



UTSS Position Paper on Witchcraft

PWA = Person(s) With Albinism

In the name of safety, UTSS will not participate in initiatives that call PWA to work, play, travel or in any other way expose themselves to witchdoctors. We will also caution PWA not to consult with witchdoctors for personal reasons. As a Christian organization, UTSS also takes a strong stand against the practice or participation in all forms of witchcraft both for PWA and non-PWA. In fact, UTSS staff are contractually forbidden from doing so.

UTSS deliberately uses the term “witchdoctor” because the “traditional healers” we are concerned with also practice witchcraft. While nobody can definitively document this, anecdotal wisdom and our own research tell us that most traditional healers also practice various aspects of witchcraft as part of their services. Since this is generally understood by most local Africans, we use the term witchdoctor to refer to most traditional healers (We understand that the words used to represent witchdoctors or traditional healers may differ by tribe, language and culture in various parts of Africa). Witchcraft practices have always been shrouded in secrecy and silence for the purpose of self-preservation and power. When interviewed, all will deny that they use rituals that rely on PWA body parts. UTSS understands that not all witchdoctors practice rituals that rely on PWA body parts, but no one can know for sure which ones do.

One PWA from Guinea said “I would not want a witchdoctor to walk me to school every day. It would be like a lion walking a sheep to school.”

UTSS will continue to advocate that traditional healers become educated about albinism but strongly believe this is not a task for the albinism community. We will continue the work of seeking justice for PWA and all perpetrators who have been involved in any practices which use the body parts of PWA's for the purposes of witchcraft. **Therefore, our official position is clear: that UTSS, for the safety and security of PWA's, will not sanction nor participate in any partnerships with individual witchdoctors or any association which represents them.**