

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

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A new wave of security crackdowns on members of opposition political parties in Uganda stirs memories of the 1960s and 1970s when the country was under a state of emergency dominated by state-inspired arrests, kidnappings, and extra-judicial killings. The abductions are also reminiscent of the January 2021 general election when hundreds of opposition supporters across the country, some of whom are yet to be seen again, were taken away by gunmen. General Muhoozi Kainerugaba, son of President Yoweri Museveni (1986-present), criticises his father's ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party as no longer representing the interests of the people of Uganda, deepening the succession row in Uganda. A founding member of the ruling NRM tells Africa Risk Consulting Briefing (ARC Briefing) that Kainerugaba's Twitter rant comes after he discovered that most of the historical members of the party are not supporting his bid for the presidency. There are renewed calls for Uganda and Rwanda to be excluded from efforts aimed at restoring peace and security in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). A Kampala-based lawyer tells ARC Briefing that external forces like Uganda and Rwanda create more problems as they advance their own interests.

Mass abductions of opposition supporters bring back memories of the dark days

A new wave of security crackdowns on members of opposition political parties in **Uganda** is stirring memories of the 1960s and 1970s when the country was under a state of emergency dominated by state-inspired arrests, kidnappings, and extra-judicial killings.¹ The abductions are also reminiscent of the January 2021 general election when hundreds of opposition supporters across the country, some of whom are yet to be seen again, were taken away by gunmen.²

Security officials have particularly targeted members of the leading opposition party **National Unity Platform (NUP)** led by **Robert Kyagulanyi** (also known as **Bobiwine**), the pop star turned politician who ran unsuccessfully against President **Yoweri Museveni** (1986-present) in last year's presidential elections.³ Non-uniformed gunmen driving in omnibuses locally known as 'drones' have resumed abductions of supporters of Bobi Wine since July.⁴ The gunmen had last been active in the months leading up to and after the 2021 general election. Some of the abducted youths who have resurfaced have relayed stories of torture that they have been subjected to, bearing torture marks on their bodies, while several families are still trying to locate their loved ones taken as far back as November 2021.

A top official of the **National Unity Platform** party told **Africa Risk Consulting Briefing (ARC Briefing)** that they have compiled a list of thirty people who were recently abducted and are being

¹ Uganda analyst, 5 Dec 2022

² Uganda analyst, 5 Dec 2022

³ Uganda analyst, 5 Dec 2022

⁴ Daily Monitor, 15 Oct 2022

held in unknown places.⁵ The official says the list has been submitted to both the government and parliament, providing the full details of the persons who were abducted in broad daylight by people driving ‘drones’, but that no action has so been taken nor has the list been produced before a court.⁶

The official further detailed:

*“Our people who are abducted are being held incommunicado while several others have been dumped at different places with severe torture wounds”.*⁷

A source working with one of the security agencies accused of carrying out the abductions told ARC that rogue elements could be behind the abductions:

*“The so-called abductions are not a government policy but rather actions of rogue elements motivated by criminal-intent members of the public that have issues to settle against each other”.*⁹

In a further deteriorating state, the **United States**-based non-profit **Human Rights Watch (HRW)** reported on 8 December that three men in civilian clothing accosted a popular **Muslim** cleric **Yahya Mwanje** outside a mosque in Kampala on 28 November, before driving off with him in a ‘drone’.¹⁰

HRW further reported that on the same day in Kampala, plain clothed men picked up former presidential candidate **Joseph Kabuleta** from his office and drove away in a ‘drone’ to an unknown destination.¹¹

HRM published a report in March documenting years of similar arbitrary arrests and detentions, enforced disappearances, and the use of illegal detention centres by Ugandan security officers before presenting the findings personally to Museveni in June, who pledged to hold them accountable and investigate **Frank “Kaka” Bagyenda**, the former director of the government’s counterintelligence agency, the **Internal Security Organisation** who is implicated in the report.

Succession row deepens in Uganda

General **Muhoozi Kainerugaba**, son of President Museveni, has criticized his father’s ruling **National Resistance Movement (NRM)** party as no longer representing the interests of the people of Uganda, deepening the succession row in Uganda.¹² A founding member of the ruling NRM told ARC Briefing that Kainerugaba’s Twitter rant came after he discovered that most of the historical members of the party are not supporting his bid for the presidency.¹³ The member says Kainerugaba prematurely started campaigning for the position of the party’s presidential flag bearer, noting that he should be aware of the NRM’s “well-laid” procedure for choosing a party presidential candidate, which has never been through Twitter.¹⁴ The member further said that at an appropriate time the party will choose a candidate but cast doubt on Kainerugaba being chosen as the flag bearer.¹⁵

⁵ Party official, Kampala, 5 Dec 2022

⁶ Party official, Kampala, 5 Dec 2022

⁷ Party official, Kampala, 5 Dec 2022

⁹ Security agent, Kampala, 5 Dec 2022

¹⁰ HRW, 8 Dec 2022

¹¹ HRW, 8 Dec 2022

¹² Uganda analyst, 8 Dec 2022

¹³ Twitter, 2 Dec 2022

¹⁴ NRM party member, Kampala, 8 Dec 2022

¹⁵ Source: Uganda Analyst 8 Dec 2022

Kainerugaba, who has declared his intention to contest in the 2026 presidential elections, fired fierce criticism at the NRM via **Twitter** on 2 December:

*"I am listening to the outcry of our people for change. I am with the people! Whatever NRM has become certainly does not represent the people of Uganda."*¹⁷

Museveni has remained silent on the son's presidential ambition while most of the ruling party leaders avoid openly discussing the first son's presidential ambition, but Museveni's supporters, led by internal affairs minister **Kahinda Otafire**, have already been moving around the country mobilising the youth to endorse Museveni for another term in 2026.²²

A former opposition presidential candidate, however, also offered rare praise for Kainerugaba. He told ARC Briefing he agrees with Kainerugaba, and that the ruling party has been the most reactionary organisation in the country.²³

A veteran journalist with a **Kampala**-based daily newspaper has expressed fear that the succession row may result in a coup d'état if not properly addressed:

*"For several months there has been a change in the army every time the General tweets something that causes debate. The change in which he was removed from commanding looked like a reward but other changes seem to sound like Museveni is protecting himself from any potential eventualities".*²⁴

The succession row is likely to become more intense in 2023, increasing the likelihood of Kainerugaba starting his own party to wrestle power from his father.²⁵

Calls for Rwanda-Uganda to be excluded from peace efforts in DRC

There has been a renewed call for **Uganda** and **Rwanda** to be excluded from efforts aimed at restoring peace and security in the eastern **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**.²⁶ For several months, the **M23 rebels** have fought Congolese government troops, **Forces armées de la république démocratique du Congo (FARDC)**, in **North Kivu** province capturing a swath of territory including the **Bunagana** border crossing.²⁷

DRC accuses **Rwanda** of backing the regrouped rebels just as **United Nations** investigators did in a previous **M23** insurgency a decade ago, but **Rwanda** denies all involvement.²⁸ The M23, which is waging its most serious offensive in eastern DRC since 2012, has rejected calls by **East African** leaders to disarm and withdraw from land they have taken. They also want to talk directly with the government in DRC's capital, **Kinshasa**.²⁹

Uganda announced on 21 November that it would send 1,000 troops to DRC to join a regional force mandated by the **East African Community (EAC)** to help end decades of instability. The announcement has been received negatively by some of the members who have been engaged in the

¹⁷ Twitter, 2 Dec 2022

²² Uganda analyst, 8 Dec 2022

²³ Former presidential candidate, Kampala, 8 Dec 2022

²⁴ Uganda analyst, 8 Dec 2022

²⁵ Uganda analyst, 8 Dec 2022

²⁶ Uganda analyst, 8 Dec 2022

²⁷ Africa report, 13 Jun 2022

²⁸ Aljazeera, 26 Nov 2022

²⁹ Aljazeera, 26 Nov 2022

efforts the issues in eastern DRC.³⁰ A Kampala based lawyer, who has been actively involved in diplomatic efforts to end the conflict, says both Uganda and Rwanda should be left out of the regional force to be deployed to restore peace in eastern Congo.³¹ He told ARC Briefing:

*“External forces like Uganda and Rwanda create more problems because they advance their own interests. It should be a neutral party that should facilitate the talks. What Uganda and Rwanda can do is to coerce Kinshasa to accept talks with M23 but not get involved in the talks themselves”.*³²

A local leader from Bunagana border post, currently controlled by the M23 rebels, also told ARC Briefing that he believes the leaders of Congo would not welcome the involvement of Rwanda and Uganda in any peace effort.³³ However, a Congolese trader in Bunagana thinks peace can be restored only if the M23 are integrated into the Congolese national army. He told ARC Briefing that this would also empower the M23 members politically and economically and that talks should be between the **Banyamulenge**, the ethnic group that largely makes up M23, and M23 Leaders on one side and the Kinshasa government on the other side:

*“Once the Banyamulenge are recognized as equal citizens of DRC and can participate in the governance of their country then they will cease to be used by external interests for selfish needs”.*³⁵

M23, when it was formed in 2012, was the latest in a series of ethnic **Tutsi**-led rebellions to revolt against Congolese forces. It was pushed out of DRC in 2013 after seizing large swaths of territory but has had a major resurgence this year.³⁶

³⁰ Uganda analyst, 8 Dec 2022

³¹ Uganda Analyst 8 Dec 2022

³² Lawyer, Kampala, 8 Dec 2022

³³ Uganda Analyst, 8 Dec 2022

³⁵ Trader, Bunagana, 8 Dec 2022

³⁶ Aljazeera, 26 Nov 2022

Planner

2026 (Uganda) General elections

Chronology

8 Dec 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Daily Monitor*. Power distribution company **Umeme** confirms it will exit **Uganda** in 2025 after receiving notice from government that its 20-year concession will not be renewed upon expiry;

7 Dec 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Bank of Uganda*. **Bank of Uganda's (BoU)** Monetary Policy Committee maintains the central bank rate at 10% as annual headline inflation decreased slightly from 10.7% in October 2022 to 10.6% in November;

6 Dec 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Daily Monitor*. **African Development Bank (AfDB)** agrees to loan \$301m to overhaul the **Kampala-Malaba Meter Gauge Railway (MGR)** which forms part of the **East African Community's** northern corridor linking **Kampala** to **Kenya's** coastal city of **Mombasa**;

5 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Independent*. **Mathias Mpuuga Nsamba**, leader of the opposition in parliament rejects calls by the deputy inspector general of police, Major General **Geoffrey Kastigazi Tumusiime** to submit another list of people believed to have been abducted by state security agencies;

3 Dec 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Nile Post*. President **Yoweri Museveni** says at least 24 suspects have been arrested after the attack on a **Ugandan People's Defence Force** patrol in **Kapeeka** last week;

2 Dec 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Aljazeera*. Uganda discharges its last known **Ebola** patient from hospital raising hopes that an outbreak, that has killed at least 56 people, will end soon;

1 Dec 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Parliament*. Parliament asks the energy and mineral minister to present a comprehensive statement on the persistent power outages in the country, experienced since 30 November;

30 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Independent*. Members of parliament (MPs) express concern over recent attacks on police posts in which officers on duty were injured or killed and guns stolen;

29 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *VOA*. Ugandan opposition politicians and rights groups call for the release of opposition party president **Joseph Kabuleta**, who was reportedly arrested on 28 November by security forces;

28 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Daily Monitor*. Unknown security operatives arrest **Joseph Kabuleta**, a former presidential candidate and leader of the **National Economic Empowerment Dialogue (NEED)** party;

27 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Aljazeera*. President **Yoweri Museveni** extends a quarantine placed on two districts that are the epicentre of the country's **Ebola** outbreak by 21 days, adding that the government's response to the disease was succeeding;

26 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *WHO*. Minister for ethics and integrity, **Rose Lilly Akello**, reveals government has relaunched plans to have a Religious and Faith Organizations (RFOs) policy;

25 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Parliament*. Parliamentary speaker, **Anita Among**, tasks the committee on gender, labour and social development, to work with line ministry to investigate companies involved in the export of labourers to the **Middle East**;

24 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *VOA*. Victims of the rebel **Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda** have

mixed reactions to plans by the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** to launch proceedings in absentia against the group's fugitive leader, **Joseph Kony**;

23 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Impact Transform*. National authorities and international organizations launch the five-year **planetGOLD Uganda** project to advance a more responsible artisanal gold mining sector and reduce mercury use by 15 tonnes over five years;

21 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Daily Monitor*. **Uganda Civil Aviation Authority (UCAA)** board chairman **Steven Kauma** reveals the government will install two new **Distance Measuring Equipment** at **Entebbe Airport** to further help pilots navigate and land safely in early 2023;

20 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *UK Government advisory*. The requirement for travellers to complete a mandatory **Digital Health Declaration** form for travel to or from **Uganda** is suspended, in addition to a negative **Covid-19** PCR test certificate no longer being required for fully vaccinated inbound and outbound travellers;

19 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Xinua*. **World Health Organisation (WHO)** calls for \$88.2m in urgent funding to support **Uganda's Ebola** response and the readiness in neighbouring countries;

18 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control*. **World Health Organization (WHO)** announces there are 141 confirmed cases of **Ebola** including 55 deaths;

17 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *East African*. A coalition of leading **Ugandan** rights groups and lawyers file a case in court challenging a controversial new internet law, which they say is aimed at curbing free speech and targeting government opponents;

16 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *UN news*. **World Health Organization (WHO)** announces that three candidate **Ebola** vaccines for a proposed clinical trial in **Uganda** were shipped in the last week of November;

15 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Observer*. President **Yoweri Museveni** says efforts to contain the **Ebola** outbreak were starting to succeed as the country tightened restrictions in the outbreak's epicenter to further slow the rate of infections; .

14 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Nile Post*. Traffic police state 1,021 boda boda riders have been killed in accidents on Ugandan roads in the past nine months;

13 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Reuters*. Health ministry confirms an **Ebola** case in **Jinja** in eastern Uganda, the first time the outbreak has spread to a new region of the country from central Uganda;

11 Nov 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Nile post*. Government through the **National Metrological Authority** warns the public to brace for floods and mudslides in different parts of the country as it is expected to rain consecutively for next 10 days;

About Africa Risk Consulting:

Africa Risk Consulting (ARC) is a pan-African consulting company that provides timely, relevant information and advice that enables its clients to take informed investment decisions and to safeguard their reputations.

ARC's core consulting services include integrity due diligence and corporate investigations, political advisory and country assessments, opportunity monitoring and reputation risk management. Most relevant to private equity firms is ARC's integrity due diligence and corporate investigations capability. Specifically, ARC offers pre-deal integrity checks to highlight red flags before negotiations start; full detailed multi-jurisdictional reputation due diligence; and supplier and senior hire vetting and repeat due diligence for compliance programmes. ARC is unique in that it offers a 10-day delivery for a routine integrity due diligence. ARC also offers a suite of

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