



## **STATEMENT CONDEMNING THE BRUTAL ASSAULT OF A JOURNALIST BY SECURITY FORCES**

*Kampala, Uganda - 6 January 2026:* The Uganda Law Society (ULS) strongly condemns the violent assault on a BBS Terefayina journalist, Mr. Ivan Mbadi, by uniformed security operatives while performing his professional duties on January 5, 2026, in Kween District.

Video footage shows two security operatives forcefully restraining the journalist, smashing his head against a motor vehicle, and destroying his professional camera equipment. This assault occurred while the journalist was covering presidential candidate Robert Kyagulanyi Sentamu's campaign.

This is not an isolated incident. Over the years, journalists in Uganda have been beaten, teargassed, arrested, intimidated, and had their equipment destroyed by security forces, especially while covering political events and opposition figures. Such conduct has repeatedly endangered the lives, dignity, and safety of journalists.

Journalism is not a crime. Covering political actors is not an offence.

The continued failure by the State to hold perpetrators accountable over the years is an abuse of democracy and the rule of law.

We remind all state and security agencies that the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda guarantees press freedom and protects journalists in the performance of their duties. Physical assault on journalists, obstruction of their work, and destruction of their equipment, constitute gross violations of these rights.

ULS therefore demands for immediate, independent, and transparent investigations into the assault on Mr. Mbadi, with the responsible officers held accountable under the law.

The continued assault of journalists is unacceptable, and the Uganda Law Society will not remain silent in the face of such impunity. We stand in solidarity with all journalists and media practitioners across the country, particularly those operating in hostile and dangerous environments.

ULS has a dedicated team of advocates ready to offer Pro bono legal support to the affected journalist and to media practitioners that have suffered any form of violence at the hand of security operatives. The Society will pursue all available legal remedies to ensure accountability and justice.

**Asimwe Anthony**

**Vice President, Uganda Law Society**