



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

Commission internationale de juristes - Comisión Internacional de Juristas

" dedicated since 1952 to the primacy, coherence and implementation of international law and principles that advance human rights "

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ICJ Oral Intervention on the Adoption of the Outcome Document of the Universal Periodic Review of Uganda

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Madam President,

The unlawful use of lethal force by Ugandan security forces against the peaceful exercise of rights and freedoms, together with arbitrary arrests and harassment of political opponents and human rights defenders continue to pose a threat to the rule of law and respect for human rights in Uganda.

Especially before, during and after the February 2011 elections, human rights defenders have faced intimidation and politically motivated criminal charges. Despite this, the Government has not conducted effective criminal investigations into the April 2011 killings and other serious abuses attributable to State agents. Just last month, a meeting of LGBT human rights defenders was shut down by the Minister for Ethics and Integrity and the organizers were threatened with arrest.

Uganda continues to use military courts to try civilians, in contravention of international standards and the domestic constitution. The military judicial systems function in violation of international fair trial standards, including through sporadic and slow proceedings, failure to afford adequate defense preparation, lack of competence by military judges, the admission as evidence of information extracted through torture and ill-treatment, and the detention of suspects for periods exceeding the maximum punishment for the offences for which they are charged.

The Anti-Homosexuality Bill has been reintroduced in Parliament. The punishment for acts of aggravated homosexuality is death. The Bill also makes it a crime to "promote homosexuality" and legitimizes violent homophobia and discrimination.

The International Commission of Jurists urges the Government of Uganda to:

- Protect the legitimate exercise of freedoms of assembly, association and expression;
- Ensure that the Anti Homosexuality Bill is not adopted into law;
- Stop the use of military courts to try civilian suspects and ensure compliance by security and prosecutorial officials with fair trial standards; and
- End impunity for gross human rights violations, in particular those implicating State agents.

I thank you.

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