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**THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

**MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS  
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18<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Rt. Hon. Speaker,

Hon. Members,

I am here to present a report, about a member of Uganda's contingent to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, Mr. Julius Ssekitoleko following his disappearance and subsequent deportation from Japan. This is in a way an anti-climax of what we were celebrating on Tuesday 17/08/2021, through the motion to pay tribute to our sportsmen for their sterling performance at The Olympics.

The subject of Ssekitoleko Julius is very intimately related to what we discussed in yesterday's motion, and how to reorganise, recognise and reward sportsmen and women.

## **BACKGROUND**

1.1. Julius Ssekitoleko started participating in Weight Lifting events since 2007 from Kisugu Kampala. He joined the National team in 2018 and competed in a number of local and International competitions where he won medals. He was selected by The Uganda Olympic Committee and included on the list of Athletes to travel for the Olympic Games in Tokyo Japan with the approval of International Weight Lifting Federation. The International Weight Lifting Federation uses the Weighting system for qualifying Athletes and the points keep on changing depending on the number of games played. At the time of travelling to Japan, Julius Ssekitoleko was on the verge of qualifying because his points were good.

**VISION: A peaceful, Safe & Stable Uganda**

**MISSION: Ensure & Maintain Internal Security, Peace & Stability**

**1.2.** Ssekitoleko Julius left Uganda for Japan together with his Coach Hakim Musoke on the 8/06/2021, in the first team which was led by Mr. Ssemakula Katende of National Council of Sports. They were accommodated in Izumisana City Japan, where a pre-qualification training Camp had been set up under a Memorandum of Understanding signed between government of Uganda and Japan in 2018 and confirmed on 17/6/2021, in which The Uganda Olympic Committee was to select Athletes for pre-qualification training from the category of those who had already qualified and those who had a chance to qualify. Julius Ssekitoleko went in the category of the Athletes who had a chance to qualify.

**1.3.** The participation of Ssekitoleko Julius in the Olympic Games depended on confirmation which was to come from the International Weight Lifting Federation. On the 17/6/2021 the Team leader, Mr. Ssemakula Katende informed Julius Ssekitoleko that he had failed to qualify for participation in the Olympic Games and handed over to him a return ticket. He was devastated by this development and made up his mind to escape from the Camp and look for odd jobs in Japan, instead of returning to Uganda, where he had a lot of debts. He disappeared by boarding a train out of Izumisano City.

His disappearance was reported to the Japanese authorities and immediately, a search for him was mounted by the Japanese Police. On realising that the police was looking for him, he handed himself in and the Japanese Police in turn handed him over to the Ugandan Team Management, who immediately arranged his return to Uganda.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 2021, he landed at Entebbe Airport and was arrested and taken to CID Headquarters for questioning.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

**2.1.** Investigate the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of Ssekitoleko Julius.

**2.2.** Interview witnesses and obtain their statements.

**2.3.** Establish whether his disappearance constituted an offence under the law.

**2.4.** Gather enough evidence to prosecute the suspect.

**2.5.** Charge and produce suspect in court.

## **3.0. ACTION TAKEN**

**3.1** A case file CID HQRTS GEF 674/2021 was opened and investigations commenced.

**3.2.** Four witnesses interviewed and their statements recorded i.e "A"

➤ Mr. Jonathan Wankolo – Liaison Officer Uganda Olympic Committee.

➤ Mr. Dominic Otucet – President Uganda Athletes Association.

➤ M/S Lidya Gloria Dhamuzungu – Assistant Secretary General Uganda Olympic Committee.

➤ Rev. Canon Duncans Mugumya – Commissioner Physical Education and Sports Ministry of Education.

**3.3** Copies of relevant documents obtained and attached to case papers.

**3.4.** Suspect received from Entebbe International Airport, interrogated and his statement recorded.

#### **4.0. CURRENT POSITION**

**4.1.** On the 27th day of June 2021, the Police file was submitted to the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the DPP's opinion was that the suspect had not committed any offence known under the laws of Uganda. The DPP instead recommended for a disciplinary action against the suspect. The DPP accordingly ordered that the suspect be released unconditionally.

**4.2.** On 28th July 2021, Julius Ssekitoleko was released.

#### **5.0. CONCLUSION**

**5.1.** Ssekitoleko's act of disappearing from the Hotel where he had been accommodated during the time of The Games to an unknown place in a foreign country like Japan, under the excuse that he was looking for a job, did not only create panic among the Ugandan officials, but also portrayed a very bad image of our country.

**5.2.** Prequalification for international features should desirably be done here not abroad in order to avoid unnecessary expenses on sportsmen who may not qualify and also such temptations of absconding by vulnerable sportsmen.

Last, as already amplified in unison, by this Honourable House through the motion and attendant resolution, to recognise the achievement of our team at The Olympics, reasonably rewarding and incentivising sportsmen and women, through the various proposals made in that motion and subsequent resolution, will reinforce and inculcate the idea of East or West, home is best and more attractive in the minds of these sportsmen/women.

This, in addition to adequate mentorship, during training sessions, beyond mere physical sports training activities.

I beg to submit Rt. Hon Speaker.

