

13<sup>th</sup> International Conference and Exhibition on  
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**Albinism and ritual murders: The untold story**

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Deriving its name from Albus, Latin meaning white, Albinism is a genetic condition that results in partial or total deficiency of melanin in hair, eyes and skin. Albinism occurs in all races with reported prevalence rates ranging from 1:4000 in Zimbabwe and South Africa to 1: 20000 in the UK and USA. Due to the lack of melanin, people with albinism are more susceptible to the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation exposure. This population must deal with issues such eye problems, extreme sun sensitivity and skin cancer. These conditions are worse for Albinos in Sub-Saharan Africa, a region that has the highest number of albinism per population. In addition to mental, social and economic burden they suffer from active and passive discrimination. A new physical and life threatening complication has arisen that seem to be ignored by then medical and political fraternity. People with albinism are being murdered and physically assaulted for the purposes of obtaining body parts based on a belief that they possess magical powers that can provide good fortune. Albinos are being targeted for their skin, limbs, internal organs, genitals amongst other body parts. Ritualistic murders of albinos have become a public health issue for countries like Malawi, Tanzania and Mozambique. People are living with fear to go to school, work and in public places for fear of being targeted. In an effort to fight this, it is necessary to strengthen the knowledge of this condition and debunk the myths surrounding albinism. I present an extensive review of literature and a perspective from Africa, regarding the physical and emotional abuse people living with albinism are going through.

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