

URGENT ACTION

OPPOSITION PARTY LEADER FORCIBLY DISAPPEARED

On 17 July, Robert Lugya Kayingo – a Ugandan-South African lawyer and President of the Ugandan Federal Alliance, an opposition political party – was arbitrarily arrested by Ugandan security agents at Entebbe Airport, after disembarking from his flight from South Africa, and has not been seen or heard from since. The security agents who carried out his arrest did not identify themselves or state the reasons for his arrest, nor has any official information been disclosed as to his fate and whereabouts. The Ugandan authorities must immediately disclose where Robert Lugya Kayingo is being held, ensure he is granted access to his family and lawyer, and unless charged with a recognisable offence immediately release him.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka

*The Attorney General of The Republic of Uganda
Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs
Plot 7, Parliament Avenue
Kampala, Uganda
Email: info@justice.go.ug*

Dear Hon. Kiwanuka,

*I am writing to express grave concern about the arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance of Ugandan-South African **Robert Lugya Kayingo**.*

Robert Lugya Kayingo is a lawyer and since January 2025, President of the Ugandan Federal Alliance, an opposition political party in Uganda. On the morning of 17 July, his flight landed at Entebbe Airport from South Africa where he lives with his family. He had returned to Uganda to attend his uncle's funeral. Upon landing, he was arbitrarily arrested by immigration officers who later handed him over to unknown security agents from an unspecified department. Neither of the two officials identified themselves nor presented a warrant or explanation for his arrest. Robert Lugya Kayingo was able to communicate his arrest to his family via phone until around 5pm of the same day. No one has heard from him since. On 17 July 2025, his family went to the Entebbe Airport police station to enquire about his whereabouts, but the police claimed they did not find any record of Robert's arrest.

On 23 July, his family filed a habeus corpus application at the High Court of Uganda. On 24 July, the respondents in the application – the Attorney General, the Inspector General of Police, the Chief of Defence Forces and the Directorate of Intelligence and Security - failed to appear before the court. During the ruling that took place on 31 July, the state counsel appeared in court and stated that the state agencies named in the application do not have Robert Lugya Kayingo in their custody but that they were looking for him.

Robert Lugya Kayingo appears to have been targeted by the Ugandan authorities because of his current position as President of an opposition political party, in violation of his rights to freedom of expression and association. He is subject to an enforced disappearance under international law which puts his safety at imminent risk.

In light of the above, I urge you to immediately disclose the whereabouts of Robert Lugya Kayingo and unless charged with a recognizable offence, to immediately release him. Pending his release, I urge you to ensure he is protected from torture and other ill-treatment and granted access to his family, a lawyer of his choice and adequate healthcare.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English
You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 1 January 2026

NAME AND PRONOUN: ROBERT LUGYA KAYINGO (he/him)