

EU's intervention is welcome

Deep in thought about the whereabouts of Uganda's main Opposition leader after a raid on his home and the assault of his wife by State security forces, my mind turned to Bobi Wine's missing official photographer and filmmaker, Andrew Natumanya, whose whereabouts remain unknown following the 2026 elections.

Scrolling through Natumanya's official X account, I noticed that for more than a month he had made no updates, contrary to his usual 24/7 activity. His family, too, does not know his location. He joins a growing list of missing Ugandans, including Sam Mugumya and John Bosco Kibalama.

Amid these concerns, I came across a viral tweet from the European Union Parliament regarding Uganda's 2026 elections. On February 12, the EU Parliament adopted three resolutions on human rights violations in Iran, Turkey and Uganda. The resolution on Uganda highlighted election shortcomings, the state of human rights, and democracy. It was adopted by 514 votes in favour, three against, with 56 abstentions.

The resolution condemns widespread intimidation, harassment, detention of Opposition figures, Internet blackouts, persecution of Bobi Wine and Dr Kiiza Besigye, suspension of civil society, torture, and enforced disappearances—acts the EU describes as crimes against humanity that undermine its principles, values and development cooperation. EU Parliament members called for impartial investigations into atrocities committed by political and military leaders.

In Uganda, reactions to the resolution were mixed. Victims of oppression welcomed the EU's stance demanding accountability, while some enablers of oppression aligned with the ruling National Resistance Movement

The EU has every right to monitor Uganda.



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International relations



accused the EU of interference in Uganda's sovereign affairs.

For instance, a respondent using the name Walokoka Omwujukuru tweeted: "This is not a colony of the EU Parliament. You have a lot of issues to solve in your backyard; deal with them first." Such statements are not random social media outbursts—they are often orchestrated to intimidate development partners seeking accountability.

Nowhere in the world should abductions, sexual assault, electoral fraud, physical brutality, cyber harassment, enforced disappearances, or torture by the military be considered normal in the 21st century. No Ugandan or African should defend such acts, regardless of political differences, tribe, gender, faith, or race.

Uganda is a member of the United Nations and party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances (CED 2010), and the Convention Against Torture (CAT 1987). The government is therefore obliged to protect citizens' lives, conduct free and fair elections, and safeguard democratic rights under both UN and EU human rights instru-

ments, including the European Convention on Human Rights (1950).

Unfortunately, the repression, abductions, torture, brutality, and electoral violence witnessed during Uganda's 2026 elections violated the 1995 Constitution and key international instruments, including the African Charter on Democracy and the ICGLR Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, which mandate rule of law, separation of powers, and free elections.

Nations must adhere to international norms to enjoy trade, investment, and diplomatic relations. On this basis, the European Union invests approximately €150 billion in Africa, including €1.4 billion in Uganda, with €115 million currently funding projects in agriculture, green jobs, climate resilience, tourism, human capital development, and refugee support.

As a major investor and trade partner, the EU has every right to monitor Uganda, especially where European taxpayers' money is spent. The world is a global village: what affects one part affects the other. Surging migration from Africa to Europe is often driven by unemployment, poverty, and political persecution stemming from bad governance. By calling for electoral reform, an end to political oppression, and respect for human rights, the EU is protecting its own interests while upholding global humanity.

Similar abuses in Uganda's past, particularly during the Idi Amin era, forced the EU to suspend diplomatic ties. Today, the EU is trying to prevent Uganda from returning to that past and ensuring accountability for foreign assistance.

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