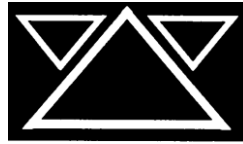


P O Box 604  
4 Marien Ngouabi Street  
Windhoek  
Namibia

Tel: Int +264 61 223356  
Fax: Int +264 61 234953  
E-mail: [info@lac.org.na](mailto:info@lac.org.na)  
Web: [www.lac.org.na](http://www.lac.org.na)



Toni Hancox (Director)

Corinna van Wyk

## LEGAL ASSISTANCE CENTRE

Recipient of the UNICEF Maurice Pate Human Rights Award – 1997

JP Karuaihe Human Rights Excellence Award – 2008, 2010, 2014, 2016 and 2020 and Social Responsibility Award – 2013

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### Press Statement

### Rights to peaceful protest

As a member of the Action Coalition, the Legal Assistance Centre wishes to acknowledge the statement published on 16 May 2022. The excessive use of force in police action can never be condoned in a democratic society. The Legal Assistance Centre records its concern with the actions of the Namibian Police when responding to the protests in Chinatown on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2022. The Inspector-General of the Namibian Police is reminded of the constitutional right of peaceful protest as implied by Article 21 of the Namibian Constitution, and the commensurate duty of the authorities to apply minimum force. Although it is acknowledged that the Namibian Police must assess the dangers in any situation, we submit that the use of tear gas should be a last resort. Rubber bullets can maim and kill, and should not be considered an acceptable form of crowd control. The Inspector-General is respectfully requested to consider relevant training for his police officers to ensure that they are able to address such situations with the necessary restraint and to ensure that the required riot gear is accessible to its officers.

Issued by  
Toni Hancox  
Director of the Legal Assistance Centre

17 May 2022

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**Trustees of the Legal Assistance Trust:**

Clement Daniels (Chairperson)      Norman Tjombe      Taamba Iithete  
Tangeni Amupadhi      Toni Hancox (ex officio)