



10th November 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Women's Probono Initiative has learnt of an internal memo issued by Kampala International University's Western Campus, School of Nursing Sciences, mandating all female nurses and midwives to undergo a pregnancy test at a fee of UGX 5,000. This memo issued by the office of the Dean of the School of Nursing Sciences further restricts any female who fails to undertake the test from sitting for their Uganda Nurses and Midwifery Examinations.

The above directive is an abuse of human rights of women guaranteed under Article 21, 32 and 33 of Uganda's Constitution. This internal memo has far reaching consequences of discriminating against pregnant women and violating their right to privacy. This non-consenting medical testing of nursing and midwifery female students is unacceptable and indignified.

We have written to the Administration of Kampala International University and asked them to halt the implementation of this discriminatory exercise. We have informed them of the gross human rights violations that will be meted out to female students in their institution if the directive in the memo is not withdrawn.

The government of Uganda earlier this year through the *2020 Revised Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Teenage Pregnancy in School Settings* issued a directive to ensure re-entry and retention of school girls that find themselves pregnant and breastfeeding in all institutions of learning in the country. In the same spirit the Ministry of Education that oversees institutions of higher learning should ensure that the state fulfils its obligation under Article 33 (3) to protect women and their rights, taking into account their unique status and natural maternal functions in society.

We call upon all relevant stakeholders especially the government to pronounce themselves on this pertinent issue. We therefore advise:

1. That the Department of Health Education and Training at the Ministry of Education and Sports looks into the conduct of private institutions of higher learning to ensure that their policies and practices conform to the Constitution of Uganda.
2. That the National Council for Higher Education which is the regulator of institutions of higher learning should ensure that they exercise their mandate of providing education without violating the rights of students.
3. That the government issues guidelines for institutions of higher learning on how to deal with cases of pregnant adults without having disregard to the state's obligation to protect women and their rights, taking into account their unique status and natural maternal functions in society.

FOR MORE DETAILS, CONTACT US: +256(0) 800 220 645 OR Write to: info@womenprobono.org or wpiugandaltd@gmail.com