Politics

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Uganda Tactical: President Museveni’s inauguration slated to be held at Kololo Independence Grounds, Kampala, on May 12; maintain vigilance

Please be advised:

- Reports indicate that the President Yoweri Museveni swearing-in ceremony is scheduled to take place at the Kololo Independence Grounds, Kampala, on May 12.
- In a statement on May 3, the Uganda Police Force (UPF) claimed that at the time of writing there were no specific threats directed toward the ceremony. The UPF also claimed that it anticipated disruptive activities such as petrol bombs and roadblocks and its Joint Task Force is gathering intelligence on potential perpetrators.
- A UPF communique on May 10 stated that entrance to the Kololo Independence Grounds will be restricted to invited guests. Road closures will reportedly be implemented.
- John Babiha Road will reportedly be closed at the Golf Course traffic lights and Acacia-Kayunga junction, while Wampewo Avenue will be one way from Wampewo roundabout towards the Independence Grounds before and during the ceremony.
- The communique stated that Heads of State from African Union (AU) member states, as well as foreign and local dignitaries, are expected to attend.



Assessments & Forecast:

1. President Museveni's inauguration takes place amid heightened tensions over perceived suppression of political opposition committed during campaigning ahead of the January 14 general election, including the arrest of opposition leaders. Existing tensions were exacerbated by the arrest of opposition National Union Party (NUP) leader Robert Kyagulanyi, also known as Bobi Wine, on March 15 during a protest calling for the release of detained NUP members and denouncing security forces' alleged abduction, torture, and killing of NUP supporters. In this context, it is likely that the anticipated disruption highlighted in the UPF statement refers to demonstrations carried out by opposition supporters.
2. **FORECAST:** Given these entrenched tensions, opposition supporters are liable to protest against Museveni's inauguration. However, the UPF's anticipation of possible disruptions on May 12 suggests that there will be a heightened security presence in the vicinity of the venue and at the entrance to the restricted areas outlined in the UPF statement on May 10. While the heightened security presence and potential for violence may deter opposition supporters and restrict their capabilities to convene in large demonstrations, spontaneous protests are liable to draw crowds in the mid to high tens. These demonstrations are likely to be dispersed, with protesters liable to be arrested on national security grounds. While the authorities may show restraint in the presence of foreign Heads of State, any perceived unruly behavior by protesters is likely to trigger a strong response from security forces, with the potential use of batons and tear gas.
3.

Recommendations

Those operating or residing in Kampala on May 12 are advised to maintain vigilance in the vicinity of the Kololo Independence Grounds throughout the day in light of the presidential inauguration.