

Newly established Communist League of Uganda leaders arrested by Museveni regime

Kipchumba Ochieng
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Ugandan security forces have reportedly arrested leaders of the recently established Communist League of Uganda (CLU), only days after the organisation held its first national congress.

Booker Ngesa Omole, general secretary of the Stalinist Communist Party Marxist-Kenya (CPM-K), reported on Saturday that leaders of the CLU had been arrested by the Western-backed regime of President Yoweri Museveni. A video posted with his statement shows several Ugandans handcuffed inside a security vehicle.

At the time of writing, the precise number and identities of those detained, the location of their detention and any charges brought against them have not been confirmed.

The arrests, if confirmed, constitute a serious attack on fundamental democratic rights. Workers, youth and defenders of democratic rights internationally must oppose the persecution of political organisations by the Ugandan state and demand the immediate disclosure of the whereabouts and legal status of all those detained.

The CPM-K has itself been subjected to an escalating campaign of state repression under Kenyan President William Ruto, as the regimes in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania work together to suppress opposition figures.

Following the CPM-K's national congress in November 2024, its national chairman Mwaivu Kaluka was detained. In January 2025, Omole survived an assassination attempt at his Nairobi home. In February this year, Omole was seized by plainclothes police officers. Only after his seizure did the authorities assemble charges against him, including accusations of assaulting and attempting to kill police officers and allegations arising from CPM-K demonstrations against the US intervention in Venezuela.

The case remains before court. Omole's defence has

challenged the police handling of alleged exhibits and discrepancies over property seized during his arrest. Since then, the presiding magistrate has recused herself, while a state witness and the original complainant have sought to withdraw from the proceedings. The next hearing is scheduled for October 16, 2026.

The repression of both the CPM-K and the UCL must be placed within the broader collaboration between the East African regimes in suppressing political opposition across their borders.

In July 2024, Kenyan authorities arrested 36 Ugandan opposition supporters linked to Museveni's main capitalist opposition leader, Kizza Besigye. Once returned, Museveni's government charged them with terrorism. Four months later, Besigye was seized while visiting Nairobi and secretly transported to Uganda with the collaboration of Kenya's security forces, resurfacing before a military court in Kampala. Besigye is now standing trial for treason; after collapsing in court last July and being hospitalised, he was returned to prison and his trial resumed this month.

The repression has operated in the opposite direction. In 2025, Kenyan Gen-Z activists Bob Njagi and Nicholas Oyoo disappeared in Uganda after attending an opposition rally led by Bobi Wine, the main contender to Uganda's January 2026 elections. Museveni acknowledged that his government had detained them, accusing them of being "specialists in organising unrest".

Njagi subsequently told *Citizen TV* that, while he was detained in Uganda, Ugandan soldiers told him that they had been deployed to Kenya during the 2024 protests. According to Njagi, they said they had crossed into Kenya dressed in Kenyan police uniforms and had been used to help suppress the demonstrations.

In neighbouring Tanzania, President Samia Suluhu

Hassan's agents tortured Kenyan human rights activist Boniface Mwangi and Ugandan journalist Agather Atuhire in Dar es Salaam in June 2025.

These cases are growing evidence of a regional system of repression. In a meeting between Suhulu and Ruto earlier this year, Suhulu said to Ruto during a press conference: "We should not take sides. When Tanzanians come to Kenya, you discipline them; when Kenyan Gen Zs come to Tanzania, I will discipline them as well so that they are in line". Underlying this collaboration is the profound fear of the three regimes that the immense social anger beneath them will escape their control and spread across the artificial borders imposed by colonialism.

Ruto confronted this danger directly in the 2024 and 2025 Gen Z protest movement, which mobilised millions of youth against tax increases, austerity, corruption, unemployment and police violence. The state responded with killings, abductions and thousands of arrests. Ruto has killed at least 250 protestors since 2022.

The explosive movement in Kenya alarmed Museveni. When young Ugandans attempted to organise anti-austerity demonstrations in Kampala in July 2024, inspired by the Gen Z protests, the regime mobilised police to prevent a march on parliament and carried out mass arrests.

In October last year, mass protests erupted in Tanzania after elections in which Hassan declared herself the winner with 98 percent of the vote. Security forces went on a rampage, killing up to 3,000 protestors. Her government has continued to suppress opposition, including banning rallies called by Gen-Z activists.

During Uganda's January 2026 elections Museveni's government militarised the country, arrested hundreds of supporters of Bobi Wine's National Unity Platform and violently suppressed opposition activity. Following the fraudulent election, Wine went into hiding and subsequently fled to the United States.

The East African ruling elites confront essentially the same danger: an increasingly hostile generation of workers and youth for whom decades of capitalist rule have produced unemployment, poverty, staggering inequality and police violence.

The CLU is a relatively new organisation. According to its chairman, Sozzi Joseph, the party was conceived on October 2024, just months after Kenya's Gen-Z

protests. The organisation identified worsening living and working conditions, social inequality and the absence of any genuine alternative within Uganda's official political establishment as the impetus for its formation. It denounced both Museveni's ruling National Resistance Movement and the bourgeois opposition parties for accepting capitalism and declared its objective to be the construction of "a revolutionary platform for liberation of the oppressed and exploited peasants, workers and poor people."

The organisation's ideological pedigree, however, is explicitly Stalinist and nationalist. It describes itself as guided by "Marxism-Leninism" and names Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong and former Ugandan president Milton Obote as its principal ideological influences.

Despite these political differences, the International Committee of the Fourth International and the WSWS unequivocally opposes this brutal attack on the organisation, demands the immediate release of the UCL members and calls for an end to all state threats and repressive acts. We take the same position in relation to the CPM-K.

The same principle must apply internationally. The CPM-K should publicly support and champion the international campaign for the freedom of Bogdan Syrotiuk, the 27-year-old Ukrainian Trotskyist sentenced to 15 years in prison for his socialist opposition to the war in Ukraine. His prosecution, based on his political writings and communications with the WSWS, is a direct attack on political freedom and socialist opposition to war. This author contacted the CPM-K on August 12 appealing for its support for Bogdan's defence campaign, but has yet to receive a reply.



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