



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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# Uganda

**Decision adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 209<sup>th</sup> session  
(Nusa Dua, 24 March 2022)**



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UGA-24 – Allan Aloizious Ssewanyana  
UGA-25 – Muhammad Ssegirinya

## Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ Abduction
- ✓ Torture, ill-treatment and other acts of violence
- ✓ Arbitrary arrest and detention
- ✓ Inhumane conditions of detention
- ✓ Lack of due process at the investigation stage
- ✓ Lack of fair trial proceedings
- ✓ Failure to respect parliamentary immunity

## A. Summary of the case

The case concerns allegations of human rights violations, including, *inter alia*, arbitrary detention, torture, inhumane conditions of detention and lack of fair trial proceedings, affecting two opposition members of parliament in Uganda. According to the complainant, the two members of parliament have been targeted because of their political opinions and their work as opposition parliamentarians.

On 7 September 2021, the Hon. Muhammad Ssegirinya was arrested together with the Hon. Allan Aloizious Ssewanyana by the Ugandan police on allegations that the two parliamentarians were involved in the murder of three individuals. They were charged with the offences of murder, terrorism, aiding and abetting terrorism and attempted murder. All these crimes were purportedly committed on 23 August 2021 in Masaka District. The two members of parliament were subsequently remanded in custody and held in Kigo Government Prison. On 21 September 2021, both members of parliament were granted bail by the High Court of Uganda sitting in Masaka.

## Case UGA-Coll-02

**Uganda:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victims:** Two male opposition members of parliament

**Qualified complainant(s):** Section I.1.(a) of the Committee Procedure (Annex I)

**Submission of complaint:** January 2022

**Recent IPU decision:** February 2022

**IPU mission(s):** - - -

**Recent Committee hearing:** Hearing with the Ugandan delegation to the 144<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (March 2022)

### Recent follow-up:

- Communication(s) from the authorities: - - -
- Communication from the complainant: March 2022
- Communication(s) to the authorities: - Letter to the Speaker of the National Assembly (March 2022)
- Communication to the complainant: March 2022

The complainant states that, on 24 September 2021, after having paid bail, Mr. Ssewanyana was released from Kigo Government Prison but was immediately attacked at the prison gate, manhandled and abducted by gun-wielding men in plain clothes, who whisked him away to an unknown destination. On 27 September 2021, Mr. Ssegirinya was also released from Kigo Government Prison, but he too was immediately abducted at the prison gate by similarly dressed men wielding heavy weapons and whisked away to an unknown destination.

On 30 September 2021, after days of detention at unknown detention facilities, the two members of parliament were summoned to the Chief Magistrate's Court in Masaka and read additional charges. According to the complainant, they appeared frail and informed the court that they had been brutally tortured through physical beatings while in detention. On the occasions the members of parliament re-appeared in court to hear their cases, they showed physical, festering wounds and complained of torture and humiliation while in detention. The complainant also states that the members of parliament informed the presiding judge that they had been prevented from receiving medical attention by a doctor of their choice and that they had been banned from receiving any visitors, including family members, while in prison.

At the hearing held during the 144<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly, the Ugandan delegation stated that the two members of parliament had been re-arrested on additional charges, the investigation of which was under way, that there was no provision under Ugandan law prohibiting the arrest of a person who had been granted bail on different charges, and that the next stage was for their case to be placed on the hearing cause list. The delegation also informed the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians that on several occasions the Human Rights Committee of the Parliament of Uganda visited the two members of parliament in Kigo Prison and Mulago National Referral Hospital in the presence of their legal representatives, and in the case of Mr. Ssegirinya in the presence of his private doctor. The parliamentary committee also interviewed the prison authorities, the two parliamentarians concerned and other stakeholders. Preliminary investigations have so far not led to a definitive conclusion as to whether the members of parliament have been tortured.

According to the complainant, the two members of parliament have remained in detention since 7 September 2021 and all efforts to secure their release on bail have been unsuccessful to date. They also need specialized medical treatment, which they cannot access at the Kigo Prison facilities. Mr. Ssegirinya's condition is particularly unstable as he has an underlying condition requiring urgent medical attention, while Mr. Ssewanyana has an injured leg.

## **B. Decision**

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Notes* that the complaint was declared admissible by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians under its Procedure for the examination and treatment of complaints during its 167<sup>th</sup> session (February 2022);
2. *Thanks* the delegation of Uganda for the information provided and for meeting with the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians during the 144<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly to discuss the cases and concerns at hand;
3. *Commends* the Parliament of Uganda, in particular its Committee on Human Rights, for the efforts made to investigate the allegations of torture and visit Mr. Ssewanyana and Mr. Ssegirinya in prison; *calls on* parliament to continue using its powers effectively to ensure that the allegations of torture against the two parliamentarians are fully investigated, followed by whatever steps are warranted as a result to ensure accountability; and *wishes* to be kept informed of progress made in this regard;
4. *Is deeply concerned* about the continued detention of the members of parliament, in view of the worrying allegations concerning their conditions of detention and mistreatment while in custody and the alleged deterioration in their state of health; *urges* the national authorities to take all necessary steps to ensure Mr. Ssewanyana's and Mr. Ssegirinya's full enjoyment of their rights, in particular their right to life, to physical integrity and to access to judicial guarantees, and that they receive the necessary medical care; and *requests* the

authorities to provide official and detailed information on the facts justifying each of the charges brought against the two members of parliament, on further steps taken to investigate the alleged acts of torture reported by the complainant and on progress made in the identification and punishment, if any, of those responsible;

5. *Requests* the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to send a delegation to Uganda as soon as possible and as soon as the COVID-19-related public health situation permits, so as to meet with all authorities exercising legislative, executive or judicial powers, as well as the prison authorities and any other institution, civil society organization or individual in a position to provide relevant information regarding the situation of Mr. Ssewanyana and Mr. Ssegirinya; *tasks* the delegation with visiting the detained members of parliament; *hopes* that the competent national authorities will cooperate fully and that the mission will help to swiftly find satisfactory solutions to this case in accordance with applicable national and international human rights standards; and *thanks* the Ugandan delegation to the 144<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly for the assurances of support that it has given on this matter;
6. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the Speaker of the National Assembly, the complainant and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information;
7. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report back to it in due course.