
Re:Statement from Buganda kingdom.

Posted by JeenaJulia - 2008/07/23 15:44

From: Buganda Emergency Response Committee

Subject: Update 3: Press Briefing Wednesday July 23rd 2008 12:30 pm

To: bugandaerc@gmail.com

Date: Wednesday, July 23, 2008, 11:29 AM

Please find attached a press briefing for today.

In other developments we are currently tracking several court actions and will give another

SORRY ATTACHMENT COULD NOT BE UPLOADED.

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Re:Statement from Buganda kingdom.

Posted by omumbejja - 2008/07/25 03:13

BUGANDA EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMITTEE

PRESS AND GENERAL BRIEF

23 RD JULY 2008

This is an update on the unfolding situation of the detained Buganda Kingdom Officials.

The Current Situation:

As all are now aware, two Ministers of the Buganda Government and the Chairperson of Buganda's Central Civic Education Committee were arrested by plain clothed security operatives on Friday July 18th 2008. The arrested individuals are:

1. Owek. Charles Peter Mayiga (Minister of Information and Cabinet and Lukiiko Affairs, Buganda Government);
2. Owek. Medard Lubega (Minister of State for Information, Buganda Government); and
3. Omuk. Betty Nambooze Bakireke (CCEC, Buganda Government).

They were arrested on the day of the successful inaugural Buganda Conference. It is increasingly apparent that the Uganda Police Force, which is the arm of Government, lawfully vested with the powers of arrest and investigation had nothing to do with the clandestine and brutal operation of the 18 th July 2008. The Police have only been brought in to provide cover for an operation being carried out by a more clandestine security organ.

As we write, the officials have been detained for coming to 120 hours without being presented to any court of law. This is a blatant violation of Article 23(3) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, which directs that no person arrested upon reasonable suspicion of having committed a criminal offence under the laws of Uganda shall be detained for more than 48 hours from the time of his or her arrest.

The Detainees Physical Wellbeing and Welfare:

Instead of presenting the officials to a court of law, the Government has decided to take them around Western Uganda, moving them around Bundibugyo, Ibanda, Fort Portal, Kyenjojo, Ntoroko and Kagadi and other places unknown. The Uganda Human Rights Commission has come out and stated that these movements amount to physical and psychological torture which is contrary to Article 24 of the Constitution. It is also hindering the detained officials' access to their next-of-kin, legal representatives and personal doctors in violation of Article 23(5) of the Constitution. The Uganda Human Rights Commission stated that two of the detained officials are in need of medical care. There is also a concern that the detained officials are suffering from the combined effects of dehydration, lack of nourishment (hunger) as well as sleep deprivation. Betty Nambooze is said to be suffering from mastitis (inflammation or infection of the breasts that causes swelling and fevers) owing to the fact that she has not breastfed her 1 year old child for over 5 days. She was allegedly detained in a car at Ntoroko for most of the day on the 21st July 2008 before being driven to Bundibugyo and dumped in the cells there. It has also been reported that Medard Lubega Ssegona collapsed during an "identification parade" in Kagadi, Kibaale District.

The Kingdom of Buganda has despatched a team of Ministers to the places where the officials are being detained to investigate their wellbeing and to offer moral as well as physical support.

But it must be reiterated that whilst Kingdom of Buganda and the families of the detainees will do their best to ensure that the detainees have access to food, clothing and medical care, it should not be in any doubt that responsibility for the physical wellbeing and welfare of the detainees rests squarely with the Government of Uganda and the individual actors responsible for the perpetration of these gross crimes.

Curious Justification of the Government's Actions:

Senior Government officials have come out with a curious justification for the detention of the Kingdom's officials well beyond the lawful time limit and subjecting them to physical and psychological torture, which should be of concern to all Ugandans.

Appearing on the WBS TV programme "Issues At Hand" on the 22 nd July 2005, the Minister of State for Internal Affairs, Hon. Matia Kasaijja, said that the provisions of Article 23 of the Constitution, requiring suspects to be produced before a court of law within 48 hours of arrest, are a "bad law" and do not bind Government. The Minister of Defence, Hon. Dr. Crispus Kiyonga, appearing before the Parliamentary Committee on Defence also said that even though 48 hours had elapsed, Government would only produce the detained officials before a court at its own convenience and give an explanation later. This statement echoes that of Hon. Kasaijja, insofar as it implies that the provisions of the Constitution do not bind Government.

Worse still, the Co-ordinator of National Intelligence, General David Munungu Tinyefuza, was quoted in the Daily Monitor as saying that under some circumstances, which he did not specify, "some laws can even be suspended". This can only have been a reference to the provisions of Article 23 of the Constitution. These statements, which come on the back of blatant violations of the provisions of the Constitution, are very alarming. It is also worth quoting Article 3(2) of the Constitution here, so as to highlight the grave implications of the statements of the those high ranking Government officials and the actions of Government:

"Any person who, singly or in concert with others, by any violent or other unlawful means, suspends, overthrows, abrogates, or amends this Constitution or any part of it or attempts to do any such act, commits the offence of treason and shall be punished according to law."

For ease of reference, the punishment for treason, under the laws of Uganda is death.

Difficult Negotiations:

As previously stated, the Katikiro has been engaged negotiations with high ranking Government officials, trying to secure the release of the detained Buganda officials. It must be made clear that this situation has been forced upon the Katikiro. He is not seeking special favours but is acting in good faith and out of concern for the physical wellbeing of the detained officials. The Katikiro is also thoroughly convinced of the innocence of all of the detained officials and is trying to ensure that they are swiftly restored to liberty and re-united with their families. However, with every passing day, the situation deteriorates and it increasingly appears as if the detained officials are being held as hostages in order to compel the Katikiro and the Kingdom of Buganda to make various concessions regarding the conduct of Buganda's affairs. However, the Katikiro has the interests of the people and the Kingdom of Buganda at heart and will not make any concessions.

Call to Action:

We continue to call upon all Ugandans, Religious Bodies as well as human rights and civil society organisations to join the Kingdom of Buganda in denouncing this heavy-handed and illegal action and to engage the Government of Uganda to abide by the Constitution and to cease and desist from the needless persecution of people who are engaged in lawful and democratic debate.

The Kingdom of Buganda would like to thank the Uganda Human Rights Commission, the Acholi Parliamentary Group, the Foundation For Human Rights Initiative and all others who have come out with timely statements of support and assistance.

BUGANDA EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMITTEE

Readers Comments:

24 Jul 2008

1.

Mengo officials Arrests Contravene international law

Merits of her arrest aside, the Buganda Kingdom official, Betty Nambooze, is a prisoner "with special status", under UN Convention on the Rights of Prisoners and Detainees," because she's still nursing a baby.

A nursing mother may not be held for more than six (6) hours without being allowed to breastfeed her baby, according to that 1952 UN Convention, as ratified in 1988 and of which Uganda is a signatory.

Someone in the Museveni regime will one day answer to this violation of basic human rights of a nursing mother.

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Re:Statement from Buganda kingdom.

Posted by Jona - 2008/07/25 17:17

...And that day is not very far away. Lo, the men who arrested Jean-Pierre Bemba of Congo, and those who recently tracked Karadzic down are at hand, with instructions to go on with their job.

Omar al-Bashir, a sitting president of Sudan is about to reap the fruits of his visionary rule. Earlier this month, the ICC prosecutor asked judges in The Hague to issue an arrest warrant for President Bashir. I believe he enjoys the prospect of his reward.

I wonder, why don't these people ever learn..??

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