

UGANDA 2022 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Uganda is a constitutional republic led since 1986 by President Yoweri Museveni of the National Resistance Movement party. In 2021, voters re-elected Museveni to a sixth consecutive five-year term and returned a National Resistance Movement majority to the unicameral parliament. The elections fell short of international standards and included allegations of arbitrary killings and disappearances of opposition supporters, disenfranchisement and voter intimidation, harassment of the opposition, closure of social media websites, and lack of transparency and independence in the Electoral Commission.

The national police maintain internal security, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs oversees police. The president detailed army officials to leadership roles within police and the executive, including government ministries. The law allows the military to support police operations to maintain internal security. The Ministry of Defense oversees the army. Civilian authorities maintained effective control over the security forces. There were reports that members of the security forces committed numerous abuses, with only a few low-ranking officers purportedly punished.

Significant human rights issues included credible reports of: unlawful or arbitrary killings, including extrajudicial killings; forced disappearance; torture and cases of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment by government agencies; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; arbitrary arrest or detention; political prisoners or detainees; serious problems with the independence of the judiciary; arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy; punishment of family members for alleged offenses by a relative; serious abuses in a conflict, including unlawful civilian harm; serious restrictions on freedom of expression and media, including violence, threats of violence, and unjustified arrests or prosecution of journalists, and censorship; serious restrictions on internet freedom; substantial interference with the freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, including overly restrictive laws on the organization, funding, or operation of nongovernmental organizations and civil society organizations; serious flaws with

organizations to pay for their travel to inspection sites. PLA officials reported that many of the labor officers were dual-hatted as social workers and did labor-related work only when a complainant reported an abuse. PLA officials also reported that companies often did not respect the recommendations made by labor officers during workplace inspections, including providing contracts or protective wear.

Authorities rarely enforce labor laws on wages and hours, and penalties were not commensurate with those for similar abuses. The legal minimum wage was never implemented, and civil society organizations reported that most domestic employees worked all year without leave. Wage arrears were common in both the public and private sectors. Workers' claims for overtime wages were difficult to enforce as they lacked documentation of their accumulated hours. PLA officials reported that abuses of standard wages and overtime pay were common in the manufacturing, education, private security, retail, private healthcare, and transport sectors. PLA officials also reported that because of an increase in commodities prices, they recorded increases in unpaid wages, shortened hours, and reduction of contract durations as well as terminations. In one example, a bakery illegally reduced workers' salaries by 70 percent, stating that the high cost of maize flour and cooking oil had affected company profits.

The same inspectors conducted wage, hour, and OSH inspections. Authorities rarely enforce OSH laws and penalties were not commensurate with those for similar abuses. Workers in the mining, construction, and textile sectors faced hazardous and exploitive working conditions. The PLA reported that abuses of safety and health standards were common in the manufacturing, education, private security, and transport sectors.

Informal Sector: According to 2017 government statistics, the most recent available, the informal sector employed up to 86 percent of the labor force primarily in agriculture, the service industry, trade, domestic work, construction, and transport. Labor officials reported that labor laws did not effectively protect workers in the informal economy, including many domestic and agricultural workers. Live-in domestic workers were at increased risk of poor working conditions, forced to work longer hours without compensation in homes during lockdown periods, often not provided with medical care, and subject to reduced wages. The law excludes some self-employed informal workers from social

