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President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni
Parliament of Uganda
Parliament Avenue
Kampala
Uganda

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Dear President Museveni,

**I am writing to express grave concern about the abduction of Ugandan opposition politician and former presidential candidate for the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), Dr Kizza Besigye from Nairobi, Kenya, on 16 November 2024 and his rendition to Uganda**. His whereabouts were unknown and he was unreachable until he was arraigned in a military court in Kampala, Uganda, on 20 November, despite being a civilian. He was charged alongside FDC member Haji Obeid Lutale with offences relating to security and unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition.

This is not the first time that Dr Besigye has been unlawfully arrested and detained. In November 2005, he was unlawfully arrested and detained on military charges of terrorism-related offences and illegal possession of weapons in the run up to the 2006 presidential elections. In February 2016, he was arbitrarily arrested and detained under powers of «preventive arrest» for «utterances and activities that amount to incitement to violence and defiance of the law» when he said that he would challenge the outcome of the 2016 presidential election in the Uganda Supreme Court.

Dr Besigye’s abduction is clearly part of a wider pattern of increasing widespread repression. Based on the frequency by which Ugandan authorities wrongly bring charges against political opponents, there is also reason to be concerned that the charges against him may be politically motivated.

**In light of the above, I urge your government to:**

* **Immediately release Dr Besigye due to the nature of his abduction, which was in clear violation of both international human rights law and the process of extradition with its requisite fair trial protections;**
* **Ensure a prompt, impartial and effective investigation is carried out into Dr Besigye’s abduction, and to bring those suspected of responsibility to account in fair trials without recourse to the death penalty.**

Yours sincerely,

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**Copie**

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