

MEDIA BRIEFING: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 2nd MAY 2025

KITEEZI LANDFILL COLLAPSE: A HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS BORN OF ENVIRONMENTAL MISMANAGEMENT

Today, 2nd May 2025, the Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD) has formally instituted proceedings against the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) and the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) before the High Court of Uganda. The case arises from the devastating collapse of the Kiteezi landfill on 10th August 2024, which claimed lives of (women, children, men, animals), destroyed homes and inflicted widespread environmental contamination upon the Kiteezi community.

At the heart of this action is the failure by KCCA and NEMA to fulfill their constitutional and statutory mandates to safeguard the right to a clean, safe and healthy environment as provided for under the Constitution and their statutory duties under the National Environment Act, Cap. 181. Despite having clear prior knowledge of the landfill's escalating risks including hazardous waste leakage, unchecked garbage accumulation, and leachate poisoning of critical water sources, both agencies failed in their duty to regulate, monitor, decommission and rehabilitate the site until it was too late.

For decades, communities living around Kiteezi sounded the alarm about the smell, the water contamination, the diseases and the crumbling waste mountains but their cries were met with bureaucratic silence. The collapse of the landfill was not a natural disaster, but a policy and a regulatory failure, and ultimately a violation of the health and human rights of the residents and the community of Kiteezi.

CEHURD's case demands not just declaration of health and rights violations, but practical redress to the violations created by these entities.

"We are here together with communities of Kiteezi to demand for immediate decommissioning of the landfill, comprehensive environmental restoration and the adoption of sustainable waste management systems aligned with international best practices. We have decided to engage Court for declarations and orders relating to the protection of the violated rights to life property, health, a clean and health environment" Nakibuuka Noor Musisi, Deputy ED, CEHURD

The Kiteezi disaster highlights a deep-rooted failure to recognize environmental governance as essential to the protection of health and human rights. When agencies entrusted with the stewardship of public health and the environment abandon their responsibilities, the consequences extend beyond environmental destruction, climate injustices to loss of human lives and the shattering of entire communities' futures

We remain hopeful that the Courts of Uganda will uphold these rights and set a precedent that no community should suffer ever again what the people of Kiteezi have endured and continue to endure.

For more information, please contact us at info@cehurd.org, call +256 200 956 006, or our toll-free line 0800 300044.