. Malawian authorities to uphold constitutional guarantees and international human rights obligations, and to ensure a safe and enabling environment for human rights defenders, journalists, and civil society actors;**
- 3. Regional and international partners, including the African Union and the United Nations, to closely monitor the situation and engage the Malawian government on the importance of protecting civic space ahead of the elections.**

Tournons La Page stands in full solidarity with CEDED, Mr. Namiwa, and all Malawians defending transparency, accountability, and democracy. We reiterate that a healthy democracy thrives on open debate, not intimidation.

