

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

Tanzania Monthly Briefing June 2025

Tanzania Summary 13 June 2025

Tanzania deports several East African activists who were planning to attend opposition party Chadema leader Tundu Lissu's trial on 19 May. The events highlight the ongoing clampdown on opposition activities ahead of the October general election. Authorities ban the use of X (formerly Twitter) and other social media apps, stating that their content contradicts Tanzania's laws and regulations. Finance minister Mwigulu Nchemba presents the 2025/2026 fiscal year budget to parliament on 12 June, setting a budget of TSh 56.49 trillion (\$21.85 billion) and targets including a budget deficit of 3% of GDP and economic growth of 6%, up from 5.5% in 2024/2025.

Tanzanian authorities detain East African activists

Opposition **Chadema** party leader **Tundu Lissu** appeared in court on 19 May on charges including treason, as focus fell on **Tanzania's** decision to deny entry to several rights activists trying to attend the trial and the subsequent deportation of two activists, who have since alleged they were tortured while detained. Tanzanian police detained **Kenya's** former justice minister, **Martha Karua**, former chief justice **Willy Mutunga** and rights activist **Hussein Khalid** when they arrived at **Julius Nyerere International Airport in Dar es Salaam** ahead of the trial and subsequently deported them.¹ Karua had attended Lissu's 15 April trial, making the arrests even more controversial.

The crackdown on those supporting Lissu did not end here. Kenyan activist **Boniface Mwangi** and **Ugandan** lawyer and activist **Agather Atuhaire** told a press conference on 2 June that security officers had abducted them from their hotel rooms, allegedly interrogating and torturing them before dumping them near the borders of their respective home countries.² Both reported that they were sexually assaulted during the interrogation.

Mwangi's abduction garnered significant attention in Kenya. Kenya's foreign ministry released a formal diplomatic note on 21 May expressing concern over his detention, noting that Tanzanian authorities had not provided any information on his whereabouts or condition. The Kenyan foreign ministry confirmed on 22 May that Tanzanian authorities had released him but did not make any comments on where Mwangi was released or his condition. Uganda's government made no comment on Atuhaire's arrest.

While the Tanzanian government has not responded to the allegations, President **Samia Suluhu Hassan** (2021-present) commented on 19 May that foreign activists should not invade and interfere in Tanzania's affairs.³ These events have once again highlighted the continuing repression of the opposition ahead of the October general election, which Hassan is expected to win. The crackdown has permeated the ruling **Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM)** party, indicative of the extent to which the government will quash any dissent. CCM member of parliament (MP) **Josephat Gwajima**, during a sermon delivered at his **Glory of Christ** church in Dar es Salaam, condemned the detention of the activists and accused the government of human rights violations in the build-up to the election. A few days later, the registrar of societies deregistered the 31-year old church, stating that Gwajima's sermons "*contravened acceptable conduct of religious organisations*".⁴

¹ Times Live, 19 May 2025

² DW, 3 Jun 2025

³ Times Live, 21 May 2025

⁴ AP, 4 Jun 2025

The crackdown on the opposition highlights the backsliding in Hassan's promised reform agenda and is harming Tanzania's reputation. Nevertheless, there has been no international outcry about the events and any condemnation is unlikely to change the government's actions towards the opposition. Lissu's trial has been adjourned to 16 June.

Government blocks access to social media platform X

Information minister **Jerry Silla** confirmed on 4 June that the government has opted to block access to social media platform **X** (formerly **Twitter**), stating that the presence of adult content and homosexuality on X contradicts Tanzania's laws and regulations. Messaging service **Telegram** and social audio app **Clubhouse** have also been restricted.⁵

Authorities initially blocked access on 20 May after a cyberattack on some social media accounts belonging to the government. Hackers posted pornographic images on the social media accounts of the police and the **Tanzania Revenue Authority** and falsely announced Hassan's death.⁶ While Tanzanian residents with a virtual private network (VPN) can still access X, the use of a VPN without government permission is illegal in Tanzania and can lead to jail time or fines. Government spokesperson **Gerson Msigwa** described the attack as a "*minor incident*" and said that investigations were in progress to identify those responsible.⁷

The **Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC)** released a statement on 4 June expressing concern over the government's decision to block X. The LHRC called on the government to restore access, ensure transparency in digital regulation processes, engage with stakeholders in developing moderation policies and uphold citizens' constitutional rights to freedom of expression, access to information and digital rights.⁸ The LHRC noted that the government's decision to block access to X is part of a pattern, as the government also restricted access to social media in the run-up to the 2020 election.⁹

Opposition politicians and rights activists often use X to criticise the government. The decision to block access is more likely driven by the government's desire to suppress online dissent, with the cyberattack merely used as justification.¹⁰ The clampdown on social media notably coincided with the crackdown on activists arriving in Tanzania to support Lissu (see above).

Finance ministry presents 2025/2026 budget

Finance minister **Mwigulu Nchemba** presented the budget for the 2025/2026 fiscal year to parliament on 12 June, setting a budget of TSh 56.49 trillion (\$21.85 billion) and targets including a budget deficit of 3% of GDP and economic growth of 6%, up from 5.5% in 2024/2025.

The budget will be financed through a combination of domestic revenue, foreign grants and loans. The government will finance TSh 40.47 trillion (\$15.43 billion) through domestic revenue, raise TSh 14.94 trillion (\$5.69 billion) through loans – TSh 6.72 trillion (\$2.59 billion) from domestic sources and TSh 8.68 trillion (\$3.35 billion) from international lenders – and is relying on TSh 1.07 trillion (\$413.92m) in foreign grants.¹¹ Government is aiming to increase domestic revenue to 16.7% of GDP with the following goals:

- TSh 32.31 trillion (\$12.49 billion) from tax revenue – an increase to 13.3% of GDP from 12.8% in 2024/2025;
- TSh 6.48 trillion (\$2.5 billion) from non-tax revenue; and
- TSh 1.68 trillion (\$649.9m) from local government authorities.¹²

⁵ BBC, 4 Jun 2025

⁶ AP News, 21 May 2025

⁷ Africanews, 22 May 2025

⁸ LHRC, 4 Jun 2025

⁹ BBC, 4 Jun 2025

¹⁰ AP News, 21 May 2025

¹¹ Daily News, 12 Jun 2025

¹² Daily News, 12 Jun 2025

As part of the government's plan to drive domestic revenue, Nchemba announced plans to make it compulsory for large-scale gold miners to refine and trade at least 20% of their gold output domestically.¹³ With gold prices at an all-time high, Tanzania stands to benefit from this programme.

Notable expenditure highlights from the budget include:

- TSh 9.17 trillion (\$3.54 billion) for civil servant salaries and pension contributions;
- TSh 5.58 trillion (\$2.12 billion) for the purchase of goods and services;
- TSh 6.49 trillion (\$2.51 billion) for loan interest payments;
- TSh 7.72 trillion (\$2.98 billion) for debt servicing; TSh 22.17 trillion (\$8.57 billion) for grants and transfers to public institutions, local governments and SOEs.

Nchemba noted in his presentation that the budget has been impacted by issues such as changing policies in development partners, a nod to the **United States' (US)** recent cuts to aid, and shifts in geopolitics.¹⁴ He also raised the existence of financial risks to the implementation of the budget, namely global commodity prices, rising interest rates, depreciation of the shilling and contingent liabilities.

Government spokesperson **Gerson Msigwa** confirmed before the budget presentation that the October general election will be funded entirely by the government.¹⁵ This is only the second time in Tanzania's multi-party democratic history that the government has funded the election without donor support, after also funding the 2020 election.

Planner

27 Jun 2025 **Dodoma (Tanzania)** President **Samia Suluhu Hassan** to dissolve parliament

Oct 2025 **(Tanzania)** General elections

Dec 2025 **(Tanzania)** **Labour Mobility Dialogue** between **African Union (AU)** and **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)**

2025 **(Tanzania and Uganda)** Completion of **East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP)**

Chronology

13 Jun 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *Daily News*. **Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority** director general **Salim Msangi** says government is engaging with the **European Union (EU)** on its ban of all Tanzanian-registered aircraft from flying into its airspace;

8 Jun 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Opposition party **Chadema's "No Reform, No Elections"** campaign gains significant traction on social media, with activists and citizens demanding comprehensive political and electoral reforms before the October general elections;

4 Jun 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Opposition party **Chadema** files a lawsuit against the **Registrar of Political Parties**, accusing the office of political bias and favouritism toward the ruling party;

3 Jun 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Health minister **Jenista Mhagama** announces that Tanzania is working toward self-sufficiency by locally manufacturing antiretroviral medications to improve access and reduce dependency on imports;

2 Jun 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. **Swissport Tanzania PLC** reports financial results, distributing TSh 2.5 billion (\$1.06m) in profits to shareholders;

¹³ Mining.com, 12 Jun 2025

¹⁴ Reuters, 12 Jun 2025

¹⁵ The Chanzo, 12 Jun 2025

1 Jun 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. The private sector welcomes the government's ambitious goal of reaching \$2 billion in horticulture exports, viewing it as a major boost for economic growth and agricultural development;

29 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Land, housing and human settlements development minister **Deogratius Ndejemi** announces that Tanzania is undertaking reforms to address land conflicts and improve settlement planning, aiming to enhance land governance and support sustainable development for the 2025/26 fiscal year;

28 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *BBC*. Kenya's President **William Ruto** publicly apologises to Tanzania after a diplomatic row sparked by the detention and deportation of **East African** activists, including Kenyan and **Ugandan** nationals, by Tanzanian authorities sparked significant backlash, leading Tanzanian lawmakers to accuse Kenyans of cyberbullying and not respecting Tanzania's sovereignty;

27 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. **Nordic Week 2025** is underway in Tanzania, a collaborative initiative organised by the embassies of **Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden** aimed at strengthening corporation, private investment and accelerating energy sector reforms;

26 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. The **Bank of Tanzania** (central bank) is preparing to release a comprehensive study on central bank digital currencies, aiming to evaluate their potential impact on the country's financial ecosystem and payment systems by June;

22 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. **African Export-Import Bank** commits to investing at least \$1 billion in Tanzania's public and private sectors over the next year;

21 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *BBC*. Access to social media platform **X** has been restricted in Tanzania after hackers compromised official government accounts, including that of the police, posting false and explicit content;

20 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Tanzania unveils its revised **Foreign Policy 2024**, marking a significant shift towards engaging its diaspora as strategic partners in national development by establishing dedicated divisions focusing on diaspora engagement, investment facilitation and international employment opportunities;

19 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *Club of Mozambique*. Opposition party **Chadema** leader **Tundu Lissu** appears in court to face charges of treason, which carries a potential death penalty under Tanzanian law;

19 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Professor **Mohamed Yakub Janabi** is nominated as the next **World Health Organization (WHO)** regional director for **Africa**, pending WHO executive board approval;

15 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *Daily News*. Minerals minister **Anthony Mavunde** announces that Tanzania's mining sector is on track to surpass its 2024/2025 revenue target of TSh 1 trillion (approximately \$385m), having achieved 90.2% of the goal by May;

14 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. **National Bureau of Statistics of Tanzania** data show Tanzania increased its production of key construction materials in 2024, exceeding domestic demand of 8.5 million tonnes and positioning itself as a regional supplier, with the surplus exported to **Rwanda, Malawi and Uganda**;

13 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Prime minister **Kassim Majaliwa** is actively promoting Tanzania's economic potential at the **2025 Africa CEO Forum in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)**, aiming to attract international investors and solidify its position as one of **Africa's** fastest-growing economies;

13 May 2025 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *DW*. Police arrest opposition leader **Amani Golugwa**, who was leaving to attend a political conference in **Belgium**, at **Julius Nyerere International Airport**;

About Africa Risk Consulting:

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