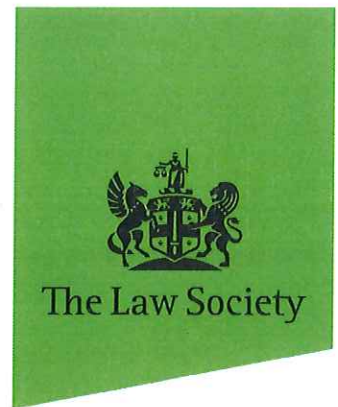


From the President

His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Museveni
President of the Republic of Uganda
State House Nakasero
P.O. Box 25497, Kampala
Uganda



By e-mail: info@statehouse.go.ug

13 October 2016

Dear Excellency

Harassment of a human rights defender - Ms. Sandra Ntebi

The Law Society is the professional body representing more than 166,000 solicitors in England and Wales. It aims to promote and support solicitors while upholding the rule of law, legal independence, ethical values, and the principle of justice for all around the world.

The Law Society is concerned about acts of harassment against Ms. Sandra Ntebi, a prominent human rights defender engaged in the protection of LGBTI rights in Uganda. Ms. Ntebi is the chairperson of the Uganda LGBT Security Committee and works as a researcher at the Law Department of Makerere University in Kampala.

We understand that on 4 August 2016, police interrupted a peaceful assembly of the LGBTI Pride event in Kabalagala, a suburb of Kampala. Ms. Ntebi was present at this meeting and was detained by police officers overnight, together with other persons who attended the event. We understand that Ms. Ntebi was beaten and her access to a lawyer was denied. Moreover, Ms. Ntebi was subsequently released without charges.

After her detention, Ms. Ntebi was allegedly harassed through phone calls and text messages by members of the police department, urging her to return to the police station, despite the absence of a formal request by the police. On 16 August 2016, she participated in a press conference regarding the events that took place on 4 August 2016. We understand that, when Ms. Ntebi was driving home after the press conference, her car was hit and she was urged by an individual to go to the police station.

The Law Society is concerned about the harassment of human rights defenders in Uganda and particularly the treatment of members of the LGBTI community and those who defend their rights.

We respectfully remind you that Uganda acceded to the **International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights** on 21 June 1995:

Article 2

Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of a kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property birth or other status.

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Article 7

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment [...]

Article 21

The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Uganda is also a party to the **African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights**, and ratified it on 10 May 1986:

Article 2

Every individual shall be entitled to the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms recognised and guaranteed in the present Charter without distinction of any kind such as race, ethnic group, colour, sex, language, religion, political or any other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth or any status.

Article 5

Every individual shall have the right to the respect of the dignity inherent in a human being and to the recognition of his legal status. All forms of exploitation and degradation of man, particularly slavery, slave trade, torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment and treatment shall be prohibited.

Article 11

Every individual shall have the right to assemble freely with others. The exercise of this right shall be subject only to necessary restrictions provided for by law, in particular those enacted in the interest of national security, the safety, health, ethics and rights and freedoms of others.

Furthermore, we would like to draw Your attention to the provisions of the **Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms** (1998):

Article 1

Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels.

Article 5

For the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, at the national and international levels:

(a) To meet or assemble peacefully [...]

Article 12

1. Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to participate in peaceful activities against violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2. The State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration.

The Law Society respectfully urges His Excellency to:

- a) take measures to prevent and adequately investigate acts of harassment against Ms. Sandra Ntebi and, if applicable, prosecute the perpetrators for such acts .
- b) ensure that human rights defenders can carry out their work without harassment or intimidation.

The Law Society will monitor the situation of Ms. Ntebi and other human rights defenders in Uganda.

Yours sincerely,



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President

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cc.

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