

Fourth Press Statement*For Immediate Release, December 25, 2020***UPDATE ON THE FRIVOLOUS CHARGES AGAINST NICHOLAS OPIYO***We continue to demand that the fabricated and malicious charges be dropped.*

Following his appearance before Nakawa Magistrates Court on December 24, 2020, to face money laundering charges under section 3 (c) of the Anti-Money Laundering Act, Nicholas Opiyo was remanded to Kitalya Government Prison, where he is currently detained. Nicholas's family and the Chapter Four board have been in touch with him, and he informed them that he is in good health and being treated decently by the authorities.

Chapter Four unequivocally reiterates that the unsubstantiated allegations against Nicholas are a fabrication, false, and will be proven to be baseless. As previously stated, the grant of 340,000 USD mentioned in the charge sheet is a routine grant that Chapter Four Uganda has received for the last five years from one of its reputable and long-standing donors. The grant is applied to lawful purposes – defending fundamental rights and freedoms. We further note that the grant in question is on Chapter Four's bank account and not on Nicholas's personal bank account. The organization's bank accounts have not been questioned before, during previous years when this same grant was received. Chapter Four pays taxes to the Government of Uganda and has never defaulted on this statutory obligation.

While regrettable, the actions of the State regarding Nicholas's treatment are not surprising. We are convinced that he faces false and malicious charges because of his bold, unapologetic conviction and tireless work towards upholding and defending the constitutionally guaranteed human rights. Nicholas and Chapter Four will be vindicated. Chapter Four remains firmly committed to its core beliefs and mission – justice and equity for all, without discrimination.

We thank all our partners and allies who have stood with Nicholas and Chapter Four during this period. We continue to call upon the State to drop the spurious charges against Nicholas and to ensure that his rights to due process and fair trial, as well as his rights to freedom from torture, inhumane and degrading treatment, are upheld to the highest standard. We further call upon the authorities to guarantee his health and safety while in detention in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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