

UGANDA: INNOCENT OR GUILTY, EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO A LAWYER

Photo for illustrative purposes



IMAGINE A MAN. Let's call him John. John is Ugandan. One day, he is stopped in the street. He is accused of armed robbery and is brought to the police station. After the prosecutor records his case, he is transferred to the central prison to await his trial. There he waits for his fate to be decided. In vain. For months. John is illiterate

and destitute. In prison, he survives as best he can, where resourcefulness rules. With the help of a fellow prisoner, who writes for him, he describes his case. He sends the letter several times to the penitentiary authorities. He receives no response.

John has no family who can support him or work on his case outside the prison. Years go by without John appearing before a judge. He fears that his life will end behind bars, without ever being given a chance to defend himself or even explain his case. One day, John learns that lawyers provide free legal advice to prisoners. He puts his name on the list of inmates in need of legal aid. He meets with a lawyer who is sent by Avocats Sans Frontières to help the accused. Following this consultation, the lawyer brings the case to court. The judge decides that there is insufficient evidence in John's case to justify detention. He acquits John and orders his release. Finally, John is free after spending ten years behind bars.

Without the intervention of the lawyer from Avocats Sans Frontières, John would still be illegally detained. Whether in Uganda or in other countries, cases like John's are unfortunately common. Detainees are often left out of the justice system. Their most basic rights are violated, such as the right to not be tortured, the right to be tried within a reasonable time frame, or to receive help from a lawyer. No one should be denied the right to freedom before having a fair trial.

Donate €48 so that sixteen Ugandan lawyers can be trained to defend minors in illegal preventive detention.

If your donations total €40 in a tax year, you will be able to deduct it from your next taxable income.

BE89 6300 2274 9185 - BIC: BBRUBEBB
WWW.ASF.BE

Avocats Sans Frontières

