

Parliament should reject the 200 billion Uganda Shillings mass surveillance supplementary budget.

[The Unwanted Witness](#) is calling upon Ugandan legislators to uphold the Constitution and protect citizens from surveillance.

Kampala 21/May/2014, [the unwanted witness](#) is dismayed by the recent supplementary budget request made by the government of Uganda to parliament amounting to 200 billion shillings an equivalent of over US \$ 80,000,000 to finance the establishment of a monitoring center and procurement of surveillance equipment.

Once established, the center is to enforce the Regulation to Interception of Communication's Act 2010 which sidelined courts and gave excessive powers to the minister to issue surveillance warrants. Also, the same law under sec.11 makes it mandatory for all telecom companies operating in Uganda to install surveillance equipment into their systems and store all call-related information whose intention is to use private companies to spying on citizens.

[The unwanted witness](#) warns that if [parliament](#) concedes to the purchase of surveillance equipment in the absence of a Privacy and Data protection law, such actions will tantamount to neglect of duty by [parliament](#) to protect the constitution.

“This law is very dangerous to all citizens and it contravenes the 1995 Constitution and regional and international human rights to which Uganda is a party. Our fear is that the implementation of the Regulations to Interception of communication's Act is not only a breach of this constitutional provisions but a threat to the enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms including the right to privacy and expression.” The CEO, [Unwanted Witness](#) Geoffrey Wokulira Ssebagala stressed.

Article 27 (2) of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda states that no person shall be subjected to interference with the privacy of that person's home, correspondence, communication or other properties

In 2010, [Parliament](#) of Uganda passed the Regulation to interception of Communication's Act to provide for the lawful interception and monitoring of certain communications in the course of their transmission through a telecommunication, postal or any other related service or system in Uganda.

[The Unwanted Witness](#) maintains that Interception of Communication's Act is a draconian legislation aimed at legitimizing otherwise unconstitutional acts whose implementation is condemned in strongest terms possible.

We therefore call on parliament to exercise its duty towards protecting the Constitution and reject the said supplementary budget to purchase surveillance equipment until a law on privacy and Data protection which should regulate and protect citizens from surveillance is passed.

[Parliament](#) should also consider expediting enactment of the privacy and data protection law to grantee citizens' right to privacy and freedoms of expression.

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