FCAU STATEMENT: Journalist alleges assault by police

Thursday 4 October 2012

KAMPALA, THURSDAY 4th OCTOBER - The Foreign Correspondents' Association of Uganda (FCAU) expresses grave concern over allegations that two police officers assaulted one of its members in Kampala on Thursday 4th October 2012, outside Kampala Central Police Station.

Isaac Kasamani, a freelance photojournalist who works for Agence France Presse (AFP) and the Daily Monitor, says he was covering the detention of opposition leader Kizze Besigye when a police officer instructed him to stop taking photographs. Kasamani claims the officer slapped him and a second police officer threw him on the ground, destroying his camera.

Kasamani adds that he spoke to the Commander of Kampala Metropolitan Police, Andrew Kaweesi, immediately after the incident and that Kaweesi assured him that the destroyed camera would be replaced.

FCAU urges the Uganda Police Force to take the incident seriously and investigate. FCAU welcomes the replacement of equipment destroyed as a result of its officers' actions, but also stresses the importance of disciplinary measures against officers found responsible. This can make it clear to all security operatives that violence against journalists is not tolerated.

Previous incidents of alleged violence against FCAU members have not resulted in any such action.

The Foreign Correspondents' Association of Uganda (FCAU) is an organization of journalists working in Uganda for foreign and international news-media.

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