

UGANDANS TO THE RESCUE

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CRACKDOWN ON UGANDAN ACTIVISTS

When Walking To Work Became A Crime Of
TREASON

An Appeal to human rights activists, human rights defenders, global citizens, civil society and free societies to stand up for democracy and human rights activists in Uganda

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ugandans have been reduced to slaves on their own land by a foreign dictator whose origin has no trace. Our people are being terrorized by Museveni's ruthless militarized police, Army and imported macinaeries from Congo, Somalia and Burundi. *To understand what am talking about please see below:*

WALK TO WORK CAMPAIGN

In April 2011, A4C launched its first Walk to Work campaign in which middle class Ugandans parked their cars and joined an increasing number of working class Ugandans who walk to work daily. The campaign's objective was to focus government's attention on escalating fuel and food prices, abuse and squander of public funds as well as corruption; which were hurting the welfare of ordinary Ugandans. Government's response was a brutal crackdown on A4C activists by the military, police and security forces that ended with at least nine people dead, including a 2 year old baby shot and killed by M7's UPDF; hundreds of activists injured and hundreds more in jails on trumped up charges of incitement to violence and unlawful assembly. All these charges were later dismissed by court.



Kizza Besigye an opposition leader was brutally arrested for participating in the Walk to Work campaign and nearly blinded with pepper spray – leading to two days of riots by his angry supporters.

Every single A4C campaign activity since April has been disrupted by security personnel who have 'orders from above' to ensure that such activities do not lead to a show of 'people power' and regime change.

Baby Juliana Nalwanga (2) was shot dead by security personnel during



the April 2011 Walk to Work campaign



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WALK TO WORK WEEK

On October 13, 2011, Activists for Change announced a 'Walk to Work Week' starting Monday 17th 2011. Activists from across the nation were mobilized to focus the attention of policy makers on the intensifying economic hardship caused by inflation, escalating cost of living and wastage of public resources. The campaign's aim was to highlight two of the most pressing issues of the day: the economic crisis and corruption.

When A4C started its campaigns in April 2011, the annual inflation rate was at 14.1 per cent; by end of September 2011 it had [doubled to 28.3 per cent](#).ⁱ The shilling had depreciated to an all-time low and was trading at [UGX 2850 to one US dollar](#)ⁱⁱ from UGX 2170 to the US dollar last April. Yet to date government has made no adjustment to the salaries of teachers, workers and other public servants to cater for inflation. The purchasing power of middle class Ugandans and workers has diminished drastically yet the increase in cost of essential commodities like household goods, fuel, health care and education keeps escalating. In April petrol was UGX 3,400/= per liter, it is now UGX 3,900=/. Sugar was UGX 2,800/- a kilo, now it is UGX 6,000/=; charcoal, the main cooking fuel for the working class; was UGX 25,000/= a sack, now it is UGX 75,000/=/. [Unemployment among the youth is at 83%](#).

Government responded to the appeal for austerity measures with arrogant denial and chose instead to brand those who speak up as 'terrorists.' Shortly before the launch of the campaign the [Inspector General of Police tried to link A4C to terrorism](#) by falsely alleging in a public statement that A4C activists had taken some youth to Afghanistan to be trained in terror tactics by the Taliban and Al Qaeda. The allegations were ridiculed by the public and soon lost traction.

Police and security forces were however [determined to stop the exercise](#) and on the eve of the Walk to Work Week, they moved into action with an operation in which several activists were arrested as they mobilized people in their localities or during the night as they returned to their homes. The pretext for the crackdown was that the campaign would disrupt schools where students were starting final exams.

TREASON

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On the second day of the campaign, the [Inspector General of Police publicly alleged](#) that he had audio evidence that the campaign was intended to unlawfully overthrow the government of Uganda. He also publicly stated that the planned rally at the end of the campaign Week was meant to create a 'Tahrir Square' at Kololo Independence Grounds.

Based on these unfounded allegations, specific activists were targeted for the harshest measures so that others might be frightened into silence.



The arrests were conducted in a brutal and inhuman manner across the country and a number of activists sustained injuries during their arrest. These so called security agents are more brutal and ruthless than the former South Africa's apartheid rulers!



A number of activists have since been charged with an array of charges including assault, incitement to violence, concealment of treason and treason. Government interfered with the independence of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the judiciary to ensure that serious charges were proffered against activists or cash terms for bail were excessively high; as a back door means of enabling an ongoing presidential push for a constitutional amendment to deny activists bail and to keep them in jail for lengthy periods at a time.

The following is a summary of those who are known to have been arrested between October 16th 2011 and October 24th 2011. Several were illegally arrested and remanded in various detention centers

A few were remanded to Luzira prison for days as they sought to raise cash bail of UGX 300,000/=, 200,000 and 300,000/= respectively. The three were returned to court and released on cash bail. An attempt to rearrest them at the court was foiled by leading opposition politicians.

In Kampala: Mutagubya Alan a Makerere University student was arrested on Sunday October 16th, 2011 and detained at Jinja Road Police station. He was released on police bond after a couple of days when

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Makerere students threatened to stage a demonstration at the station. We have not established whether he was charged with any offence.

On Wednesday October 19th 2011, [Mugumya Sam, Mwijukye Francis and Ingrid Turinawe](#) were charged with treason. Mugumya Sam and Mwijukye Francis had been arrested and detained at Jinja Road station on Sunday 16th October, 2011. They were remanded to Luzira prison because Magistrates courts in Uganda are not empowered by law to take a plea for capital offenses. The High Court will hear their pleas and application for bail at a future date yet to be established. In Uganda treason carries the death sentence. A warrant of arrest was issued for Ingrid Turinawe and she was finally arrested on October 24th, 2011 in Kasangati and moved to Jinja Road police station for detention the same day.

Kirunda Hassan, Sebandeke Shafic, Mutesa Ziyadi, Walakira Matthew, Jenny Lubega, Nakabugo Farida, Rajab Kaaya and Asimwe Peace were arrested on Sunday October 16th 2011 and detained at Jinja Road Police Station. They were released on police bond On Thursday October 20th, 2011, even though some of them were charged with treason; and ordered to report to police on a daily basis for an undetermined period. Among this group of suspects were those who went to Jinja Road police station to deliver food to their detained colleagues only to be arrested.

[Robert Mayanja, Matthew Walakira and Tony Sempebwa](#) were charged with concealment of treason on Friday October 21st 2011 and remanded to Luzira because the Chief Magistrate was not available to hear a bail application. They were produced in court on Monday 24th October, 2011 and granted bail.

Fiona Busingye was arrested on Sunday October 16th, 2011 and detained at Kira Road Police station. On Thursday October 20th, 2011, she was produced in court charged with incitement to violence and released on a non cash bail.

All detainees arrested in Kampala with the exception of Ingrid Turinawe and Mutagubya Alan were unlawfully detained beyond the 48 hours within which the law requires that detainees be charged in a court of law.

In Ntungamo: Aloysius Twiine, Mugizi Dennis, Sanga Julius, Alice Kafooda, Benon Nuwagira, and Justus Muhwezi were arrested in Ntungamo town as they walked to work on Monday October 17th 2011. They were detained at the police station beyond the mandatory 48 hours and were produced in court on Friday October 21st, 2011, where they were released on noncash bail – Charges are not yet known.

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In Mbarara: Yasin Masiko and a second man (*not yet identified*) were arrested on Sunday 16th October 2011 while **Imam Makumbi**, was arrested while walking to work on October 17th 2011 in Mbarara town. They were released on noncash bail on Tuesday October 18th 2011.

And on Thursday October 20th, 2011, **Malice Bainomugisha** and **Vincent Mugisha** were brutally attacked and beaten by security personnel during their arrest as they walked in a procession that was protesting Kizza Besigye's house arrest. They were released on police bond on Friday October 21st and have not yet been taken to court.

In Bushenyi: Guma Gumisiriza, Mukama David, Besigye Robert, Tugume Amon, Baineke A Mustapha, Ninsiima Christine, Twambure Rosemary and Ibrahim Baryamujura and;

In Kabwohe: Sulaiman Kasule, Abdu Kivumbi Kyeyune, Rashid Kawesi and Henry Kahangire Byamukama were arrested on Monday October 17th, 2011. On Thursday October 20th 2011, lawyers secured an order for the release of all 12 detainees – having been detained without being charged for over 48 hours. Later the same day they were charged with incitement to violence an offence which required an order from a senior magistrate. On Friday they were remanded to Nyamushkyera prison and their case comes up for hearing on Tuesday October 25th, 2011.

In Isingiro: Yasin Abdu Karim and Bafaki Deo were arrested on Monday October 17th, 2011. They were denied meals on their first night of custody. They were moved to Mbarara police station and back to Isingiro but were not taken to court until Friday October 21st, 2011. Their charges and current status of detention/liberty are not yet known. However they were detained beyond 48 hours without appearing before any court.

In Hoima: Dan Tumwesigye, Kato Ronald, Muhumuza Ibra, and Muzamiro were arrested on Monday October 17th, 2011 and detained for longer the mandatory 48 hours without charge. They appeared in court on Friday October 21st, 2011 and were charged with participating in an illegal assembly, but were remanded to prison for lack of cash bail of 500,000/= each.

In Busia - Ojiambo Peter Lwande, Idi Kibaki, Uayima, and fourth person (*not yet identified*) were arrested on Monday October 17th, 2011 and detained for longer the mandatory 48 hours without charge. They were charged (charges unknown) on Friday October 21st, 2011 and remanded to Musafu prison for lack of cash bail of 2,000,000/= each.

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In Mubende and Rukungiri, those arrested on Sunday October 16th 2011 were released on police bond but their charges included treason.

We are still receiving reports of activists detained around the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Activist for Change has [made the following demands](#) and calls on all peace loving Ugandans and global citizens to add their voices towards realization of these demands:

1. **The immediate and unconditional release of all activists who are unlawfully detained in police stations around the country**
2. **The unconditional dropping of all charges against activists including the ludicrous treason charges and the immediate release of remanded activists.**
3. **An immediate end to the 'preventive arrest' and siege at Dr. Kizza Besigye's home by security forces.**
4. **Government's commitment to respecting and guaranteeing all Ugandans' rights and freedoms including freedom of movement and freedom of association.**

ⁱ Source <http://af.reuters.com/article/investingNews/idAFJ0E78T06J20110930>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.exchangerates.org.uk/USD-UGX-exchange-rate-history.html>