RADICAL NEW BAR

UGANDA LAW SOCIETY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NO ONE IS SAFE

Kampala, Uganda – 28 June 2026: Miria Matembe, Eunice Musiime, and Sarah Bireete are Ugandan citizens, lawyers, and civil society activists. In all three capacities, they are exactly the people the Uganda Law Society exists to defend and to guarantee access to justice.

This morning, Eunice Musiime and Sarah Bireete were forcibly taken by armed men claiming to be security officers. Both have since been released.

We can confirm the abduction of Miria Matembe. As with others, her home was on Friday raided and ransacked. Her whereabouts remain unknown. Raids have also been reported at the premises of others linked to her.

Armed men claiming to be security officers also raided Nation Media Group (NMG) earlier this morning, halting the media house's radio, TV, and print operations. Three night staff were abducted and later released.

We are gravely concerned for the life and liberty of NMG Managing Director Susan Nsibirwa, who is presently out of contact due to an unspecified threat.

The head of the military in this country has claimed ownership of both operations.

The end of the Constitution

Ugandans now need to understand that we are in a wholly new situation. This is not the era of the Constitution. That era began to die in 2005 when unprincipled parliamentarians dismantled it by removing presidential term limits. It has now ended with recent events in which the Speaker attributed his elevation to the head of the armed forces. It was a two-decade process of slow death.

We must now change our language to match this reality. No one is being "arrested"; these are kidnappings. No one is "on remand"; these people are hostages. No one is "facing charges or on trial"; these are negotiations where kidnappers set the venue and price—or the terms and conditions—for the release of their hostages.

This is why the cases are not uniform. Some are abducted and released without explanation days later. Others are placed under home detention, surveilled and silenced. Others are taken to torture sites, mocked on social media, and then released. Others are dumped at a police booth, only to be presented before a compromised court and remanded as hostages.

However, it all begins with an act of kidnapping. At this hour, Miria Matembe's location is unknown. Nation Media Group remains under siege as armed forces hunt for Managing Director Susan Nsibirwa and other staff. Without intervention, they will join a hostage list that grows longer every week.

The Uganda Law Society condemns this latest wave of terror. We condemn, in particular, the misuse of the armed forces to violate the law. This follows earlier violations: the weaponization of the DPP's office, the capture of the judiciary, and the abuse of the prison service.

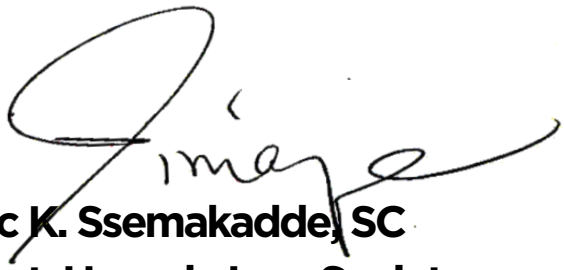
We solemnly call on all persons of authority in the military, police, prisons service, and on the Bench to seriously reflect on the implications for the country, and for themselves personally, of allowing their powers to be misused.

We once more call on all pro-democracy forces to unite and demand the government end this abuse of power. By Presidential Proclamation, the Government must account for every missing person, disclose their condition to their families, and grant unimpeded access without delay.

But that is neither the issue, nor the justice sought. Even if all those held hostage by those in power were released today, the fact that they were abducted will still exist. Until senior military commanders stop ignoring, excusing, or celebrating these acts, Ugandans will continue to live in fear that it will happen again. No citizen should have to live this way.

Following the Lawyers' Strike of 26 June 2026, held in solidarity with victims of torture, and pursuant to our public defender mandate under Section 3(d) of the Uganda Law Society Act, the Radical New Bar therefore calls on Ugandans to understand this new situation and to organize in response.

Resist. Expose. Record.



Isaac K. Ssemakadde, SC
President, Uganda Law Society