



**DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

### **MARKING THE WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY**

Today the 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021, Justice Access Point (JAP) joins the rest of World to mark the World Humanitarian Day. This day is dedicated to the recognition of humanitarian workers and those who have lost their lives working for humanitarian causes. It was designated by the United Nations General Assembly subsequent to GA Resolution A/63/L.49 on the Strengthening of the Coordination of Emergency Assistance of the United Nations.

Humanitarian workers continue to face all sorts of harassments and dire threats in the field as they respond to natural and complex humanitarian disasters in the different parts of the world. The theme for this year is “*The Human Race*”, the global challenge for climate action in solidarity with the world’s most vulnerable population and respond to “needs of climate-vulnerables”. In responding to the affected communities negatively impacted by climatic crises, humanitarian workers often find themselves faced with security threats linked to access. This is especially the case for the conflict-prone climatically delicate situations.

Uganda has experienced a number of humanitarian disasters linked to climatic conditions. For instance the landslides in Bududa Districts in Eastern Uganda; and Kilembe and Kasese District in Western Uganda. It is absolutely important that humanitarian workers are protected during the course of their response to support affected communities with assistance. It is important that the State fulfills its primary protection responsibility and initiates measures that strengthen the assistance delivery mechanisms and the local actors to play their role in humanitarian actions.

In view of the above JAP calls upon government of Uganda to undertake the following:

- (a) Review the laws that restrict the operations of non-state actors including the NGO Act, the Anti-terrorism Act which unduly encumber the actors with excessive restrictions and burdens ;
- (b) Work towards the improvement of civilian – military relations. This is especially crucial given the recent acrimonious 2021 general and Presidential Elections in

- Uganda that may have soured the relations between the security actors and local populations including those living in the affected communities;
- (c) Enforce rule 31 of the Customary International Humanitarian Law on the protection of humanitarian workers;
  - (d) Commit to take practical measures to address the needs of climate-vulnerables at COP26 and to follow with concrete national action plans for their implementation.

Endorsed by:



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