

UGANDA

- **UGA-COLL-01:** Five parliamentarians
- **UGA-COLL-02:** Two parliamentarians
- **UGA-26:** Betty Nambooze (Ms.)



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Uganda

Decision adopted by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians at its 179th session (Geneva, 2 to 18 February 2026)



© Francis Zaake

UGA-19 – Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu (aka Bobi Wine)

UGA-20 – Francis Zaake

UGA-21 – Kassiano Wadri

UGA-22 – Gerald Karuhanga

UGA-23 – Paul Mwiru

Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ Torture, ill-treatment and other acts of violence
- ✓ Arbitrary arrest and detention
- ✓ Lack of due process at the investigation stage
- ✓ Lack of fair trial proceedings
- ✓ Violation of freedom of opinion and expression
- ✓ Impunity

A. Summary of the case

The complaint was initially received against the background of the by-election in Arua municipality in Uganda on 15 August 2018. Of the five members of parliament listed in the present case, only Mr. Francis Zaake was re-elected in 2021 and 2026.

The five individuals were violently arrested in the district of Arua on 14 August 2018, the eve of the by-election, along with 29 other people, after President Yoweri Museveni's convoy was reportedly pelted with stones. According to credible reports and

Case UGA-COLL-01

Uganda: Parliament affiliated to the IPU

Victims: Five male parliamentarians (four independent and one opposition parliamentarian)

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

Submission of complaint: August 2018

Recent IPU decision: March 2022

IPU mission: January 2020

Recent Committee hearing: Hearing with the Ugandan delegation to the 150th IPU Assembly (April 2025)

Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: Letter from the Speaker of Parliament (January 2023)
- Communication from the complainants: January 2026
- Communication to the authorities: Letter to the Speaker of Parliament (December 2025)
- Communication to the complainants: January 2026

information gathered on the ground by the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP), the parliamentarians were tortured and ill-treated while in detention. All those arrested, including the five parliamentarians, were charged with treason, which in Uganda carries the death penalty. On 6 August 2019, the following additional charges were reportedly brought against them in relation to the same events: intent to annoy, alarm or ridicule the President, incitement to violence, disobedience of lawful orders, failure to prevent obstruction of traffic, confusion or disorder during a public meeting, and failure to give right of way to the President.

The complainants claim that due process guarantees have been violated from the outset, that the parliamentarians are victims of political repression, as there is no evidence to support the charges brought against them, and that no effective action has been taken to hold to account the security forces that mistreated them while arresting them.

The complainants further state that, at the time the complaint was first lodged, Mr. Kyagulanyi was a popular young parliamentarian, strongly supported, among others, by the four other parliamentarians in this case, and a well-known singer who enjoyed wide popularity among young people. Through his songs and parliamentary work between 2017 and 2021, he had been a vocal critic of President Museveni and his government. The complainants affirm that the authorities were doing everything possible to prevent Mr. Kyagulanyi from staging concerts and thus conveying his music and political message.

From 25 to 29 January 2020, a CHRP delegation conducted an on-site mission to Uganda. Despite its specific request, the delegation was not able to obtain concrete information on possible ongoing cases against police officers in connection with the allegations of torture against the five members of parliament. The delegation was told that no information could be disclosed as the matter was *sub judice*. Among other concerns, the delegation regretted that no progress seemed to have been made towards investigating these allegations and urged the relevant authorities to conduct a prompt, impartial and independent investigation, including, where appropriate, the filing of specific torture charges against the perpetrators and the application of the corresponding penalties under domestic law. It also urged parliament to use its oversight powers effectively to this end.

Mr. Francis Zaake was detained by the police and military again on Sunday evening, 19 April 2020 and released on 29 April 2020. According to information received, Mr. Zaake was severely tortured while in detention, denied access to his lawyer and family, food and independent medical attention. The complainants also informed the IPU that Mr. Zaake and other Ugandan members of parliament have been arrested and reportedly mistreated while in custody on several occasions, before being subsequently released.

At the hearing held during the 150th IPU Assembly in April 2025, the Ugandan delegation agreed with the Committee on the value of a visit to Uganda, reiterating that the formal request for such a visit had been submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for consideration.

In February 2026, the complainants informed the Committee that the situation had not evolved since the last IPU public decision on this case, and that general elections were held in Uganda in January 2026 in an environment reportedly marked by widespread repression and intimidation of the political opposition, human rights defenders, journalists and individuals holding dissenting views. The Committee was also informed that Mr. Kyagulanyi, the main challenger to President Museveni in the election, was reportedly forced to flee his home on 16 January 2026, leaving his family behind following what he described as a night raid by police and military forces. His whereabouts have since been unknown.

B. Decision

The Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

1. *Regrets* the continued absence of a response from the Parliament to repeated formal correspondence concerning the various situations before the Committee; and *expresses serious concern* that, despite assurances of cooperation provided by the Ugandan delegation to the 150th IPU Assembly (April 2025), the mission requested by the Committee several years ago has still not been facilitated, thereby obstructing the Committee's work, preventing a full examination of the matters, and delaying a possible resolution;

2. *Reiterates* its previous long-standing concerns relating to the impunity that seemingly reigns in the cases at hand with regard to the allegations of torture committed against the members of parliament in 2018; *reaffirms* that impunity, by shielding those responsible from judicial action and accountability, decisively encourages the perpetration of further serious human rights violations and that attacks against the life and personal integrity of members of parliament, when left unpunished, not only violate the fundamental rights of individual parliamentarians and of those who elected them, but also affect the integrity of parliament and its ability to fulfil its role as an institution; *urges*, once again, parliament to use its oversight powers effectively to ensure that the allegations of torture against the five members of parliament in 2018 are fully and effectively investigated, followed by whatever accountability steps are warranted as a result; and *requests* the parliamentary authorities to provide information on any relevant developments in this regard and on any action taken by parliament to this end;
3. *Invites* the newly elected parliament to engage in a constructive dialogue with the Committee and the IPU to advance towards a satisfactory settlement of this case; *affirms* that the IPU stands ready to provide assistance upon request aimed at strengthening the capacities of the Parliament of Uganda to identify any underlying issues that gave rise to the current case and to rectify such issues; and *invites* the competent authorities to provide further information on how the IPU could best provide such assistance;
4. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda, the complainants and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information;
5. *Decides* to continue examining this case.



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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

On 7 September 2021, Mr. Muhammad Ssegirinya was arrested together with Mr. Allan Aloizious Ssewanyana by the Ugandan police on allegations that the two opposition parliamentarians were involved in the murder of two individuals and the attempted murder of a third person. They were charged with the offences of murder, terrorism, aiding and abetting terrorism and attempted murder, along with four other co-accused. 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 30 September 2021, 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

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: March 2023

IPU mission(s): - - -

Recent Committee hearing: Hearing with the Ugandan delegation to the 150th IPU Assembly (April 2025)

Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: January 2023
- Communication from the complainant: January 2026
- Communication to the authorities: Letter to the Speaker of the National Assembly (December 2025)
- Communication to the complainant: January 2026

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. According to the complainant, on 13 February 2023, the two members of parliament were granted bail and transferred to a hospital for urgent medical attention.

A trial observer mandated by the IPU travelled to Uganda on 11 February 2023 and on 6 March 2023 to observe the proceedings against the two members of parliament. The observer reported that, although the hearings had finally been adjourned on both occasions, the general court atmosphere was calm and that court workers were cooperative with the observer.

Mr. Ssegirinya was allowed to travel abroad for specialized medical treatment, after which he decided to return to his country. According to the complainant, Mr. Ssegirinya may have been intentionally infected with an incurable virus while in prison, which led to his death on 8 January 2025. On 17 March 2025, the International Crimes Division of the High Court of Uganda ruled that the charges against Mr. Ssegirinya automatically abated as a result of his death.

At the hearing held during the 150th IPU Assembly (April 2025), the Ugandan delegation asserted that the arrest of the two members of parliament had been carried out in accordance with the applicable laws and procedures and that the privileges of members of parliament under Ugandan law did not include immunity from criminal prosecution. Regarding action taken by parliament, the delegation reported that the Human Rights Committee of the Parliament of Uganda had conducted multiple visits to the two members of parliament in prison. The parliamentary committee also interviewed the prison authorities, the two parliamentarians concerned and other stakeholders. It subsequently produced a report that could be made available to the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP) upon request. The situation of the two members of parliament had been discussed several times in parliament and the Speaker of Parliament had called for a speedy trial. While the criminal case against Mr. Ssewanyana is still pending, he remains free on bail and able to carry out his parliamentary duties. Regarding the allegations of torture and their possible connection to the death of Mr. Ssegirinya, the delegation stated that investigations carried out by the relevant national authorities had not found evidence to support these claims. The outcomes of such investigations could be made available to the CHRP as well. Finally, the delegation agreed with the CHRP on the value of visiting Uganda and reiterated that the formal request for such a visit had been submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for consideration.

Parliamentary elections took place in Uganda in January 2026, and Mr. Ssewanyana was not re-elected. No formal response has been received from the Parliament to repeated requests for facilitation of the CHRP mission, and the parliamentary reports and outcomes of State investigations referred to above have not been provided.

B. Decision

The Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

1. *Regrets* the continued absence of a response from the Parliament to repeated formal correspondence concerning the various situations before the Committee; and *expresses serious concern* that, despite assurances of cooperation provided by the Ugandan delegation to the 150th IPU Assembly (April 2025), the mission requested by the Committee several years ago has still not been facilitated, thereby obstructing the Committee's work, preventing a full examination of the matters, and delaying a possible resolution;
2. *Remains deeply disturbed* by the grave allegation that the death of Mr. Ssegirinya may have resulted directly from acts of torture; *recalls* that according to the information provided by the Ugandan delegation to the 150th IPU Assembly (April 2025), a number of reports issued by parliamentary bodies and relevant State agencies, setting out conclusions and findings concerning the treatment of both parliamentarians mentioned in the resent case during their detention, as well as the causes and circumstances surrounding the death of Mr. Ssegirinya are available and may be transmitted to the CHRP; and *requests once more* in this regard that Parliament provide copies of all reports in its possession, insofar as they contain verified information relevant to assessing the allegations of torture allegedly suffered by the two members of parliament, the factual circumstances and conditions surrounding the death of Mr. Ssegirinya, and any investigative or judicial measures undertaken to establish accountability;

3. *Reiterates* that the allegations in this case have to be seen in the context of the CHRP's concerns in other existing cases in Uganda about the lack of respect for the physical integrity of members of the opposition and the lack of accountability whenever they are subject to ill-treatment or torture;
4. *Reiterates its firm hope* that a CHRP delegation can finally travel to Uganda to meet with all relevant authorities exercising legislative, executive and judicial powers and any other institution, civil society organization or individual in a position to provide relevant information on the present case as well as on the other Ugandan cases before the Committee; *calls on* the parliamentary authorities, once again, to do their utmost to obtain a response from the executive authorities regarding such a mission as soon as possible; and *trusts* that the competent national authorities will cooperate fully to help the mission find swift satisfactory solutions to this and the other cases in accordance with applicable national and international human rights standards, and to obtain first-hand information on the status of the implementation of the CHRP's recommendations following its [mission](#) to Uganda in 2020;
5. *Remains concerned* at the seriousness of the charges against Mr. Ssewanyana, which carry particularly severe penalties under Ugandan law, including life imprisonment and the death penalty; *reiterates its wish* to mandate a new a trial observer to continue monitoring the upcoming court proceedings; and *wishes* to be kept informed of the dates of future hearings when available and of any other relevant judicial developments in the case;
6. *Invites* the newly elected parliament to engage in a constructive dialogue with the Committee and the IPU to advance towards a satisfactory settlement of this case; *affirms* that the IPU stands ready to provide assistance upon request aimed at strengthening the capacities of the Parliament of Uganda to identify any underlying issues that gave rise to the current case and to rectify such issues; and *invites* the competent authorities to provide further information on how the IPU could best provide such assistance;
7. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the Speaker of Parliament, the complainant and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information;
8. *Decides* to continue examining this case.



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UGA-26 – Betty Nambooze

Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ Torture, ill-treatment and other acts of violence
- ✓ Threats, acts of intimidation
- ✓ Arbitrary arrest and detention
- ✓ Inhumane conditions of detention
- ✓ Lack of fair trial proceedings
- ✓ Other acts obstructing the exercise of the parliamentary mandate

A. Summary of the case

The case concerns allegations of human rights violations, including, *inter alia*, ill-treatment and other acts of violence, arbitrary detention, inhumane conditions of detention and acts obstructing the exercise of the parliamentary mandate, affecting one woman opposition member of parliament in Uganda. According to the complainant, the member of parliament has been targeted because of her political opinions and her work as an opposition parliamentarian.

According to the information provided by the complainant, Ms. Betty Nambooze was beaten by a group of security operatives on 27 September 2017 while she was in parliament. The events took place against the backdrop of controversial debates in parliament about the Constitution Amendment Bill No. 2 of 2017.

The complainant reports that during a violent incident in parliament that day, a group of security operatives attacked Ms. Nambooze. They forced her body into uncomfortable contortions, including forcing her shoulders, arms and hands to touch each other behind her back while one of them applied strong pressure on her back using a knee. She was then arrested and transferred to the headquarters of the Special Investigations Unit of the Uganda police force located in Kireka, where

Case UGA-26

Uganda: Parliament affiliated to the IPU

Victim: A female opposition member of parliament

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

Submission of complaint: February 2023

Recent IPU decision: March 2023

IPU mission(s): - - -

Recent Committee hearing: Hearing with the Ugandan delegation to the 150th IPU Assembly (April 2025)

Recent follow-up:

- Communication(s) from the authorities:
- - -
- Communication from the complainant:
February 2026
- Communication to the authorities: Letter to the Speaker of the Parliament (December 2025)
- Communication to the complainant:
February 2026

she remained for seven hours without receiving medical attention, despite her deteriorating condition and her specific requests. None of her children, her husband or friends were permitted to see her, even though they were present at the police station.

After Ms. Nambooze's release, towards midnight on 27 September 2017, she was driven in a police vehicle to Bugolobi Medical Centre where she was admitted for over a fortnight. Subsequent medical examinations revealed that, as a result of the beatings and contortions inflicted, three discs within her lower vertebrae had become compressed, thereby endangering her spinal cord. The complainant asserts that, in total violation of Ms. Nambooze's privacy and security, men and women forced themselves into the examination rooms and read through all reports and notes that were being written as she went through tests and treatment.

Ms. Nambooze travelled to India for surgery and treatment. The complainant claims that pleading with the government medical and administrative departments in charge to allow and enable her to travel took a total of one and a half months, during which time she was hospitalized in Kampala without receiving the specialized treatment required. Ms. Nambooze returned to Uganda in late November 2017. As she was preparing to travel back to India for a check-up in June 2018, and still in the process of healing, she was re-arrested on charges of "offensive communication" and manhandled again by security officers. According to the complainant, Ms. Nambooze remained immobile in a prison cell for nearly a week, unable to sit up or stand and in constant pain. She was then transferred to a hospital but, on the way, a police vehicle struck the ambulance. In the collision, her spine was further damaged, and her knee was severely injured. Doctors later determined that one of the metal screws implanted in her back had been dislodged and was pressing on a major nerve.

Ms. Nambooze was finally given bond and flown to India for another round of surgery in July 2018. She has also been allowed to receive regular treatment in the United States. According to the complainant, many years later she is still experiencing pain and still undergoing tough medical treatment. No action has been taken by the national authorities to identify and punish those responsible for the above-described events.

At the hearing held during the 150th IPU Assembly (April 2025), the Ugandan delegation stated that parliamentary reports exist regarding the 27 September 2017 events, which could be made available to the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP) upon request. Finally, the delegation agreed with the CHRP on the value of it visiting Uganda and reiterated that the formal request for such a visit had been submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for consideration.

Parliamentary elections took place in Uganda in January 2026, and Ms. Nambooze was re-elected. No formal response has been received from the Parliament to repeated requests for facilitation of the CHRP mission, and the parliamentary reports referred to above have not been provided.

B. Decision

The Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

1. *Regrets* the continued absence of a response from the Parliament to repeated formal correspondence concerning the various situations before the Committee; and *expresses serious concern* that, despite assurances of cooperation provided by the Ugandan delegation to the 150th IPU Assembly (April 2025), the mission requested by the Committee several years ago has still not been facilitated, thereby obstructing the Committee's work, preventing a full examination of the matters, and delaying a possible resolution;
2. *Recalls* that according to the information provided by the Ugandan delegation to the 150th IPU Assembly (April 2025), a number of reports prepared by parliamentary bodies on the events of 27 September 2017 are available and may be transmitted to the CHRP; and *requests once more* that the Parliament provide copies of all relevant reports in its possession, insofar as they contain information on the steps taken to identify and prosecute those responsible for the acts of violence committed against the member of parliament and the alleged ill-treatment in detention;
3. *Remains deeply concerned* at the alleged treatment suffered by Ms. Nambooze, all the more so given the apparent irreparable damage to her health and the perceived impunity surrounding it; *solemnly recalls* that all forms of violence against women parliamentarians

constitute a serious affront to their dignity, contribute to the creation of an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, and serve to perpetuate gender-based inequality and harmful stereotypes; and *is convinced* that such violence also has a chilling effect on their peers and discourages other women from pursuing political engagement;

4. *Reiterates* that the allegations in this case have to be seen in the context of the CHRP's concerns in other existing cases in Uganda regarding the lack of respect for the physical integrity of members of the opposition and the lack of accountability whenever they are subject to ill-treatment or torture;
5. *Reiterates its firm hope* that a CHRP delegation can finally travel to Uganda to meet with all relevant authorities exercising legislative, executive and judicial powers and any other institution, civil society organization or individual in a position to provide relevant information on the present case as well as on the other Ugandan cases before the Committee; *calls on* the parliamentary authorities, once again, to do their utmost to obtain a response from the executive authorities regarding such a mission as soon as possible; and *trusts* that the competent national authorities will cooperate fully to help the mission find swift satisfactory solutions to this and the other cases in accordance with applicable national and international human rights standards, and to obtain first-hand information on the status of the implementation of the CHRP's recommendations following its [mission](#) to Uganda in 2020;
6. *Invites* the newly elected parliament to engage in a constructive dialogue with the Committee and the IPU to advance towards a satisfactory settlement of this case; *affirms* that the IPU stands ready to provide assistance upon request aimed at strengthening the capacities of the Parliament of Uganda to identify any underlying issues that gave rise to the current case and to rectify such issues; and *invites* the competent authorities to provide further information on how the IPU could best provide such assistance;
7. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the relevant authorities, the complainant and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information;
8. *Decides* to continue examining this case.