



## CONSTITUTIONAL COURT CONCLUDES HEARING OF PETITIONS AGAINST COMPUTER MISUSE ACT, JUDGMENT TO BE ISSUED ON NOTICE

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(Kampala, Uganda | May 8, 2025) This morning, the Constitutional Court of Uganda concluded the hearing of two petitions brought by 27 human rights defenders and civil society organisations challenging seven sections of the Computer Misuse Act, Cap. 96. The Court has committed to delivering its judgment on a date to be announced, Chapter Four Uganda said today. These petitions are pivotal in safeguarding free speech and digital freedoms in Uganda.

The first petition, *Human Rights Network for Journalists Uganda (HRNJ-U), Chapter Four Uganda and 12 Others v Attorney General* (Constitutional Petition No. 37 of 2022), raises eight issues for determination. The initial two challenge the procedural manner in which the Parliament of Uganda enacted the law, while the remaining six address substantive constitutional concerns.

The second petition, *Alternative Digitalk Limited and 12 Others v Attorney General*, (Constitutional Petition No. 34 of 2022), contests similar provisions and constitutional questions, leading to the consolidation of both petitions.

“Beyond the repressive sections, we challenge the vague, overly broad, and ambiguous provisions criminalizing unsolicited information, malicious information, hate speech, and what is described as misuse of social media,” said Anthony Masake, Executive Director at Chapter Four Uganda. “The failure to clearly define the key terms results in a lack of legal clarity, encourages arbitrary enforcement, and grants law enforcement unchecked discretion to target dissenting and critical voices online.”

In recent months, several young men and women have been arrested and charged under the contested sections. We hope the Court will promptly issue a judgment to clarify the constitutionality of these provisions and uphold the fundamental rights to free expression and digital freedoms in Uganda.

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