



***Press Statement***

For Immediate Release

November 28, 2022

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**Conduct Public Inquiry into the November 2016 Killings, Hold Perpetrators to Account**  
*Lack of accountability, long pre-trial detention of civilians 6 years on deeply concerning*

(Kampala, Uganda / 28 November 2022) – The Ugandan government should facilitate independent and transparent investigations into the November 26 and 27 killings in Kasese district, appoint an independent commission of inquiry to conduct public hearings and hold security forces accountable, Chapter Four Uganda said today. The organisation further calls on the courts of law to end the long pre-trial detention of 49 civilians who were arrested in Kasese.

Six years after the joint operation by Uganda's police and military in the Western district of Kasese which led to the [death of more than 100 civilians, including 15 children](#), there has been no investigations into the actions of the security forces. While more than 180 civilians have been charged in court, no police and military officer has been arraigned in court for the unexplained and overwhelming use of lethal force.

The inaction of the government despite multiple calls by a [coalition of 40 human rights organisations](#), [Buganda Kingdom](#), [European Union \(EU\) and Member States](#) with embassies in Uganda and [the United States](#) for timely, independent and transparent investigations in accordance with the rule of law is deeply troubling.

We urge the government to end the silence by appointing an independent commission of inquiry to conduct a public hearing on the crimes that were committed in Kasese in the month of November 2016. The victims and families in Kasese need answers and justice. We further encourage the government to accept international cooperation by extending an invitation to the African Commission and United Nations experts on extra-judicial and arbitrary executions. The government has a responsibility of ensuring accountability for the actions of its police and military officers and should not continue to avoid that scrutiny.

The criminal cases in court against civilians cannot and should not be used to deflect calls for investigations into the actions of the security forces.

We are further concerned by the abuse of the freedom from torture and ill treatment, fair trial and due process rights. Following the arrest and remand of more than 180 civilians, several incidents of ghastly [torture in detention](#) and [loss of life](#) have been reported. 49 accused persons have now marked [six year in pre-trial detention](#). These human rights breaches undermine the rule of law. We call on the judiciary to ensure that the bail applications of the accused persons are heard and determined expeditiously.

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