



JOINT PRESS STATEMENT ON THE COMMEMORATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY (IHRD/UDHR)

**December 5, 2025
UHRC HEAD QUARTERS**

The Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), together with its partners, is honored to announce the commemoration of this year's **International Human Rights Day (IHRD)** under the national theme: *"Strengthening Democratic Space, Upholding Freedom of Expression, Speech, Association, Media and Security of Person during elections for all"*.

The IHRD, being the day on which the UN General Assembly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) – **10th December 1948**, is used by nations as a powerful advocacy tool to highlight issues of human rights concern in their respective jurisdictions.

This being a campaign period leading to the general elections in the Country, the UHRC and partners; African Center for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (ACTV), Justice Access Point, UNFPA, Human Rights Center Uganda (HRCU), DefendDefenders, Torture Survivors Association, Uganda Law Society, Rights 4her, AGROREF, among others are coming together to pay special attention to the realization of the Human Rights and Freedoms related to campaigns and elections in Uganda.

This year's commemoration, comes at a time when the need to remind ourselves that democracy thrives when citizens can speak freely, associate openly, tolerate those with divergent views and participate peacefully in shaping the future of our country, is critical. These freedoms are not privileges; they are rights enshrined in our Constitution, protected by regional and international human rights instruments, and nurtured through our collective responsibility.

The Commission and its partners recognize the progress Uganda has made in safeguarding rights during past election cycles, but also acknowledges the challenges that remain, such as hate speech, incitement of violence by some.

actors and sometimes excessive use of force by the security agencies, acts of intimidation and incidents of other human rights violations and abuses.

UHRC and her partners like ACTV and the Coalition Against Torture (CAT) have taken an active rather than a passive approach to addressing violence during elections in Uganda with some notable interventions worth highlighting;

- On 26th June 2025 together with the UHRC and the 30 members of the Coalition Against Torture in Uganda (CAT) we conducted a public dialogue under the theme: "A Torture and Violence Free Elections for All, By All", in Commemoration of Survivors of Torture. We appreciated the participation in particular of 4 diplomatic Missions from Denmark, Sweden, Austria and Germany.
- On 3rd July 2025, ACTV and UHRC were invited by The Uganda Law Society (ULS), a partner of the CAT to participate in a discussion on peaceful elections hosted by the Radical New Bar at the ULS offices.
- Developed draft guidelines on torture and violence free elections by the CAT in Uganda. Produced a booklet on awareness of election violence in Uganda.
- Convened various national and regional Dialogues aimed at securing a peaceful elections as a pre-requisite for sustainable economic development in Uganda.
- On 30 July 2025, trained Kampala Metropolitan South Police on torture prevention during elections.
- On 24 July 2025, we trained journalists on their role in prevention of torture and violence during the general elections 2026. The journalists were from

Bukomansimbi, Gomba, Gulu City, Gulu district, Karamoja, Masaka, Mukono, Wakiso and Kampala.

- Every election cycle, the Commission has monitored and published a special report on elections highlighting successes, challenges and making recommendations.

Therefore, as we commemorate this year's Human Rights Day, we call for the following actions;

- The State should appropriate adequate resources towards voter education and civic education.
- Journalists and the media should ensure professional and impartial reporting on election related activities and incidents.
- The general public to always use legal means to advocate for their rights, and respect each other to avoid political violence.
- Political parties should institute mechanisms that promote political dialogue and tolerance during the electoral process and provide access to professional and timely documentation of survivors of torture and violence.

This year's commemoration will climax into a Multi-stakeholder National Dialogue to be held on **10th December 2025 at Golf Course Hotel, Kampala starting at 8:30am**. It will feature Political parties, Ministries, Departments and Agencies of State, Security agencies, Non-Government Organizations and Development partners. These will come together to discuss and lay strategies for a peaceful atmosphere during and after the general elections.

An election is not an event but a process. The UHRC calls upon all Ugandans to join this commemoration, not passively but actively as champions of peace,

tolerance, and accountability. Together we can promote, protect and respect the rights of every one.

In conclusion, we appreciate the technical and financial support of the Government of Uganda and development partners in making this commemoration possible.

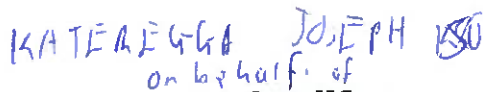
For God and My Country



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