



Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	129
Land:	Uganda
Kilde:	Amnesty International
Titel:	"Overview - covering events from January - December 2005"
Udgivet:	13. juni 2006
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	4. juli 2006

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL > HOME > LIBRARY > ANNUAL REPORTS > REPORT 2006



- AI Report 2006.
- Secretary General's
- The Search for Hum
- What does AI do?

Regional Overview.

Africa • Americas • Asia-Pacific
Europe and Central Asia • Middle East and
North Africa

Choose a country...

[View full country list.](#)

Key Issues.

Arms Control.
International Justice.
Displaced People.
Stop Violence Against Women.
Death Penalty.

Options.

Buy the report.
Join AI.
Make a donation.
E-mail this page
Printer friendly

Africa : Uganda

REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

Head of state and government: Yoweri Kaguta Museveni

Death penalty: retentionist

International Criminal Court: ratified

UN Women's Convention: ratified

Optional Protocol to UN Women's Convention: not signed

Overview - Covering events from January - December 2005

[Background](#) : [Independence of the judiciary](#) : [Attacks on freedom of expression](#) : [Conflict in northern Uganda](#) : [Torture](#) : [Violence against women and girls](#) : [Death penalty](#) : [AI country visits](#)

The independence of the judiciary, freedom of expression and press freedom came under attack. Violence against women and girls was widespread. Torture by state security agents persisted.

Background

On 28 June Parliament voted to amend the Constitution and lifted the limit of two terms that a president could serve. Demonstrators protesting against this vote clashed with riot police. A national referendum on 28 July brought a return to a multi-party system of politics.

Abuses against civilians by all parties to the conflict in northern Uganda continued. In October the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for five senior leaders of the armed opposition group, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The accused were Joseph Kony, leader of the LRA; Vincent Otti, the second in command; Okot Odhiambo, Dominic Ongwen and Raska Lukwiya. They were charged with crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Uganda since July 2002.

Independence of the judiciary



Uganda

[Archive information](#)

[Uganda: Independent information under the](#)
(AI Index: AFR 59/006)

[Uganda: First ever arr](#)
International Criminal
towards addressing in
(AI Index: AFR 59/008)

[Uganda: Call for a fair](#)
arrested opposition le:
(AI Index: AFR 59/015)

[Uganda: Attack on the](#)
courts
(AI Index AFR 59/017,

[All documents on Uga](#)

Retired army colonel Dr Kizza Besigye, presidential candidate of the opposition party Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) in the 2006 elections, was arrested on 14 November. He was charged with rape and, together with 22 other people, treason and concealment of treason.

On 16 November, the High Court granted bail to 14 of the co-accused facing charges of treason. However, heavily armed state security agents were deployed in the courtyard of the High Court, reportedly ready to re-arrest the 14 once they emerged. Consequently, they were not released on bail but returned to prison. The 14 appeared before a military court on 18 November, charged with terrorism. Lawyers across Uganda staged a one-day strike on 28 November in protest at this siege of the High Court.

Thousands of people demonstrated in Kampala city centre against the arrest of Dr Besigye. Riot police used live ammunition, tear gas and water cannons against demonstrators. During the two-day protests, at least one person was killed and dozens were arrested. The Internal Affairs Minister banned demonstrations and processions ahead of Dr Besigye's bail application and court case.

On 24 November, Dr Besigye was charged before the military court with terrorism and unlawful possession of firearms. On the same day, he was scheduled to appear before the High Court for his bail application. Two lawyers representing Dr Besigye before the military court were charged with contempt of court and held for seven hours as they attempted to explain that their client was due to appear before the High Court. They were convicted and fined.

Dr Besigye was granted bail by the High Court on 25 November, but that morning, he had been remanded back to Luzira Maximum Security Prison by the military court and therefore he did not regain his freedom. The High Court ordered the military to suspend its trial until the Constitutional Court ruled on its legality, but the military court said the trial would go ahead. On 19 December Dr Besigye appeared before the High Court – his trial before the military court was scheduled for the same day. Dr Besigye's treason and rape cases were adjourned to January 2006 and he remained in prison until the end of the year.

Attacks on freedom of expression

Freedom of expression and press freedom came under attack and continued to be threatened. Journalists faced criminal charges because of their work.

- In February the Media Council banned the play *The Vagina Monologues* by the US playwright Eve Ensler, which several women's organizations had planned to stage to raise awareness about violence against women.
- In August the Uganda Broadcasting Council suspended the licence of *K FM 93.3 Radio* for a week after it broadcast a programme discussing the fatal helicopter crash that killed John Garang de Mabior, the Sudanese Vice President and Southern Sudanese leader, and seven Ugandan crew members. Andrew Mwenda, the programme's host, was charged with sedition and released on bail. His trial had not been fixed by the end of the year, pending the outcome of a constitutional petition challenging the sedition laws.
- On 17 November, policemen and intelligence personnel raided the offices of Monitor Publications, newspaper publishers and owners of *K FM 93.3 Radio*. The *Monitor* daily newspaper had run a paid advertisement from the FDC calling for contributions to a fund for the legal defence of political prisoners in Uganda. Police claimed the advertisement breached the law because the FDC had not obtained permission to fundraise.

On 22 November, the State Minister for Information and Broadcasting issued a directive to revoke the licence of any media outlet hosting discussion of cases before the courts. He added that as the trial of Dr Besigye had started, all talk shows or debates "in respect of or incidental to that case and other cases" were banned.

Conflict in northern Uganda

The 19-year conflict between the government and the LRA persisted throughout 2005. There were clashes between the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) and the LRA in Gulu, Pader, Kitgum, Lira and Apac districts.

At the end of August an estimated 1.4 million people were confined to Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps across northern Uganda. Overcrowding and poor sanitation rendered them vulnerable to outbreaks of disease, including cholera, while insecurity put them at risk of human rights abuses. In February, the government officially launched a National Policy for IDPs, which it said was based on international humanitarian law, human rights instruments

and national laws.

The LRA extended its operations to daylight hours, contrary to its earlier practice, and continued to use road ambushes to attack civilians.

- On 21 November, between seven and 10 LRA fighters ambushed a minibus taxi between Pader and Paiula in Pader district. Two civilians were killed instantly. Ten other civilians were removed from the vehicle, laid on the ground and executed. The vehicle was set on fire.

The LRA attacked the staff of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in conflict-affected areas, making humanitarian access hazardous.

- On 26 October, in an LRA ambush on the Pader Pajule road, one staff member of the NGO Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development (ACORD) was killed and two others were wounded. In a separate incident on the same day, the LRA killed a staff member of the NGO CARITAS about eight kilometres from Kitgum town.

Civilians also suffered human rights violations at the hands of government soldiers.

- On 16 October, a family of four was shot dead by a member of the UPDF at the main entrance to the 4th Division Headquarters in Gulu Town. The soldier was reportedly a former LRA combatant.

Torture

Allegations of torture and ill-treatment committed by state security agents persisted throughout 2005. Uganda submitted its initial report on the implementation of the UN Convention against Torture to the Committee against Torture after a delay of 16 years. The Committee noted with concern "the lack of proportion between the high number of reports of torture and the very small number of convictions for such offences" which contributed to impunity. While acknowledging the difficult situation of internal conflict in northern Uganda, the Committee stressed that there were "no exceptional circumstances, whatsoever, which may be invoked as a justification of torture".

- In July, the High Court sitting at Arua in the north-west ordered the government to pay compensation of Uganda Shillings 20,000,000 (approximately US\$11,000) to Justine Okot, following his arrest and torture by UPDF soldiers who accused him of being a "rebel collaborator". He had been beaten with clubs and iron bars and molten plastic was poured on his body. He sustained severe injuries and permanent impairment. By the end of the year, he had not received payment.

Violence against women and girls

Women and girls continued to face widespread violence both in the public and private spheres of life, being subjected to beatings, killings, acid attacks and rapes. In northern Uganda, women and girls were raped and killed by all parties to the conflict. While police expressed concern about the growing number of rapes, especially of young girls, acts of violence were little reported for fear of reprisals. Between January and June, the rapes of 292 girls were reported in mid-western Uganda (Kabarole, Kamwenge, Bundibugyo, Kyenjojo and Kasese districts).

In September the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that the country adopt legislative measures to prohibit the persistent practice of female genital mutilation (FGM). It also recommended awareness-raising campaigns to combat FGM and other traditional practices harmful to the health, survival and development of children, especially girls.

Death penalty

In a landmark judgment delivered on 10 June, the Constitutional Court ruled in favour of ending laws that stipulate a mandatory death sentence. It ruled that the death penalty as such was not unconstitutional when it was defined as the maximum sentence for a crime, but that laws imposing a mandatory death sentence interfered with a judge's discretion in dispensing justice. The court stated that such laws were unconstitutional and must be amended by Parliament. The Attorney General appealed against the ruling and by the end of 2005, the parties were awaiting the hearing of the appeal before the Supreme Court.

Death sentences continued to be imposed. At Luzira Maximum Security Prison, at the end of

June, there were 555 prisoners on death row, 27 of whom were women. No executions were reported during the year.

AI country visits

AI delegates visited northern Uganda in May and June to conduct research. An AI representative met President Museveni in October during his visit to the UK.

[Back to Top](#)

[E-mail this page](#)

[Printer friendly](#)