

URGENT ACTION

OPPOSITION POLITICIAN CHARGED AFTER ABDUCTION

On November 16, Dr. Kizza Besigye, Ugandan opposition politician and former presidential candidate for the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) political party, was abducted in Nairobi, Kenya. He resurfaced on November 20, 2024, when he was arraigned in a military court in Kampala, Uganda, where he was charged alongside FDC member Haji Obeid Lutale with offenses relating to security and unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition. He was remanded to Luzira Maximum Security Prison in Kampala, Uganda, where he continues to be detained as investigations into these allegations continue. Dr. Besigye must be immediately released due to the nature of his abduction, which was in clear violation of both international human rights law and the process of extradition with its requisite fair trial protections.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
- [Click here](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Urgent Action 100.24**. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni
Parliament of Uganda
Parliament Avenue
Kampala, Uganda
Email: info@statehouse.go.ug
Twitter/X: [@kagutamuseveni](https://twitter.com/kagutamuseveni)
Copies to: press@statehouse.go.ug

CC: Embassy of Uganda in the United States
Ambassador Robie Kakonge
5911 16th Street,
NW, Washington DC 20011
Email: washington@mofa.go.ug or
info@ugandaembassyus.org
Twitter/X: [@UgaEmbaWashDC](https://twitter.com/UgaEmbaWashDC)

Dear President Museveni,

I am gravely concerned about the abduction of Ugandan opposition politician and former presidential candidate for the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), **Dr. Kizza Besigye**, from Nairobi, Kenya, on November 16, 2024, and his rendition to Uganda. His whereabouts were unknown, and he was unreachable until he was arraigned in a military court in Kampala, Uganda, on November 20, despite being a civilian. He was charged alongside FDC member Haji Obeid Lutale with offenses relating to security and unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition.

Dr. Besigye's abduction is part of a wider pattern of increasing widespread repression. Based on the frequency by which Ugandan authorities wrongly bring charges against political opponents, there is also reason to be concerned that the charges against Dr. Besigye may be politically motivated.

I urge your government to immediately release Dr. Besigye due to the nature of his abduction, which was in clear violation of both international human rights law and the process of extradition with its requisite fair trial protections. I also urge your government to ensure a prompt, impartial, and effective investigation is carried out into Dr. Besigye's abduction, and to bring those suspected of responsibility to account in fair trials without recourse to the death penalty.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Dr. Kizza Besigye is a Ugandan physician, opposition politician, and a former presidential candidate for the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) who unsuccessfully ran against President Museveni in the 2001, 2006, 2011, and 2016 presidential elections.

According to Dr. Kizza Besigye's lawyers, he was last seen at around 4.30pm on November 16, 2024 in an apartment complex in Nairobi, Kenya, and was subsequently unreachable until family members confirmed that he was being held at a military jail in Kampala with no access to his family or lawyers. Dr. Besigye's lawyers claim that the abduction is the result of collusion between Kenyan and Ugandan authorities, but the Kenyan government has denied involvement.

Dr. Besigye was arraigned alongside FDC member Haji Obeid Lutale at Makindye General Court Martial despite being a civilian and charged with offenses relating to security and the unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition. According to a 2006 ruling by the Constitutional Court of Uganda, military courts have no jurisdiction to try cases of terrorism and unlawful possession of firearms. Similarly, Amnesty International does not consider trials by military courts of civilians to be fair.

The Ugandan Government has a history of wrongfully charging political opponents including from the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) and the National Unity Platform (NUP). This is a tool of repression that has been used to clamp down on members of the opposition. This is despite 2 rulings by the Constitutional Court of Uganda prohibiting the misuse of military courts to try civilians under the Uganda People Defence Forces (UPDF) Act in 2021 and the 2006 ruling on military related charges.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: May 25, 2025

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Kizza Besigye (he/him)