

Ugandans to the rescue



2/15/2011 9:30:15 AM

Mr. Paul Anderson

Press and Public Affairs Officer
European Union, Election Observation Mission
Kabira Country Club Plot 63,
Old Kira Road, Bukoto,
Kampala, Uganda

Dear Mr. Anderson:

As a concerned Ugandan, I am writing to address what appears to me to have been part of an alleged orchestrated pattern and practice of choreographing, custom-tailoring and predetermining of election results by certain elements in Uganda. It has come to my attention that, while the election is scheduled to take place on February 18, 2011, certain "ballots" have already been "cast" and that what remains is the counting of "ballots" with results having been predetermined by virtue of conduct and practices that have no place in a democratic process.

While I cannot offer you more specific information, it appears that certain ballot forms have already been filled out in advance, thereby turning the entire electoral process into a mockery and an affront to democracy and freedom. It is my understanding that you are in Uganda to observe the electoral process among other things and, I appeal to your good offices to undertake the relevant and necessary action to ensure that, if the apparently and purportedly well-known election malpractice scheme is true and verifiable, that no previously filled out forms and ballots are counted as part and parcel of the electoral process scheduled to commence on February 18, 2010. At a minimum, your officers must bear this in mind during the execution of your official duties.

Furthermore, while I am very well aware that you are operating under the mandate of the EU EOM and that your duty is to observe all aspects of the electoral process and to assess the extent to which the elections comply with international and regional standards for elections, as well as with domestic law, I would be remiss if I failed to indicate and request that, to the extent the allegations regarding the existence of already filled out ballots are true, that you exercise prudence and alert the general public, the media and others, as a matter of caution.

I say this because, if the allegations are true, such state of affairs almost always will spark unrest and violence. I believe I speak for every reasonable person when I reiterate the European Union's Graham Elson's statement that "there is no place for violence in democracy".

To that end, it would appear to me that it is in our collective best interests to attempt to ward off what may be potentially very destabilizing activity by virtue of the alleged

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election malpractice[s]. We most certainly do not want to see or experience what happened in Kenya. Also, every Ugandan is entitled to a process that is not tainted. While various reports characterize the general mood in Uganda as being "calm", it is important to pay attention to what may otherwise escape the unsuspecting eye.

Also, I would also like to sensitize you to what I understand to be the alleged occurrence of routine torture, illegal detentions and other similar activity as a pattern and practice intended to unleash fear among the most politically active demographic and citizenry, thereby dissuading them from freely exercising their constitutional rights as guaranteed by the Constitution of Uganda.

In particular, a one Ms. Annet Namwanga, currently at Luzira Prison, was tortured by repeatedly poking needles in her fingernails, placed in a box like compartment and sprayed with teargass before smearing her genitalia with with hot sauce that is a derivative of red peppers or chilli. Ms. Namwanga is available for you to interview at Luzira Prison. I bring this to your attention because, a free and fair election just does not happen intantly. It is a process geared to a scheduled conclusion, in this case, February 18, 2011. Therefore, limiting our focus on February 18, 2011 is to miss the point.

Again, and as stated elsewhere, determining whether an election is genuine and free and fair involves more than assessing whether electors turn up to vote. It requires a judgment on a dynamic and often evolving process. The dynamic must be examined within the totality of circumstances. Again, I fully appreciate your role and understand you are not monitors but hasten to add, your attention however limited can only help to write a wrong.

I thank you for your anticipated attention to my concern and therefore look forward to a process and end result that is not only free and fair but also, free of any post election casualties and mayhem. I also thank you for the time and efforts you and your team have committed to Uganda's electoral activities and hope that such will not be in vain.

For God and My Country.
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HELP IS ON THE WAY