

9 February 2018

## Uganda: Break-in at offices of Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum

On 9 February 2018, eight unidentified persons broke into the offices of **Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum – HRAPF** and attacked two security guards with machetes, leaving them both hospitalised in a critical condition.

Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum - [HRAPF](#) is a Uganda-based NGO founded in 2008 who promotes the rights of marginalised groups through advocacy, research and documentation, legal and human rights awareness and capacity building. HRAPF works on sustainable access to justice in Uganda, specifically for sexual minorities, poor women and men, children living with HIV/AIDS and the elderly. It also provides pro-bono legal aid services to marginalised groups in the areas of criminal justice, land justice, family justice (HIV/AIDS related) and sexual and gender based violence.

In the early hours of 9 February 2018, eight unidentified men attempted to break into HRAPF's offices in Kampala and attacked the two security guards on duty with machetes. The assailants cut the power to the building and managed to get through to the reception area but were unable to get any further due to HRAPF's security measures. The two security guards are currently in hospital in a critical condition.

This incident follows a pattern of harassment and intimidation of the organisation. On 22 May 2016, four unidentified assailants [broke into](#) the secure compound and offices of HRAPF. The intruders beat the security guard to death and dismantled all but one CCTV security camera and the alarm siren before breaking into the office building. Although the police conducted an investigation, no perpetrators were found. This attack had followed a series of attacks against individual staff members of HRAPF over the course of the same month, including break-ins at the home of the Deputy Director and the Head of Advocacy, and the physical assault and robbery of two members of staff in front of their homes.

Front Line Defenders expresses deep concern at the break-in at HRAPF's offices as it believes it is part of a larger pattern of harassment against human rights defenders in Uganda, in particular those working on LGBTI rights.

### Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Uganda to:

1. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the break-in at HRAPF's offices, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
2. Consult HRAPF on their physical and psychological security needs in order to assess the most appropriate protection measures to be taken;

3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Uganda are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including intimidation and harassment.