

STATEMENT OF THE NETWORK OF AFRICAN NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS FOLLOWING THE DETERIORATING SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN UGANDA

Nairobi, Kenya: August 23, 2018:

The Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) is a regional umbrella body that brings together 44 National Human Rights Institutions across Africa¹. The Network seeks to support and strengthen National Human Rights Institutions in Africa by promoting their compliance with the United Nations Paris Principles.

We wish to express our deepest regrets following reports on the current unfortunate events that have unfolded in Uganda since the arrest of civil rights protestors and some Members of the Parliament, including Mr. Robert Kyagulanyi.

The situation lends itself to violations of human rights and must be stopped forthwith from deteriorating any further.

It has been brought to our attention that other members of Parliament and civil rights protestors are being held incommunicado by the Police and Military in violation of the laws of the Republic of Uganda. The right to freedom from violence, torture and other forms of ill-treatment, and the rights to freedom of expression and assembly, the right to a fair trial are all in danger of gross violation if political and social disorder is left to persist.

African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (The Charter) requires states to protect the right of individuals irrespective of their political affiliation. The Charter also prohibits all forms of degradation of an individual particularly through torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment and treatment.

Uganda, being a member of the African Union, is, therefore, obliged to promote and protect human rights within its territory as outlined in the Charter. To uphold the Rule of Law and

¹ NHRIs of Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso; Burundi; Cameroon; Cape Verde; Chad; Rep. of Congo Brazzaville; Cote d'Ivoire; Comoros; Democratic Republic of Congo; Djibouti; Egypt; Ethiopia; Gabon; Ghana; Guinea Bissau; Guinea Conakry; Kenya; Liberia; Libya; Madagascar; Malawi; Mali; Mauritania; Mauritius; Morocco; Mozambique; Namibia; Niger; Nigeria; Rwanda; Senegal; Sierra Leone; South Africa; South Sudan; Sudan; Swaziland; Tanzania; Togo; Tunisia; Uganda; Zambia and Zimbabwe




international and regional human rights treaties, NANHRI supports the need to try all suspects under the Penal laws of the Republic of Uganda.

We, therefore, condemn all acts of violence, call for the observation of International and regional human rights treaties, and urge the Government of Uganda to refrain from excessive use of force to curb the riots and to allow for a return to normalcy.

Consequently, we strongly call upon the Government of Uganda, to observe the following as a duty to the Ugandan people:

- i. Respect for International and Regional Human Rights treaties to which Uganda is a State Party, and, specifically, to uphold non-derogable rights such as the right to freedom from torture;
- ii. Demonstrate restraint from using excessive force and unwarranted denial of the freedom of expression, assembly and peaceful protest;
- iii. Allow for an independent and impartial investigation into the violence that has unfolded prior and after the arrest of Members of the Parliament including Mr. Robert Kyagulanyi.
- iv. Ensure that the mandate of the Uganda Human Rights Commission of promotion and protection of human rights is not compromised either by engaging in acts that undermine its independence and its contribution to the Rule of Law and access to justice;
- v. Allow Mr. Robert Kyagulanyi access to medical services by taking him to a private hospital where he will get adequate medical attention and humane and dignified treatment;

Finally, we wish to call upon international, regional and local human rights defenders to monitor the unfolding human rights situation in Uganda for purposes of upholding due process of human rights mechanisms, as a way of ensuring accountability and that victims access available forms of redress.



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