

# Communist Party Marxist-Kenya leader Booker Omole faces fraudulent charges as detention continues

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The political persecution of Booker Ngesa Omole, General Secretary of the Communist Party Marxist–Kenya (CPM-K), has entered a new and dangerous stage.

The Kenyan regime’s so-called “broad-based unity” government under President William Ruto, an alliance between the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) and the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), founded by the late political fixer Raila Odinga, is escalating politically charged criminal accusations against him, as reports of degrading conditions spark outrage in Kenya and internationally.

In its latest update today, February 26, the CPM-K reports that Omole “has been transferred to Kitengela Remand Prison with a broken arm. The court has acted with open hostility, denying him both cash bail and urgent medical care.” The transfer and denial of treatment underscore the increasingly punitive character of his detention.

Omole was initially seized by plainclothes police officers in an illegal abduction, without the officers identifying themselves, or producing any warrant, and without any charges being read to him. During his illegal arrest, he was beaten, suffering a broken tooth and a finger cut with a penknife. In subsequent statements, Omole has appealed for urgent medical attention as well as access to adequate food and water. He said that police tortured him in an attempt to extract information, though it remains unclear what they were seeking. Plainclothes officers then transported him for eight hours, first to his house and then to Mlolongo Police Station in Nairobi, where he was denied access to legal counsel, family members or party representatives.

Only after his detention did the authorities begin to assemble the series of allegations now being levelled against him. According to an official statement of the CPM-K, “Booker is accused of attempting to kill the police, assaulting the police and having connections with the now jailed President of Venezuela Nicolás Maduro in the US drug cartel, this is as a result of organising a demonstration at the US Embassy demanding the release of Nicolás Maduro.”

Among the most sensational is a claim linking him to a “drug cartel.” His and the CPM-K’s official account has categorically rejected the accusation, stating: “Linking Booker to a ‘drug cartel’ is pure political theatre. His only link to Venezuela is solidarity with Nicolás Maduro. Internationalism is not narcotics. Anti imperialism is not crime. When the state lacks evidence, it manufactures lies.”

The CPM-K has solidarised itself with the Bolivarian government of Venezuela and has publicly called for the freedom of Nicolás Maduro. It has organised protests in front of the US Embassy Nairobi in solidarity with Venezuela and against Washington’s intervention, demonstrations that were violently dispersed by Kenyan police, in violation of the constitutional right to free assembly.

Washington has pursued narco-terrorism and drug trafficking charges against Maduro and his inner circle under the claim that he led the “Cartel de los Soles”. The sensational narrative was central to US justifications for the military invasion of Venezuela in early January, and the subsequent killing of civilians and the abduction of its elected president. The illegal intervention was made to seize control over Venezuela’s vast oil resources and limit China’s and

Russia's access to them.

Now, the Kenyan regime attempts to attach Omole to drug trafficking, using Washington's playbook, to criminalise the CPM-K in an operation whose ultimate target is the Kenyan working class.

Regarding the charge of assaulting police officers, the CPM-K has explained: "They allege assault. Truth is simpler. Plain clothed men grabbed him without identifying themselves, no badges, no warrants. Any fracas arose from an illegal abduction, not resistance to law."

For many Kenyans, this account describes a familiar reality. Plainclothes security forces frequently carry out arrests without identifying themselves, presenting no badges, warrants or official documentation. The police have a longstanding reputation for corruption, extorting ordinary Kenyans daily through bribes, arbitrary fines and intimidation. Officers regularly plant drugs on individuals in order to fabricate charges and then demand payment for their release.

Most importantly, they have been repeatedly implicated in enforced disappearances. In the past year-and-a-half alone, they have been linked to more than 80 reported cases, with some victims never seen again.

In such an environment, it is entirely understandable that citizens hesitate or resist when unidentified men attempt to seize them, fearing criminal gangs, rogue officers, or abduction.

A further charge concerns alleged illegal firearms possession. However, Omole is a licensed firearm owner. His account reports: "At arrest he was unarmed. Police later searched his rented apartment and the firearm was voluntarily handed over. License provided." It is well known that Omole legally owns a firearm, and last year used that licensed weapon in self-defence during an assassination attempt. At no point following that incident did the authorities arrest or charge him over the weapon.

Omole is being subject to inhumane treatment designed to degrade and psychologically torment a political prisoner. According to the CPM-K's official statement: "Cde Booker Omole, our General Secretary, was thrown into a filthy cell. An unknown man was sent to defecate in the corner. Poorly cooked food dumped beside the waste. Then Booker was forced to clean the human filth."

Omole's detention has sparked solidarity campaigns

demanding his immediate release. The International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) has issued a statement supporting this demand, which has been endorsed by its Socialist Equality Party sections internationally.

Within Kenya, the Pan-Africanist Kongamano la Mapinduzi issued a statement demanding his unconditional release. Human rights and anti-corruption activist and potential 2027 presidential contender for Ukweli Party leader, Boniface Mwangi, endorsed calls for his freedom. Prominent online commentators that have tens of thousands of followers, including I Am Chege, Wanjiru, yoko have amplified these calls.

According to activity on X, more than 15,000 posts have circulated discussing his case and demanding his release.

In contrast, Kenya's major capitalist media outlets have remained silent. Neither *The Standard*, *Daily Nation* nor *The Star* has provided coverage of Omole's abduction. It underscores the extent to which the capitalist media, despite its criticisms of the Ruto regime, closes ranks when the fundamental interests of the ruling class are at stake, withholding scrutiny when state repression is directed to the left.

The ICFI reiterates its demand for the immediate and unconditional release of Omole. All politically motivated charges must be dropped, and full legal and medical access guaranteed without delay.

The escalating campaign of intimidation, fabricated allegations and degrading treatment directed against Omole forms part of a broader persecution of left-wing opposition in Kenya and internationally against IMF-austerity, war and attacks on democratic rights. This repression must end and the democratic rights of CPM-K members and supporters, including freedom of speech, assembly and political organisation, must be upheld.



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