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Information regarding abuses carried out by the ISO (Internal Security Organisation) in Uganda.

The Introduction to a report published by the *Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative* states:

> "Uganda does not have a democratic, accountable police service. Instead, it has a heavily militarised, colonial-style regime police force that is firmly under the control of the ruling government. The interests of the Government are placed far ahead of the protection of Uganda's people. The police are responsible for widespread human rights violations, and they have not been held to account." (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (2006) *The Police, the People, the Politics: Police Accountability in Uganda*, p.1)

The *US Department of State* country report on Uganda, in a section headed "Role of the Police and Security Apparatus", states:

> "The Uganda Police Force (UPF), under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, has primary responsibility for law enforcement. The UPDF is the key armed force charged with external security but had partial responsibility for maintaining order in the north, where it was deployed to protect civilian IDPs from rebel attacks and to prevent violence resulting from interclan cattle raids in the Karamoja Region. The Internal Security Organization (ISO) and External Security Organization (ESO), key security agencies and intelligence-gathering entities under the direct control of the president and the minister of security, occasionally detained civilians. The CMI is legally under UPDF authority, although it often acted as a semiautonomous unit by detaining civilians suspected of rebel and terrorist activity, as did the ISO and ESO. The Joint Anti-terrorism Taskforce (JATT), a paramilitary group under the CMI, has no codified mandate but illegally detained numerous civilians suspected of rebel and terrorist activity. The JATT is a joint command whose members are drawn from the UPDF, police, ISO, and ESO." (US Department of State (11 March 2010) *2009 Human Rights Report: Uganda*)

A *Human Rights Watch* report on freedom of expression in Uganda, in a section headed "Background", states:

> "Currently, five separate entities all have some formal overlapping mandate to control, monitor, discipline, and/or sanction journalists and media houses. All are subject to direct government control. Contrary to internationally accepted standards, and in contrast with several other African jurisdictions, there are no provisions in law requiring the regulatory bodies to be independent of government interference. This structure leaves the media, and especially those who are critical of government action, extremely vulnerable to closure or other punitive action. In addition, it is widely believed that others in government, particularly the Internal Security Organization, the domestic intelligence body, monitor the media and react, often to suppress critical

> reporting." (Human Rights Watch (2 May 2010) *A Media Minefield: Increased Threats to Freedom of Expression in Uganda*, p.12)

A *Human Rights Watch* report on alleged abuses committed by the Joint Anti-terrorism Task Force (JATT), in a section headed "Structure of Security Organizations in Uganda", states:

> "Operation Wembley, a joint operation of the police, Internal Security Organization (ISO) and military intelligence and other unofficial volunteers, operated for several months. It was established in 2002 to fight violent crime in urban areas and a spate of killings in the business community. Though it was reported that crime levels decreased, the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) noted that 'methods of arrest and illegal detention were a point of concern, as well as the shoot-to-kill policy, which put lives at risk and disregarded the presumption of innocence of suspects.' Operation Wembley eventually turned into VCCU, and then the RRU, which is still in operation. Both the VCCU and the RRU have frequently been accused of abuses by human rights groups and the Uganda Human Rights Commission." (Human Rights Watch (9 April 2009) *Open Secret. Illegal Detention and Torture by the Joint Anti-terrorism Task Force in Uganda*, p.15)

A *Human Rights Watch* report on electoral violence in Uganda, in a section headed "Alleged Criminal Acts by Government Forces and Ruling Party Candidates", states:

> "Other current ministers have run election campaigns marred by serious violence in which the individuals implicated were never investigated let alone prosecuted. In the 2001 contest (under the Movement system) for the parliamentary seat from Kinkizi West, James Garuga Musiniguzi filed an electoral petition disputing that Amama Mbabazi, the former minister of defense, had won the election. Musinguzi offered evidence of violence and intimidation of his supporters by Mbabazi's backers and staff. For instance, Mbabazi's campaign manager, James Kamwesigwa, allegedly shot John Bosco Twinomuhwezi, a Musinguzi supporter, in the eye, seriously injuring him. Judge Egonda-Ntende ruled that the campaign manager, who was also an officer of the Internal Security Organization (ISO), was not in lawful possession of the firearm and was in fact not allowed by law to serve as a campaign manager because of his position in the ISO." (Human Rights Watch (4 December 2009) *Preparing for the Polls: Improving Accountability for Electoral Violence in Uganda*, pp.15-16)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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