



**OFFICE OF THE
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**



**STATEMENT ON ACCOUNT OF HUMAN RIGHTS' VIOLATIONS
IN UGANDA FOR THE YEARS 2019, 2020 AND 2021**

Moved under Rule 53 of the Rules of Procedure

**By
Mpuuga Mathias (MP)
Leader of the Opposition**

March, 2022

Rt. Hon. Speaker and Honourable Members,

On 03rd February 2022, we exited the Plenary in protest against the inaction, collusion, tacitly and directly, by the State and its actors regarding the worst forms of gross human rights violations in this country over the past three years of 2019, 2020 2021.

On that day and in our statements made before the House earlier on, we indicated that these atrocities had manifested through brutality by various security organisations, that is, Uganda Police Force, Uganda People's Defence Forces and Local Defence Unit, and other sister organizations like the Internal Security Organization. Their demeaning raging forms of brutality were mainly in the form of use of live bullets to disperse crowds that left many dead and scores injured, deliberate run-over of opposition supporters with Police and Military trucks, beating people with batons and sticks, kidnapping and abducting especially people affiliated with the opposition, and other various repressive mechanisms aimed at stifling dissent.

We indicated that we shall return to the House with a Motion on the rampant gross human rights abuses seeking for intervention and remedial action from Parliament.

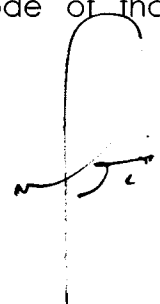
Between then and now, a lot has happened including initiation of the process to censure the Minister of Security over his inaction and laxity in the face of gross human rights at the hands of the security operatives. The procedure was initiated by a notice which as require by the Rules was followed by a process of collection of signatures in support of the censure motion the Minister of Security by the Sergeant-at-arms.

The exercise lasted for a mandatory period of 10 days and by the final day, 88 (Eighty Eight) Hon. Members of Parliament had appended their signatures respectively in support of the motion, short of the requisite number.

Rt. Hon. Speaker we should not take this lightly. This is a strong representation and sends a very strong message to the Country that 88 (Eighty Eight) constituencies are discontented with the current spate of human rights violations by security officers. This has reinforced resolute in pursuit of justice for the victims of human rights abuses. *(I beg to lay the list of Hon. Members who signed in support of the motion)*

In other developments, on 08th February 2022 the Acting Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs presented a statement on reports of alleged human rights violations by state security operatives.

In that statement, the Government acknowledged receipt from us of a list of names of some of the missing persons at the hands of security operatives, but did not act upon it, purportedly because no clear particulars regarding address of the victims was provided. How do we know the area code of those who are held incommunicado by the State?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized 'J' or 'K' with a horizontal stroke, located at the bottom right of the page.

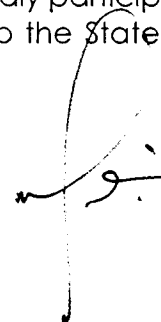
Secondly, one wonders whether the Hon. Minister took time to consider the list which was provided, otherwise if he did details on how those people were kidnapped are there in black and white, and the names of the family members are clearly indicated in case further information is required in that regard. In any case, I personally presented that list to him, how inconvenient was it for him to contact me for the details. For avoidance of doubt, I wish to present the list as provided to the Hon. Minister, thus,

1. Kasumba George arrested from Kasaali Town Council, Kyotera on 19th January, 2021. He was arrested together with 18 others who were dropped in Kyotera on 22nd March, 2021;
2. Mbabazi Moses picked by armed gunmen from Kisekka Market on 07th December, 2020. His sister's (Namugenyi Sanyu Juliet) number is 0706627697;
3. Wangolo Shafic of Kyebando and Nansana. His wife's (Nabakooza Florence) telephone number is 0774638441;
4. Nalumoso Vincent was picked from Bugolobi Market on the 01st December, 2020. His wife is called Nanyonga Eron and can be reached on telephone number - 0758940041;
5. Kibalama John Bosco was picked from Kumukaaga, Gayaza Road on 3rd June, 2019. Since then his whereabouts remain unknown. His sister can be reached on 0755031731;
6. Muhammad Kanatta was picked from Walusubi village, Namawojolo, Mukono District. Hon. Kiwanuka Abdallah reported this matter to Police but no action has been taken.
7. Ssempija Yudah was picked from Kabembe Village, Kyampisi Subcounty, Mukono North, Mukono District. Hon. Kiwanuka Abdallah reported this matter to Police but no action has been taken.

Besides that there are other human rights violations for which the public has long awaited for reports, redress, apprehension and punishment of the officers involved. These include;

Brutal November 2020 killings

Rt. Hon. Speaker, as a result of the infamous November 2020 shootings many people lost their lives whereas others were maimed and are still nursing wounds without any support from the government. The government committed to have the matter investigated and audited, however, all that has been achieved was the categorization of the victims into a cluster of 20 persons who were shot and killed by stray bullets whereas 34 others were shot and killed for allegedly participating in riots. The details of the report remain a top secret only known to the State despite the President's promise to make the same public.



Additionally, on 29th November 2020, the government undertook to compensate all those who were affected by the indiscriminate shootings, but to date many victims are still waiting for this promise to materialise and their hopes are now fading with immense despair for the injuries they suffered and the loss of their loved ones, respectively.

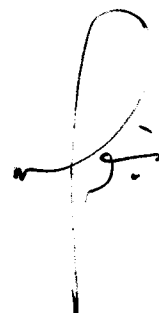
On 09th June 2021 during the commemoration of the 32nd Heroes Day Anniversary, the President admitted that it was due to the reckless and inappropriate reaction of the security forces that the 54 people died. The President is on record stating that he finally identified the security officers who are criminally liable for the November killings, but no action has been taken to date.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, how do we report to those who lost their loved ones that the culprits were identified, but not arraigned before court to account for their actions?

Many innocent Ugandans were killed and others injured while on the campaign trail for Hon. Kyagulanyi Robert Sentamu who was contesting for the presidency in the 2021 General elections. Those who were killed include;

1. Ssentenza Frank Kalibbala
2. Micheal Kalinda aka Ziggy Wine,
3. Ritah Nabukenya
4. Daniel Kyeyune
5. Ibrahim Mutaasa
6. Willy Kayondo of Kubbiri Roundabout
7. Sophie Kusasira of Kalerwe B Market
8. Baker Kato Lubwama shot from namulanda
9. Martin Owekikye
10. Tsubira Elijah
11. Elijah Mukibi Kaate of Luweero
12. Umaru Ssemakula of Entebbe/Gomba
13. Katwere Kimuli of Seeta
14. Musisi Allan Kitete Mukono
15. Peter Mwanje of Nansana
16. Mugerwa William of Wankulukuku
17. Baatio Sofi of Obongi
18. Alionji Nobert of Obongi
19. Fungaroo Moro of Obongi
20. Shaaba Saraf of Obongi
21. Akim Abile of Obongi – deliberately drowned by UPF and UPDF on 15th Jan., 2021
22. Bukere Nuhu abducted from Mukono Municipality, murdered and dumped in Kalangala.

The relatives of the deceased are still reeling in bereavement with no hope of ever receiving justice for the death of their loved ones.



Extra judicial killings

Following the twin bombings in Kampala on the 16th of November, 2021, security forces shot dead over twelve (12) suspected terror attackers, four (4) of whom were killed in Ntoroko district; Sheikh Muhammad Abbas Kirevu was shot dead while on handcuffs by security agencies; a one Musa Mudasir alias Moze was shot dead at Bwaise, Kawempe Division; Muhammad Kiryowa alias Musa Kiryowa was also shot dead in cold blood.

Even before the attacks, the security agencies had made it fashionable to kill suspects on spot for instance the former national boxing captain, Isaac Ssenyange alias Mando Zebra, Maka Umar, Ronald Ssebulime and many more were killed in on spot by security operatives.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, by law, any arresting officer is allowed reasonable or necessary force in effecting the arrest. The force employed should be proportional to the circumstances. The use of fire arms during arrests amounts to excessive force if the suspect is unarmed. Even if some of the suspects were purportedly evading arrest, the fire arm should only be used to incapacitate the suspect and deter evasion but not to kill.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, reports indicate that most of the victims who have been killed were already handcuffed and in essence posed no threat warranting use of a fire arm.

Torture while in detention

Rt. Hon. Speaker, recently a one **Samuel Masereka**, the Registrar of the National Unity Platform (NUP) in Kasese district was abducted by security personnel on December 7, 2021 taken to the Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence (CMI) in Mbuya where he was detained and tortured for twenty (20) days until he was released on 28th January 2020. Masereka's legs were swollen, and bore fresh scars and wounds all over his body including his private parts. His condition is, to say the least, traumatising. He narrated that for the period he was in detention the security personnel severely beat him and poured hot water on him which left him grievously burnt and wounded.

Another incident I can highlight now, concerns **Kakwenza Rukirabashaija** who was arrested, tortured while in detention and later charged for disturbing the peace of the President of Uganda and his son.

His story is also full of trauma and terror. The medical examination conducted on him by the Prisons Authority at Kitalya Min Max Prison on 11th January 2022 revealed that Kakwenza had healing scars of wounds sustained before being remanded to prison. Later, I visited him at the Prison whereat he showed me fresh scars and wounds on some parts of his body. His finger nails had patches of blood caused by injuries he sustained during the torture sessions. He told me that the soldiers used a pair of pliers to pluck his finger nails and other body parts before being made to dance nonstop throughout the day and night. It is on court record that Kakwenza was taken to Court by security operatives but none of them has been apprehended or charged for torture unleashed on Kakwenza.



Other similar incidents occurred in the recent past for instance when Hon. Kyagulanyi was arrested from Arua and subsequently severely tortured by the State operatives, Hon. Francis Zaake has on several occasions faced it rough to the extent of almost losing his sight and limbs. Surprisingly, in regard to Hon. Kyagulanyi, his tormentors were praised for job well done and possibly have since been promoted whereas for Hon. Francis Zaake the High Court made a finding that he was tortured but no effort or step has been taken to apprehend and bring to book the errant officers.

We cannot say that these are isolated incidents. I sense danger on muzzling dissenting voices and delimiting space for holding accountable those in power. If this happened to them today, and no statement or remedial action has been taken by the government how shall we all here be spared if our turn comes.

Detention without trial

To date, Hon. Ssewanyana and Hon. Ssegirinya continue ailing from Prison without being arraigned in Court for trial, after a period of five (5) months after their arrest. While the case of the Hon. Members has receive wide media coverage, several people are still under detention for without any trial whereas others ever since their arrest their whereabouts remain unknown to any of their close relatives or at all.

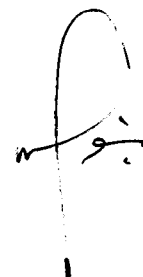
On 04th August 2021, in my response to the State of the Nation Address, I challenged this August House to demand an account from the State on the highlighted human rights abuses. I detailed particulars of the victims and missing persons at the hands of the State but to date no accountability has been made neither has the State felt any sense of responsibility to respond. This indifference is only synonymous with an oppressive State.

Slow or non-intervention of the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) into human rights abuses

We are concerned that the UHRC has been slow to intervene in issues relating to human rights abuse in this country. Even on the most eminent and gross violations the UHRC remains unconcerned. Worse still, complaints filed with the UHRC die on arrival. Files are rarely handled beyond the UHRC Registry for instance on 09th February 2021, Namugumya Zainab a resident of Kimaanya Kabonera, Masaka City filed a complaint for the injuries that she and her children sustained as a result of negligence on part of Police. But since then the UHRC has not taken action on her file despite follow ups on a number of occasions. *(I beg to lay copy of the complaint filed on 09th February 2021 by Namugumya Zainab)*

Conclusion

We appreciate that the Deputy Speaker referred this issue on rampant human rights abuses and violations to the Committee on Human Rights for investigations and recommendations.

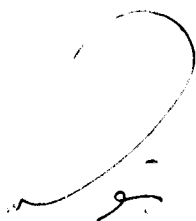


Notably, immediately after the 2021 General Elections the Committee on Human Rights conducted an inquiry into the allegations of human rights violations that marred the 2021 elections. A number of witnesses were summoned and written submissions made including the report from NUP – Masaka City Office dated 12th March 2021 which showed the human rights violations ordeals in that region. Since then no report has ever been made by the Committee on the findings to Parliament. *(I beg to lay a copy of the report from NUP – Masaka City Office dated 12th March 2021)*

We hope that the Committee on Human Rights will undertake nationwide inquest into the violations, listen to the affected parties and their families, extensively scrutinise all the evidence available, and make a recommendations which shall be followed to their logical conclusion.

In that regard, we decided to stay the presentation of our motion on human rights abuses pending investigations, findings and recommendations of the Committee on Human Rights. The Committee undertook to deliver their report in 45 days. We pray that the Report is delivered within the agreed time and without delay.

I beg to submit.

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