



26th JULY 2024

STATEMENT CONCERNING THE MARCH TO PARLIAMENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN UGANDA

The African Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (ACTV) followed the demonstration named 'March to parliament' by the youths in Uganda against corruption. Freedom of expression and assembly is a cornerstone for a democratic society and should be an aspiration for all States in the world. ACTV acknowledges the national and constitutional duty by security agencies to preserve peace and security besides property for all Ugandans as per the National Objectives and Directive principle III in the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda as amended. Relatedly, we wish to remind the security agencies that the freedom to assemble and to demonstrate together with others peacefully and unarmed and to petition is a human right guaranteed under Article 29 (1) (d) of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda as amended.

The latter is not a privilege. Therefore, as guidance was given by the supreme court of Uganda in *Muwanga Kivumbi V Attorney General* [2017] UGSC 4 (14 February 2017), Uganda Police Force should be seen to facilitate peaceful assemblies and demonstrations as opposed to regulating. Failure to protect and respect this right, consequently leads to infringement of other rights including, the right to freedom from torture which is absolute as per Article 24 and 44 (a) of our cherished 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

We want to commend the Security Officers that have exercised discipline and professionalism during the last 2 days of the demonstrations. However, we have also noted with concern on several media platforms the arbitrary arrests of youths demonstrating and lawyers denied access to suspects arrested during demonstrations.

We therefore call upon,

- The security agencies to exercise their mandate without violating rights and freedoms especially the right of freedom from torture cruel and inhumane degrading treatment.
- All criminal justice actors to ensure that those arrested are granted all their rights i.e. a right to access a lawyer and doctor, right to bail, right to a fair hearing among others
- The public to remain vigilant and report any person that breaks the law.

As an organization we remain committed to advocating for torture free communities for all by all, and also offer treatment and rehabilitation services to any survivor of torture and ill treatment.

For more information or report on torture complaints, please contact us;

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