



**EUROPEAN UNION**

DELEGATION TO THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

Kampala 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2022

### **Local statement on torture and human rights violations**

*The Delegation of the European Union issues the following statement together with the diplomatic missions of the European Union Member States to Uganda.*

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During the recently concluded Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the Uganda Human Rights Commission and several other stakeholders pointed out the persistence in Uganda of torture. They also expressed concern for other human right violations in Uganda such as the excessive use of force by the police, violations to freedom of expression and the media, including harassment, threats, illegal detentions and violence against journalists and human rights defenders.

The European Union fully shares the concern of many Ugandan stakeholders over a situation that for more than a year has seen a significant increase of reports of torture, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, harassment as well as attacks against human rights defenders, members of the opposition and environmental rights activists. The arbitrary arrest of people by security services, holding them in ungazetted places of detention for prolonged periods of time, torturing them, not bringing them before a court within the mandatory time limits, are violations of Uganda's national legislation, regional and international commitments as well as specific Presidential guidelines.

While we note the actions already taken against some perpetrators of human rights violations amongst security forces, the relevant Ugandan authorities should urgently ensure a comprehensive investigation into all the reported abuses, including the events of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of November 2020. Those who are being held incommunicado should be immediately released or brought before justice and those who violate the laws of Uganda should be held accountable and personally liable for their actions.