



**Chapter Four Uganda**  
*For Immediate Release*  
February 5, 2024

---

## **Ugandan Civil Society expose Uganda’s Deliberate Misrepresentations to the United Nations Human Rights Bodies**

*(Kampala, Uganda / February 5, 2024)* Today, Chapter Four Uganda submitted three Communications to the United Nations (UN) human rights bodies in Geneva, exposing a multitude of misrepresentations by Uganda relating to the human rights abuses committed during the 2021 general election period.

Following the election violence that marred the 2021 elections, the Ugandan authorities made submissions before (i) the UN Human Rights Committee (ii) the UN Committee on the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel and Inhuman Treatment, and (iii) the UN Human Rights Council Working Group on Universal Periodic Review. Uganda was specifically asked questions about excessive use of force, unlawful killings, arbitrary detentions, torture and enforced disappearances by Ugandan state actors. Uganda, like all UN Member States, is obliged to implement their UN treaty obligations in good faith, and to provide truthful and accurate information.

According to Chapter Four’s research, the Ugandan government failed to provide truthful responses and denied any responsibility for the election-related human rights abuses. As noted in Chapter Four’s Communications, the Ugandan government’s misrepresentations before the UN human rights monitoring bodies were not innocent factual errors, rather:

“They illustrate a clear intention to distort, disguise, and obscure the true state of human rights in Uganda, particularly in connection to the election period 2020-2021. They demonstrate a consistent pattern of deceit and disrespect towards the UN Human Rights Bodies and Special Mandate Holders and a flagrant disregard for Uganda’s treaty obligations.” – excerpt from Chapter Four’s Communications to UN.

For example, Ugandan authorities categorically disassociated themselves from allegations of enforced disappearances; denied the existence of ungazetted places of detention; denied that arbitrary detentions took place; claimed the Government was committed to the investigation of the extrajudicial killings that took place during the election violence and the compensation of all victims; asserted that the Government did not condone torture and that the Director of Public Prosecutions had concluded almost 2,000 cases involving torture or serious mistreated which resulted in 885 convictions in the period of 2021-2022. None of these statements are factually accurate.

In exposing the Ugandan authorities for these blatantly false assertions, Chapter Four seeks to draw the attention of the UN to the continued deteriorating human rights situation in the

country. Chapter Four also hopes that the three Communications will alert the international community of the need to take effective action in support of the Ugandan people.

### ***Questions and Answers***

#### **1. What is the purpose of filing the three Communications to UN human rights bodies?**

The purpose of the filings is to draw the attention of the UN human rights bodies and the broader international community to the fact that the Ugandan Government has failed to meet its obligations under the UN human rights treaties to which it is party. Firstly, by perpetrating human rights abuses during the 2021 general election period. Secondly, by misrepresenting the true human rights situation in submissions before the UN human rights bodies.

#### **2. What will happen next?**

It is up to the UN human rights bodies to decide what steps to take. The UN bodies could ask the Ugandan Government to explain the misrepresentations. However, it should be noted that Uganda has received various requests from UN Special Mandate holders seeking Uganda's response to allegations of human rights violations, which Uganda has systematically ignored. These failures on the part of Uganda to respond to communications alleging human rights violations from United Nations Special Mandate holders and Working Groups underscores the general disregard shown by Uganda to these bodies and to its own human rights obligations.

#### **3. What power do UN Human Rights Bodies have to ensure Uganda complies with its human rights obligations?**

The UN Human Rights Bodies do not have any enforcement powers to make Uganda comply with its human rights obligations. However, through the United Nations Human Rights Commission it can take measures, including establishing a dedicated body mandated to investigate the human rights situation in Uganda. It is regrettable that this action was not taken immediately after the election violence in 2020-2021.

#### **4. How do you think Uganda will react to these filings?**

Unfortunately, based on the pattern of past behavior, we expect Uganda to ignore these filings just as they have persistently ignored their human rights obligations. However, we hope that the international community will review these filings and use their good offices to persuade Uganda to start respecting the UN human rights treaty bodies.