



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

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CHAUBEY: My name is Varanya Chaubey and I am speaking with Mr. Khalfan Khalfan, who is executive director of the Organization of People with Disabilities. Today is November 17th, 2008. I'd like to begin the interview by learning a little bit more about your personal background. Would you describe the position you hold now?

KHALFAN: *As I said, my name is Khalfan, and I was born and brought up here in Zanzibar. Before I worked with the minister of education, I worked as a schoolteacher for secondary schools for almost 20 years. Within those years I also became the head of schools for about 12 years. Then in 1981, during the International Year of Disabled People, I got the opportunity to travel to Singapore to attend a disabled people's international meeting. Of course at that time there was no organization in Zanzibar. I was invited as an observer, but I learned a lot about disability, about disability movements and the formation of organizations.*

So when I came back to Zanzibar in 1981 I mobilized a few people around, and I started to talk about forming an organization. It took some time because after the 1964 Zanzibar revolution all societies were banned in Zanzibar, so it was very difficult to organize a society. So we tried from '81. The organization was successfully registered in 1985. So then we started this organization as a disability rights movement. We started with a few people, but now we have a membership of more than 4,000 on both islands of Unguja and Pemba. I was the founding chair of the organization. Later on when we started to make accountability procedures, we thought that the chairperson should not be the director, so there should be separation of powers. We decided that there should be leadership on one hand and there should be management on the other. That is why I became head of the management and I got this position of executive director.

Also I worked with various international organizations. For example, I was a member of the World Council of Disabled People's International for more than 20 years. The last five years, that is from 2002 until 2007, I was elected as the vice-chair for development and under-represented groups of Disabled People's International. Now I have just retired, and I thought that other people should take over that one. Also I was the chairperson of Pan African Federation of the Disabled for about twelve years. The last election I also stepped down. So now my position is the immediate past chair of Pan African Federation of the Disabled, and [so I am] a member of the executive committee of that organization.

I also founded the Eastern African Federation of the Disabled, which is called EAFOD, of which I am holding the position of the secretary general, which I also intend in the next election to step down. I got also the opportunity to participate at the United Nations during the ad hoc committee on the development of the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. So I was attending those meetings.

I attended about six out of eight sessions of the UN on the development of the convention. So in brief, I am a disability activist now, and I am very, very much concerned with the rights of disabled people. We were also very successful to make a disability bill in Zanzibar, Act 9 of 2006, which is called the Disabled Persons Rights and Opportunities Act. Also there is a policy on disability. Now there is a Zanzibar National Disability Council, of which I am a member. I am also a member of the Education Council in Zanzibar. I have been on many, many other boards.

CHAUBEY: Wow, that's very interesting. Would you talk a little bit about the kind of work that you may have done over the years, at any time in elections processes?

KHALFAN: *In fact, the first multi-party election was in 1995. This was the first multi-party election in Zanzibar, in Tanzania. I was recruited, or I recruited myself to be an observer of that particular election. Then in the last election of 2005, we became more active where we thought that we needed to sensitize disabled people to use their rights to elect or to be elected. So that was the time when we also requested funding from UNDP, the United Nations Development Program. We got some funding. We then managed to organize the Training of Trainers Program, where we trained a group of disabled people on the constitution, on the electoral laws and all that, so that they could also go into the villages to train disabled people to understand their rights as far as elections are concerned. So I was very much involved in that one.*

At the end we were able to produce this report that involved elections. That is how our involvement is. We hope also to participate in the coming election, which should be in 2010. We want to be more involved in this election and to make sure that disabled people not only vote, but they should be part of being voted into these political positions.

CHAUBEY: I'd like to ask a little bit—we'll talk in more detail later—but first, would you just describe the issues surrounding the participation of people with disabilities in the electoral process here in Zanzibar?

KHALFAN: *I think the participation—it is assumed that everything is all right, but practically it is not, because, A, many disabled people don't understand that they have the right to vote as a constitutional right, as a basic right. That is one thing. But the other thing is with some other disabilities it becomes very difficult—for example, the question of mobility and transportation is difficult. Then also the question of especially those people with visual impairment. They don't have these tactile ballot papers. They have to be able to read and to be able to choose themselves. They only depend on assistants. But even people with visual impairment, they do complain that as much as they trust their assistant, you never know when it comes to the ballot paper what they are going to do. The visual impaired person has got his own interest and the assistant has got his own interest, and if they're different, then that's where the problem comes.*

Then the other thing is, it is a bit difficult in some polling stations for disabled people, especially when it comes to privacy. The question of privacy is not there. Either the booths could be too small for example for those people using the wheelchair—so it could be open. Maybe some of the polling stations are not accessible, either with stairs or other obstructions or obstacles. So it becomes a little bit difficult. So we thought participating in elections actively means you wanted to make changes—that's what we really want, to make changes so that people with disabilities can participate in elections much freer, so that they are able to do the election as free as they can without interference by an assistant or third party or anything like that. So that is why we are getting more involved in this issue of elections.

CHAUBEY: You mentioned changes. I would like to know what are the changes in the recent past, if any, that have been made to facilitate greater participation of people with disabilities?

KHALFAN: *Well, at least it has been allowed for people with disabilities to be assisted by people whom they themselves trust. That has been accepted. Normally they don't allow two people to get into the voting booth, whatever—but in this case they do allow disabled people to go with their attendants or to go there with an assistant so they can help them. If they're visually impaired, maybe at least to read the names and maybe to tell them, OK, vote for me for this particular person, or so on. With those with physical disabilities also they are getting help to maybe get more access to the places. That is one.*

The second thing also, people with disabilities, once they are at the voting station, normally they get help so they don't stand on long queues, so they can be assisted to get in fast, to vote, and then to get out of the polling station. So these are new developments that are taking place. We tried last year to have these tactile ballot papers, but unfortunately the commission couldn't make it, though they promised that they are going to do it next election. They're calling them tactile ballot papers. You don't need to have Braille because many, many people cannot read Braille. But this tactile ballot paper is a kind of ballot paper with holes, and they're just being put there, and their pictures. Then once you say OK, the pictures are one from right to left, so on and so on. Then you can feel it, and then wherever you want to vote you can put your mark.

This has been practiced on the Tanzanian mainland in the last election, but it was not yet here. So we hope it is going to be there in the next election.

CHAUBEY: In 2010?

KHALFAN: Yes, 2010.

CHAUBEY: The names that are in order: how are people told that this is the order in which the names appear on the ballot?

KHALFAN: *That will be: either your assistant will tell you or the polling station officer will say; for example, from your left, you don't have to say one, two, three, because it is not a question of looking for numbers. You say from left to right there is X for CCM [Chama cha Mapinduzi, Party of the Revolution], then there is Y for CUF [Civic United Front], then there is W for CDM [Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo, Party for Democracy and Progress], just like that. Then you capture that, and it is OK. Then even if he goes out, you can just feel and it is OK: either you want one, two, three, and then you can put your mark. Even all the people who cannot read can use that.*

CHAUBEY: What are the concerns about using this kind of tactile ballot paper that still has some element of trusting another person who then tells you what order the photos appear—is that a concern at all?

KHALFAN: *Because we have not practiced it, it is very difficult, but it could be, especially with people with visual impairment. It could be that maybe you know the affiliation of that particular person, and maybe instead of saying the first one is of this party, you say, the third one is of that party, and you know that is the party that that person loves, and then he points to the wrong person. It can happen. But we have not practiced it, so we cannot say exactly how difficult, or how cheating people could experience that particular type.*

CHAUBEY: Have there been any reports from the mainland, where this was tried, about potential blips in the system that come up?

KHALFAN: *I'm not sure—we have not received any reports. We definitely are going to use the experience they have had and develop that one.*

CHAUBEY: So these changes that have come about—would you describe who are the main players involved in creating these kinds of changes and generally working to create greater participation?

KHALFAN: *First, it is we ourselves as a movement, but also we worked with other NGOs. For instance, we worked with NGOs like Zanzibar Legal Service Centers, Zanzibar Law Society, Women Lawyers Association, and other NGOs, and so on. But the other thing is ZEC [Zanzibar Electoral Commission] has been willing enough to accept the suggestions, so that has helped to make those changes. If they would refuse that could make things difficult. We might have achieved it, but it could have been very difficult. But they accepted that that is a right, and that right has to be enjoyed by all people, so they accepted to make those changes. Though there is still something that is haunting me: the question still of a group of people with intellectual disabilities, not really involved in the election.*

This is because there is a statement in the election law that says, only people with sound mind. So we're always asking who determines who has a sound mind and what is a sound mind and who is without a sound mind. In other countries, people with intellectual disabilities represent themselves and they can vote. But here they're confusing intellectual disability with people who are mentally sick. These are two different issues, two different things.

So now we want also to convince the Electoral Commission at least to understand this, that where people with intellectual disability or mental disability and people who are mentally sick—so mentally sick is a question that determines a sound mind, but with intellectual disability there is no issue of a sound mind. The mind is there and the mind is sound; maybe the development of the mind is a bit slower than others. So this is one area where people are really missing the target of their rights as far as election is concerned.

The other thing is, also, I think generally that other NGOs have accepted these concerns that we've raised, and we've got the support. We work together as a kind of group. We did form a kind of a committee with all NGOs, a steering committee or something like that, that takes over all these issues. So it is not only disabled people's organizations fighting, but other NGOs are supporting us in claiming those rights and getting those rights.

CHAUBEY: You mentioned that the ZEC has been open to these suggestions. Would you describe the ways in which you have approached the ZEC or the kinds of partnerships you may have formed with them, how often you meet, what kind of consultations occur?

KHALFAN: *At least to the experience of the last election, first they took the initiative of organizing a meeting with disabled people's organizations here in Zanzibar. We discussed the election and the barriers to the election for people with disabilities. So we raised all the issues for them, and they took them. Then even if you get funding, if you are going to do any training on elections or whatever it is, you have to get a permit from the Electoral Commission. So they have to permit you; even if you want to be an observer you have to get a permit or something like that.*

So when we had that one, then we did consult them that we want to do A, B, C, D, E in this particular area, and then they accepted that we should continue to do it. So whenever there is—for example, when we wanted to introduce this tactile ballot paper, there was somebody from Washington who came here to give that example of the ballot paper, what it looks like. So we informed the Electoral Commission; they agreed. So we, and that person, went to the Electoral Commission and showed them practically how it looks and how it is going to work and all that, and they agreed. But later on they said it was too late for them to do it. You don't need to print as many ballot papers now, you just print—for example, in one station if you can keep only one, so many people can use that. You don't need to have—for each person you should have the same. Because that one, you just put it there. The ballot paper is down; once you take up that one and the ballot paper is just going, so it can be used by many people. So in a way they were very cooperative in that sense, though they have not practiced some of the recommendations, but they promise that they're going to do it in 2010. So we hope for that.

CHAUBEY: How far in advance of the previous election, the 2005 election, was this proposal taken to the ZEC to introduce tactile ballot papers?

KHALFAN: *What is the question?*

CHAUBEY: When was it proposed to the ZEC?

KHALFAN: *In fact, we did introduce that, I think less than a year before the election, so they had a reason to say you're a bit late. It was less than a year. It was not really very late, because in the Tanzanian mainland they were able to make it. But I think maybe it was not clear to them what it all means and all that. But now we have already started to talk to them. One of our members, the secretary general of our organization, is attending a meeting on the committee of the ZEC on a regular basis, so she is the one who is taking over these issues.*

CHAUBEY: Is there some kind of timetable right now for how this will proceed on the ZEC's part?

KHALFAN: *No, not yet. I think now they're working on—I don't know, I think now they're working on the registration book. They say they're going to start it next year.*

CHAUBEY: I'd also like to ask what other sorts of funding sources that the ZEC or your organization can rely on, or that you have, in order to introduce these changes, such as tactile ballot papers?

KHALFAN: *For us, I think this is our concern, but it has to be, because as a right it means that ZEC has to implement that one. It is not for us to fund that particular issue. It is a right, and they're the ones organizing elections, so it means they have to include it in their budget proposal that they are going to have that one. So our main concern is just to bring that over, to advocate for it and to make sure that it takes place. But how is their concern, or they have to do it themselves.*

CHAUBEY: There are several phases to the electoral process at which arrangements probably need to be made. So I'd like to start with registration. What are some of the challenges of registering people with disabilities?

KHALFAN: *As I said earlier, the biggest challenge is accessibility and transportation. It may be that the place where they register it could be one kilometer from where people*

stay, or two kilometers, and that could be a bit of a problem for people with disabilities. But that does not mean that they should be denied that right. So there should be other facilities to help them register. That should be the work of the Electoral Commission, to make sure that each and every individual is being registered. Basically that is one of the biggest obstacles.

The second thing is also disabled people understanding that it is their right to register and it is their right to vote. So we need to raise awareness in that particular area. So that could be another problem. If there is not awareness, people feel that this is not so important, so why should we bother, why should we waste time and all that? So we need to create awareness. This awareness is what we are doing in our work on advocating and focusing on doing that. Last year we managed to work with about 5,000 people with disabilities on this particular area of elections. We gave them training, and most of them went to register, and most of them went to vote.

Then when it comes to voting, the problem is if there is any eruption of, let us say, problems arising from the stations, maybe people fighting or that, then disabled people are getting a little bit uncomfortable. If anything happens, they're the ones to become the victims. So maybe that's another barrier that they feel why should we go to register and then vote. We have experienced that violence for two elections, three elections. So people are getting that kind of fear. If I go there and anything happens, it means I'm going to be the victim because maybe I cannot run, I cannot see, there could be a stampede, whatever happens. So this could be some of the problems that people with disabilities are facing.

CHAUBEY: Have there been any steps to rectify these things, particularly transportation or security of people with disabilities?

KHALFAN: *Security is there, generally, because in all polling stations they do keep security like police and all that. Transportation is not organized; it is only the candidates sometimes that feel these people are going to vote for me, so maybe some of them do organize to take those people to the polling stations, get them to vote and then send them back. I remember that some of them they do that, but not all of them. So it is not really something reliable. It could happen randomly.*

CHAUBEY: In terms of—this seemed like a very pertinent concern, particularly here with the violence—are there any recommendations you have made or that you are thinking of that could make this slightly less risky for a person with disabilities to participate?

KHALFAN: *Yes, I think one of the recommendations which is being implemented is: disabled people, once they're at the polling station, they should get the opportunity to vote fast and then go. That is happening now. So once a disabled person is at the polling station, he or she is being helped to get in fast, vote and then goes away. So at least that one is taking place.*

CHAUBEY: Have there been any practical problems in implementing this measure?

KHALFAN: *I don't think so. I don't think there has been any problem. The culture of Zanzibar is giving that kind of facility. Once you're a disabled person in any place—which is not good in a way, because it comes to a kind of sympathy which you don't feel is good, or overprotection which is not good—but in many instances, once a disabled person is there, then everybody will just step aside and say, let him or let her go. So at least we have that support even from the community as well.*

- CHAUBEY: Apart from security issues, there are a lot of other pressures, political pressures or various things that can limit people's right to vote. What are the steps taken to safeguard people with disabilities particularly from these types of pressures?
- KHALFAN: *Pressures like?*
- CHAUBEY: For instance, politically there could be some pressures of how they should vote, if they should vote, things like that.
- KHALFAN: *One thing is that many disabled people fear to attend these political rallies during the election or before the election. Most of them end up in a sort of semi-violence. So it becomes a little bit difficult. Most of them do fear to go into those rallies, and those rallies are very important, because attending them you are able to hear what policies, what things political parties are talking they are going to do and all that. But with many disabled people—some do go, but with some, especially those with visual impairment and mobility impairment, it becomes very difficult for them to attend. They are just fearing that if anything happens, then they are going to get that problem first.*
- We did recommend that there should be political tolerance; we as an organization do preach that one, political tolerance. People should just talk and let other people listen, and why should people fight? But in Zanzibar you never know. Once we are in an election we expect all those things to happen. We have seen that in 1995, we have seen that in 2000, and we have seen that in 2005. So I don't know about 2010.*
- CHAUBEY: Has it been an issue here at all that maybe disabled people were forced to vote a certain way by political parties, maybe for instance when they were given transportation? That was also a way to influence who they voted for. Has that been an issue at all?
- KHALFAN: *It hasn't come to a realization. Definitely if a candidate comes to pick you up, he is telling you indirectly that you vote for me. If you vote for another person and it is in the private, that is all right, but normally they feel—it is a kind of an influence. But it has not come out vividly as a problem, so we have never experienced that. No people have come to complain about that. At least on our side, we have not received that one.*
- CHAUBEY: You mentioned the training programs that were conducted in order to—you trained people who were then able to go out and train other people on the electoral process.
- KHALFAN: Yes.
- CHAUBEY: For people with disabilities.
- KHALFAN: Yes.
- CHAUBEY: Would you describe that process a little bit? How did you recruit trainers, what materials did they use, how did they go about their work?
- KHALFAN: *As far as we're concerned, we did recruit our own people, those with quite good qualifications and who could be very good trainers. Then there was a training of trainers. This was organized by UNDP, so our trainers also participated in that*

one. Then from there they went to the community to train. So they were using the constitution, and they're using other posters, and there are also some booklets; we've got them in our library. We do distribute those booklets which are talking about how to vote and the meaning of voting, the right to vote and all those kinds of things. So all these were prepared by the steering committee of the NGOs, and they were funded by UNDP to be published. So we did use those materials, posters and booklets and all that.

CHAUBEY: And the training that they went to at UNDP, was that a general training, or specifically for this?

KHALFAN: *Specifically for that. Not on disability—specifically for what we call voter education. It was called voters' education.*

CHAUBEY: How many people were involved from this organization in the training?

KHALFAN: *I think we did—as an organization, what we did first is, we tried to find out the training needs assessment. So we did that one. That training needs assessment helped us to identify what kind of training our people would like to do. Those training of trainers we taught about 33 people from Unguja and from the island of Pemba. So there were about 22 in Unguja and 11 on the other island. This training was really talking about duties and responsibilities of those trainers, communication, mobilization strategies; they're talking about that. Human rights of all citizens, political reconciliation, political tolerance and violence; all these they were teaching the people when they were going to the villages and to the community. They talked about that.*

Then we had also awareness-raising meetings which we did in each district. There we were able to have about 533 people attending those in all the districts of Zanzibar. So I think we also used mass media. For example, we can have even these papers, talking about disability and all those kinds of things.

Then we had also awareness-raising meetings. We listed them by gender, and at that we had about 750 people; that is, 370 males and 380 females attended those meetings. Then we went district by district. So we have all these statistics for the last election. Then of course we do have, for example, the issues of physical disabilities. The issue of distance from polling centers and residential areas during elections act as a hindrance, that one I told you. Inaccessible polling centers which rob them of their rights to vote in secrecy, lack of supportive appliances. For example, some of them don't have wheelchairs that could help them go to the polling stations, and things like that.

For deaf people, communication was insufficient; there were no sign language interpreters, so it was difficult for them to understand. For blind people, we say that there was a lack of enough guides to escort them to the campaign rallies or to go to the voting stations, lack of Braille documents from the Zanzibar Electoral Commission, at least during the lulls and all that. The secrecy of the whole exercise would be missing, because they would have to rely on somebody to read for them. Also lack of guiding sticks, those white canes.

In fact, people with mental disabilities say that they should be given names of contestants as far as possible, to claim them before time, that they should be allowed to vote, which they were not allowed to at that time. So that is what we have been doing. I don't know if I've got another copy I could find for you; you

can have it. But you can see we have listed all the statistics, all the problems and all the successes that were done.

CHAUBEY: Then when you have these meetings—it sounds like there were quite a few with quite a few attendees—how do you determine the location of these meetings? Do you have a membership base by which you go?

KHALFAN: *Yes, we have a membership base. We have offices in all the districts. So if we are going to the West District, our office there would work with the committee and mobilize people. In that training we don't train disabled people alone, we train them and other people like their parents or their friends and whoever comes there. So we do provide that training. So it is not really—it is kind of a mainstream training, not only for disabled people.*

CHAUBEY: You mentioned that the media is also used sometimes to distribute these messages. What has been the role of the media in making the electoral process more inclusive in Zanzibar, not just maybe for people with disabilities, but overall—what have they done to make it more inclusive?

KHALFAN: *Though they publish—the problem is that sometimes, media—I don't know how to describe that. Some of the media are aligned to some of the political parties, so that becomes a little bit difficult. The problem is if any media is talking anything on the aspect of opposition parties, then that media is going to be attacked. This is the problem that really we're facing. So just as they used to say that if you are not with me you're against me—which is wrong—I may not be with you, but I may not be against you. I'm just working to see how things are going to be better.*

But the media generally, they play a good role in educating the people, especially the electronic media, like television and radio and all that. The print media do the same, but sometimes they do create controversies. Generally, I think, radio and television are more efficient, because when we're talking about many people, many cannot afford to buy papers, but many people can just sit around in a club or in a group or in the community, and the radio is switched on. Then at least you are able to hear that. Also you've got community television. They're just stationed some places, and people just group themselves, and they watch and listen to that. So these are very effective, radio and television. Newspapers—many people cannot read and cannot afford to buy the papers; not only that, they are also not well distributed. Most of the papers are just distributed in town. If you live outside the town, you don't find any shops selling newspapers there.

CHAUBEY: You mentioned—you showed me, actually, an article that a newspaper ran on how to have greater participation of people with disabilities. Are there other examples of maybe radio programs that were specifically targeted with this message?

KHALFAN: *Yes, for example, we have our own radio program; it is a weekly program. We call it the Voice of Disabled People. That one is running in thematic areas. So when it comes to elections, we're talking about civic education, so we'll be talking more about that: civic education, elections and all that. Also, we have got our own television program, so we do highlight that. We do produce our own newsletter. And we've got very good cooperation with the media, at least our organization, and they do support us a lot. Whenever we have an issue we call them, and they come, and they could just put that on the papers, on the radio, on the TV. For example, on 3rd December we have this International Day of Disabled*

People, so they are going to help us also to send the message across the country. So we are working very closely with the media. We are trying as much as possible not to fight with the media. Sometimes you have to, but they can destroy you. They can build you, but they can destroy you easily. I'm sure in the States it is the same. You can see how media built [Barack] Obama and how it destroyed [George] Bush.

CHAUBEY: In this relationship with the media that you're speaking about here, is it the private media or the public media that you interact with?

KHALFAN: *Both. We have only one government paper, and then the TV and radio, these are public, but also we are using private media. Most of the newspapers are private media, so we are using them.*

CHAUBEY: What are the aspects of election administration in which people with disabilities are involved, and how is this changing?

KHALFAN: *As I said, at least now we have one other person who is on the committee that sits with the ZEC. They are not a member of ZEC, but they sit with the ZEC committee where they discuss administration of the election. So that person representing us is the one who raises our concerns to the Electoral Committee through that committee. So that is how we are functioning.*

CHAUBEY: Are there others that you have evidence of that maybe people with disabilities are being employed in elections administration apart from this example?

KHALFAN: *No, so far no. At this time we are going to try, because they are capable people. We are going to try to see if they can employ at least in some of these—either polling stations or whatever. But I think that is something we're going to do now.*

CHAUBEY: Is that something you have discussed with the ZEC so far, or is it for later?

KHALFAN: *We have just discussed it internally. We hope maybe in the next meeting the representative will be able to raise that issue.*

CHAUBEY: I'd like to ask you for the future, what steps would you recommend, and to whom would you recommend them as a matter of priority in order to make the electoral process here more inclusive?

KHALFAN: *I think we need to recommend—especially now when you have the UN convention in place, when you have the national legislation in place, which stipulates all the rights and everything—our major recommendation is that elections should be made as accessible as possible for all people, including people with disabilities. They have also to look into the election laws and to see what gaps they have after all these developments so that they will be able to make amendments to those particular laws. But what we are really looking now, not only for disabled people to vote, but we want disabled people to get into the process of becoming members of Parliament, members of the House of Representatives.*

So we are in the process of recommending an amendment to the constitution so that they form a constituency for disabled people. This is not strange; Uganda has done that, and South Africa has done that. So they have a constituency. There you find that disabled people are elected into political positions. So each type of disability is getting represented. Once we get that one, it means our

influence will be much more, because it will be in the legislature, so they should be able to influence some of these legislations and some of the laws. That is what we are now planning, and we have already started to advocate for that.

CHAUBEY: When do you think something like this—is it likely to become a possibility?

KHALFAN: *I'm not sure. We are trying to work hard for 2010; I don't know, but that is our target. If we miss that one, at least the next one. But we are working very hard to see that we meet this target of 2010.*

CHAUBEY: Finally, I'd like to ask you about your role as an observer. Are there examples of election irregularities you observed, and if you observed any steps to correct them, what they were?

KHALFAN: *That's too long—it was 1995, it is more than ten years. There were some irregularities. For example, there were some forms that once the votes had been calculated and known in that particular station, then there should be a specific form where all the candidates have to sign whether they accept that result or not. In most polling stations, and some of those I observed, they were not available. So these are just written on papers. Some of the candidates refused to sign, or their agents refused to sign, and that was the starting of the chaos. It started there. That happened even in the last election, the same. Those forms are not available, I don't know why, because they should be in the polling station.*

The other thing that I observed is, especially the results for the presidential election are not announced by each station. They just collect them, but you never know how much in Station A, how much this candidate got and how much that candidate and all other candidates. It remains so secret. Then it ends up at the end of the day, coming up with results which don't tally with what people have recorded. This is something that maybe needs to be changed. Once you calculate, this is polling station A, you calculate the votes for each candidate including the president; you say, in this polling station candidate A got this, candidate B got this, candidate C got that. The candidate for the presidency A got this, presidency B got this, and so on. Then it should be signed. So that would help maybe remove this kind of chaos.

Otherwise you only tender for other candidates, but for the president, it is never. That's one thing. The other thing is, the law itself is a bit difficult as I observe it. For presidency results, the chairman of the electoral commission is the final—. Once he says that candidate A has won, it means there is no way you can appeal; that is the end of the story. That also creates chaos, because the court is not involved. With other candidates it is OK, but with the presidential candidates the law stops you. Once the chairman says, OK, you've got 10 and you've got five, that's final. I observed that also as a kind of a problem. That needs to be amended, so at least if there is any problem, that could be taken to court, where you should be able to put your claims, and the court should be able to make investigations and then come up with a judgment. So that is another thing that I have observed that is part of this chaos.

CHAUBEY: So at present, there is no way of registering a dispute with the electoral process?

KHALFAN: *With the president.*

CHAUBEY: With the presidential election.

KHALFAN: There is no way with the president. Once the chairman of the Electoral Commission announces, that's final. With other candidates you can take petitions to court; that's allowed, but only with the presidential election—.

CHAUBEY: Has there been some sort of move on the part of civil society to change this law?

KHALFAN: Well, it could—maybe when you send it back I can remove this one, but most of the civil society organizations in Zanzibar are not really strong enough for that. That's why I'm telling you, on the 27th, the 28th, I'm initiating with the UN Civil Society Advisory Committee to start a civil society forum at least to discuss some policy issues, to discuss some legislation issues and all that. But so far, no, they are not very strong on that. There are very, very few, maybe the Legal Center and just a few other organizations.

CHAUBEY: So this thing you're organizing on December 27th and 28th, is this specific to election law?

KHALFAN: No, this is just the initiation to start the forum. So we are going to have some papers, what they are calling One UN. Then we invited one or two other people to talk about civil society movements, their responsibilities, and all those kinds of things. Then later on, maybe, we are going to finalize forming a small committee that should work on this forum in the future, and then to give terms of reference and things like that.

CHAUBEY: Well, those are all the questions I have. Is there something that you feel we should have discussed that we haven't brought up?

KHALFAN: I think you brought up many issues. The only thing is, I think, we need to see how—because disabled people are the most marginalized in society, whether here or anywhere else, that's a fact. So with that marginalization, it means many disabled people are disempowered to understand their rights. So I feel that we need to see how we are going to remove this stereotype kind of attitude and create an enabling environment where people with disabilities feel that they are free in their own society, in their own country, and they are able to participate not only in elections but in any other program, activity, that concerns these communities as well. Maybe later on if you can find an organization in the States we could work with, especially on these electoral issues, that would be fine.

CHAUBEY: That sounds very good. Thank you so much for your time.