

## **Statement by the Media Freedom Coalition on the situation in Uganda**

January 8, 2021 – Ottawa, Ontario – Global Affairs Canada

The undersigned members of the Media Freedom Coalition express their concern about the situation for journalists and media freedom in the lead-up to the Ugandan elections of January 14, 2021.

People need free, independent, and impartial media to provide them with accurate and reliable information and informed analysis if governments are to be held to account.

We are concerned by reports of attacks and harassment of journalists, including those covering the country's election campaigns. We join the international community in expressing serious concerns about the impact of these attacks on the development and maintenance of a healthy civic space in the run-up to the elections.

We note that it is important for journalists to be granted accreditation in order to cover the elections. We encourage the Government of Uganda to uphold the right to freedom of expression and opinion in Uganda and ensure a vibrant media space.

We ask that the Ugandan authorities investigate any attacks on the press and hold those responsible to account, and ensure that journalists are provided with the necessary protections, accreditation, and access that they need to do their jobs.

Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America