

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

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Uganda Summary 13 August 2026

There is growing concern in Uganda over the number of opposition political figures fleeing into exile following an unprecedented political crackdown and fears of arbitrary military detentions and torture which the United Nations (UN) has condemned. Parliament's approval to deploy Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF) troops to Gaza under a United States (US)-backed international force has sparked intense domestic controversy over strategic overextension, rushed legislative approval, and the vague operational risks of entering an active Middle East conflict. Western countries, led by the US, have maintained strict travel advisories and entry restrictions on Uganda despite its health ministry declaring that the country is now Ebola-free, causing significant losses for the vital tourism sector.

Military crackdown on political dissent forces opposition into exile

There is growing concern in **Uganda** over the number of opposition political figures fleeing into exile following an unprecedented political crackdown and fears of arbitrary military detentions and torture which the **United Nations (UN)** has [condemned](#). The current wave of opposition figures fleeing into [exile](#) follows the highly disputed 15 January presidential election which the incumbent President **Yoweri Museveni** (1986-present) won with over 71% of the vote, against his rival **Robert Kyagulanyi** (also known as **Bobi Wine**), who polled 24.72%. Following a multi-week military manhunt after the January polls, Wine fled the country in March, [stating](#) that the regime intended to "eliminate" him.

Opposition politicians, lawyers, journalists and activists are fleeing to exile following [reports](#) of forced disappearances and documented torture claims orchestrated by the military under the command of the Chief of Defence Forces, General **Muhoozi Kainerugaba**. Pictures have emerged of people who the military abducted and tortured in what Muhoozi has [publicly](#) said is his 'basement'. In other cases, people are allegedly being held arbitrarily in detention centres; most recently, Wine posted a video on social media [showing](#) **Sam Mugumya**, the former aide to Museveni's **Bush War** medical doctor and jailed four times presidential contender Dr. **Kiiza Besigye**. Unknown men abducted Mugumya, who was a parliamentary candidate, in August 2025 from a hotel in **Mbarara**. Supporters of the Wine's **National Unity Platform (NUP)**, who were recently released, report that they were allegedly being held together with Mugumya at the headquarters of the **Special Forces Command (SFC)** in **Kasenya** in **Entebbe**.

The latest prominent opposition figure to flee to exile is Dr. **Linah Zedriga**, who [took](#) over the leadership of the NUP after Wine fled to exile. Local media reported Zedriga fled the country on 10 August, citing fears for her safety. Former **Kira Municipality** member of parliament (MP) and opposition **People's Front for Freedom (PFF)** spokesperson **Ibrahim Semujju** also [fled](#) the country in June and is reported to be sheltering in a neighbouring country. In a recent interview with local media published on 9 August, Semujju said he fled the country in fear of ending up in a military torture chamber and then prison. Before fleeing to exile, [Semujju](#) had also been named as an accomplice to a case involving Besigye. Besigye is currently facing charges of plotting to overthrow Museveni's government through an armed struggle. **Uganda Law Society** president **Isaac Ssemakadde** and Besigye's lawyer, **Eron Kiiza**, have also fled the country.

UN high commissioner for human rights, **Volker Türk**, [issued](#) a strong statement on 30 July, condemning Uganda for the brutal crackdown that includes widespread torture of political critics:

"The actions of the authorities are creating a climate of fear that is increasing self-censorship, further stifling public debate and deepening polarization."

United Nations Human Rights Office (OHCHR) [estimates](#) that at least 50 opposition leaders and supporters, five human rights defenders and five journalists have been subjected to abuses in recent months. The UN also said authorities have relied on [legal](#) provisions that do not comply with international human rights law to detain critics, further contributing to an atmosphere of intimidation and fear.

Uganda's proposed troop deployment in Gaza causes controversy at home

Parliament's [approval](#) on 6 August to deploy **Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF)** troops to **Gaza** under a **United States (US)**-backed international force has sparked intense domestic controversy over strategic overextension, rushed legislative approval, and the vague operational risks of entering an active **Middle East** conflict.

The motion, tabled by the defence and veteran affairs minister, **Kiryowa Kiwanuka**, sought Parliament's [approval](#) under the constitution and the **Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces Act (UPDF Act)** to deploy Ugandan troops to support efforts to restore peace and facilitate humanitarian assistance in Gaza. Kiwanuka [noted](#):

"The deployment is consistent with our National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, particularly Objective XIII, which mandates Uganda to promote regional and international peace, security and cooperation."

However, the approval has attracted controversy with the opposition, civil society and the public arguing that the process was rushed and lacked adequate consultations. Among those who are querying the deployment is retired [army](#) General **David Sejusa**. Sejusa, warns that participating without a concrete political settlement or definitive mandate exposes troops to severe legal risks and potential war crimes:

"It is, therefore, a danger/a risk of complicity in war crimes when we deploy troops in un-militarised active conflict area, without any clear implementable political framework? Where a belligerent state continues strikes on the occupied population."

Critics note the [UPDF](#) is already heavily deployed across regional hotspots including **Somalia**, the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**, and **South Sudan**, making a distant Middle East mission a zero-sum game for national security resources. Ssemakadde also voiced concern that the deployment is not a decision of national interest but a transaction that will benefit a few individuals in Uganda:

"This decision was not made for Uganda; it was made for a small group of officials who will benefit from the financial arrangements. This money, on paper, looks attractive but we all know a significant portion will be embezzled along the way"

While the mission is structured under a US backed international framework, precise [burden-sharing agreements](#) regarding whether external partners will fully reimburse Uganda or if domestic budgetary reallocations will be required, remain a point of public scrutiny.

MPs have also demanded financial [guarantees](#) that the deployed soldiers will receive their full salaries and operational allowances without leakage or administrative corruption. Ugandan soldiers serving under similar [peacekeeping missions](#), like the **African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)**, have previously complained of their money being siphoned off by corrupt officials through multiple schemes ranging from selling vital field provisions to exploiting administrative processes. In April, authorities [remanded](#) high-ranking Ugandan army officer, Major General **Geoffrey Barigye**, for the theft of 270,000 litres of fuel, while other junior commanders have historically been caught selling fuel directly to Somali civilians in **Mogadishu**.

The deployment is part of part of a multinational security force proposed under US President **Donald Trump's** (2015-2021; 2025-present) ceasefire plan. Under the plan, an **International Stabilization**

Force is envisioned deploying in areas that are not under Israeli control. It is unclear when any such force will deploy.

Uganda still faces travel advisories despite reporting Ebola free status

Western countries, led by the US, have [maintained](#) 'Do Not Travel' advisories and entry restrictions for Uganda despite the health ministry [declaring](#) on 28 July that the country is now free from **Ebola**. The Ebola-free declaration followed the successful completion of the mandatory 42-day monitoring period after the last confirmed patient was discharged on 16 June.

The country had hoped that the travel ban would be lifted after the expiry of the 42-day monitoring without any Ebola case recorded but the US **Department of State** has [maintained](#) a Level 4 advisory, citing regional health risks tied to the broader Ebola situation alongside other security indicators. This same advisory level applies to other countries such as **North Korea**, Somalia, **Afghanistan** and **Russia**. Alongside the US, 15 other countries continue to maintain either partial or full travel restrictions.

Ongoing economic losses have angered tour company operators; **Great Lakes Safaris** and **Uganda Lodges** founder and CEO [Amos Wekesa](#) is now urging the Ugandan government to retaliate to the ban by preventing airlines from destinations that have maintained advisories from operating from Uganda, such as **Emirates**. The **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** [introduced](#) the Ebola-related restrictions on 6 June. The measures also suspended new visas for nationals of Uganda, the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** and **South Sudan**.

These restrictions have crippled the tourism sector, which [earns](#) approximately Ush 1.8 trillion (\$1.7 billion) in revenue annually, equal to around 5.9% of [GDP](#), and supports approximately 876,512 jobs (7.5% of total national employment) and roughly 16% of total export revenues.

Planner

13 Aug 2026 **Kampala (Uganda) Bank of Uganda** (central bank) **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** meeting

Chronology

9 Aug 2026 **Kampala (Uganda) Chimpreports**. The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** warns **Bank of Uganda (BoU)** (central bank) over its growing reliance on short-term foreign currency borrowing, even as the central bank begins purchasing local gold to strengthen national reserves;

8 Aug 2026 **Kampala (Uganda) NTV**. Local manufacturers - accounting for roughly 15% to 16% of GDP - are pushing government for relief from commercial lending rates sitting at high margins of 18% to 24%, requesting single-digit or 12% interest structures to sustain SME growth;

7 Aug 2026 **Kampala (Uganda) Trading Economics**. Uganda's economy demonstrated steady performance moving into mid-2026, closing out FY2025/26 with an estimated 6.4% GDP growth rate and a total nominal size reaching roughly USh 250.4 trillion (\$69.3 billion), while annual headline inflation ticked up slightly to 3.7%, driven primarily by climbing transport, energy, and utility costs;

6 Aug 2026 **Kampala (Uganda) Daily Monitor**. Parliament approves the deployment of the **Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF)** to **Gaza** as part of a **United States (US)**-led international stabilization mission;

5 Aug 2026 **Kampala (Uganda) New Vision**. **Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU)** says a final investment decision (FID) for Uganda's planned crude oil refinery is expected next February; a step that could trigger long-delayed development of the \$4 billion project;

4 August 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Nile Post*. Uganda is positioning its emerging oil and gas sector as a cornerstone of its ambitious **Tenfold Growth Strategy**; a national development plan aimed at expanding the country's economy from about \$50 billion to \$500 billion by 2040;

3 Aug 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Mining Weekly*. Despite government deployment orders, medical interns across the country collectively refuse to report to duty, citing unresolved demands regarding their welfare and allowances;

2 Aug 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Press release*. The **Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB)** officially deregisters 90,000 inactive companies, classified as companies that have not filed annual returns for five consecutive years and missed the statutory 12-month grace period for administrative restoration;

1 Aug 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *URN*. Parliament issues a strict seven-day ultimatum to the **Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA)**, demanding accountability for persistent engineering failures and poor planning that have worsened the capital's flooding crisis;

30 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Al Jazeera*. The **United Nations** high commissioner for human rights, **Volker Turk**, condemns Uganda for its clampdown on dissent and opposition groups;

29 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Al Jazeera*. A hunger crisis is brewing in **Uganda** as the country battles its worst drought in decades. Crops across the country have failed, and families are losing loved ones as the crisis deepens across the country's northeastern region and the wider Horn of Africa;

28 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Al Jazeera*. Health minister **Chris Baryomunsi** announces the successful completion of the mandatory 42-day monitoring period which begun after the discharge of the last Ugandan national on 16 June, declaring the country **Ebola** free;

26 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Press release*. Finance minister **Henry Musasizi** has directed **Uganda Investment Authority (UIA)** management to prioritise the completion of key infrastructure projects including roads, water and power in industrial parks to facilitate their growth and attract investors;

25 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Parliament*. **Uganda Railways Corporation (URC)** managing director **Benon Kajuna** records a statement with Parliament police after failing to provide evidence on efforts to recover 394 railway wagons that went missing during the **Rift Valley Railways (RVR)** concession;

24 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Press release*. **United States (US)** embassy in Uganda issues a travel advisory stating that the **Centre for Disease Control (CDC)** is temporarily restricting US entry for travellers who were recently in the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**;

23 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *New Vision*. Finance ministry data shows that gold export earnings reached \$814.78m in May, up from \$485.83m in the same period last year, representing 67.7% year on year increase;

21 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Parliament*. Parliament has been petitioned over the dysfunctional situation at **Uganda National Bureau of Statistics (UBS)** which has resulted in the proliferation of poor quality and counterfeit goods, eroding investor confidence and frustrated industrialisation and the efficient enforcement of standards laws and regulations;

20 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda)** *URN*. Works and transport ministry officials admit before Parliament that three of the four buses involved in recent fatal road crashes across Uganda were operating illegally after failing mandatory roadworthiness inspections, raising fresh concerns over weak enforcement of transport regulations and the country's growing road safety crisis;

18 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda) Parliament**. Parliament has unanimously backed a motion calling for urgent government intervention to address the worsening drought and hunger crisis affecting northern Uganda;

17 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda) Al Jazeera**. Uganda suspends all school trips and excursions following a tragic bus crash in eastern Uganda that killed 20 children and one adult;

16 Jul 2026 **Kampala (Uganda) WHO**. Uganda discharges its final recovering **Ebola** patient from **Mulago National Referral Hospital** in Kampala, officially launching a 42-day **World Health Organization (WHO)** countdown toward being declared Ebola free;

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.

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Please contact us by email info@africariskconsulting.com