



LIBERTY
PROBONO
INITIATIVE

**LIBERTY PROBONO INITIATIVE
(LPI)**

The Chairperson,
Uganda Human Rights Commission,
P.O Box 4929,
Kampala, Uganda.

28th October, 2025.

RE: A CALL FOR INTERVENTION IN THE CONTINUED DENIAL OF THE RIGHT TO APPLY FOR BAIL FOR THREE FEMALE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS AND OTHERS VIDE UGANDA VERSUS WAMBOGA IVAN & 11 OTHERS CRIMINAL CASE NO.0662/2025 AT THE CHIEF MAGISTRATES COURT OF BUGANDA ROAD.

We are a Civil Society Organisation whose main objective is to promote the rights of marginalized groups, especially women through legal representation, empowerment and advocacy in Uganda.

Together with the undersigned female environmental activists, Civil Society Organizations, Human Rights Defenders and concerned citizens, we call upon your institution to intervene in the ongoing violation of the constitutional rights of three female environmental activists in the above captioned matter.

Background;

The said female Environmental Activists are Asio Dorothy (20 years), Nakyambadde Teopista (25 years) and Nalwadda Shammy (24 years) who were peacefully delivering petition to Stanbic Bank on **August 1, 2025** in protest against the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project due to its documented human and environmental violations. Despite the nonviolent nature of their action, they were arrested and have been denied the right to apply for bail highlighting the increasing criminalization of civic activism and suppression of dissent in Uganda.

We respectfully draw the attention of the Commission to the broader growing pattern of repression against the female environmental activists in Uganda. The case at hand is not isolated. There are multiple ongoing cases across different courts in Uganda involving environmental activists particularly those who oppose oil projects and other environmentally harmful developments.

It should be noted that the Government and oil companies are increasingly using the Judiciary as a stool to silence and suppress environmental activism. This is being done by pressing criminal charges against activism including Common Nuisance, Nuisance on Roads and Criminal Trespass.

These charges are often arbitrary, repetitive and appear intended not to pursue justice but rather to discourage civic engagement and peaceful protests. They have become a pattern of judicial



harassment targeting individuals who are exercising their constitutional right to protect the environment and speak out against harmful practices.

Legal concerns;

Since the arrest of these Activists, they have appeared in court more than five times, yet the presiding Trial Magistrate has consistently refused to hear their bail application. It is important to stress that this is not a case where the Application for bail has been heard and denied, but rather the Magistrate has entirely refused to hear the application in violation of **Article 23(6)(b) and (c) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda**, which guarantees every person the right to apply for bail at any stage of proceedings unless charged with a capital offense triable by the High Court.

The last court appearance on October 20, 2025, saw the magistrate deny the hearing of the bail application again, citing that the case was at an advanced stage. This justification is not supported by any law as the law in Uganda permits the accused person to apply for bail at any stage of the proceedings before Judgment is delivered particularly in cases triable by a magistrate court.

The said Activists are charged with the offense of **Nuisance on Roads C/S 65 (e) of the Roads Act Cap 346** which is categorized as a minor offence and clearly within the jurisdiction of the Magistrate's Court. There is therefore no legal basis for the continued denial of their right to apply for bail.

Human rights and gender sensitive concerns;

In addition to the abuse of the Judicial system, these women have now spent 82 days in prison, facing not only the emotional and psychological burden of unjust detention but also significant gender specific hardships.

Dorothy Asio lost her mother after one month in detention, something that has taken a mental toll on her as she never had an opportunity to pay her last respect to her deceased mother. She is now left as the primary care giver for her younger siblings.

Nalwadda Shammy is a student whose education has been severely disrupted with the continued detention.

Nakyabade Teopista is a single mother to one-year-old child and currently has no one to take care of her child.

It should be noted that these brutal arrests are usually conducted by male Police Officers, involving beatings and verbal abuse.

These women also face public humiliation as women which is always aimed at shaming them into silence.

While in detention, particularly Luzira Prison, these women have reported:

- a. Sexual harassment
- b. Excessive hard labour compared to other detainees
- c. Disproportionate punishments that result in chronic back pain.

- d. Skin and Urinary Tract Infections and in some cases conditions that end up as surgical emergencies.
- e. Psychological trauma and long term health impacts.

These challenges are inhumane, degrading, and constitute a violation of their rights as women, mothers, students and caregivers under the National and International Human Rights standards.

Our appeal;

We call upon the Ugandan Human Rights Commission to:

1. Investigate the continued denial of the activists right to apply bail.
2. Engage with the Judiciary to ensure compliance with constitutional provisions regarding the right to bail.
3. Call for the immediate hearing of the activists' bail application.
4. Ensure protection of the Activists' human rights including gender specific rights while in detention.

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda clearly outlines that justice shall not be delayed nor denied and that all persons are equal before and under the law. We urge the commission to uphold these principles in this case.

We stand in solidarity with the detained Activists and believe that their peaceful environmental advocacy should not be criminalized.

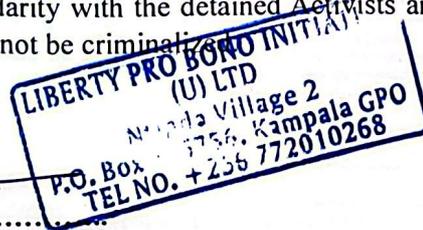
Sincerely,



Doreen Namara

Chief Executive Director, Liberty pro bono initiative(LPI)

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Cc;

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecution

The Uganda Police

Judicial Service Commission

Parliamentary Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs

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