



## PRESS BRIEFING

**WHEN:** Thursday 29 June 2017, 09:00 – 11:00 EAT

**WHERE:** METROPOLE HOTEL, KAMPALA

**LIVESTREAM:**

[facebook.com/mentaldisabilityadvocacy](https://www.facebook.com/mentaldisabilityadvocacy)

**EMBARGOED:** To be lifted on Thurs 29 June 2017, 00:01 EAT

# BREAKING POINT AT BUTABIKA: ABUSE AND ILL-TREATMENT UNCOVERED AT PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL SHOWS NEED FOR NATIONAL REFORMS

*MDAC CALLS FOR FUNDAMENTAL RETHINK OF MENTAL HEALTH BILL*

Read the full report: [www.mdac.org/breaking-point](http://www.mdac.org/breaking-point)

**KAMPALA** – The international NGO, Mental Disability Advocacy Centre (MDAC) is today releasing a report documenting abuse, ill-treatment and shocking conditions at Butabika National Mental Referral Hospital. Children were found to be detained with adults, seclusion rooms are still in operation, and residents with serious health conditions were left untreated.

The report, entitled *Breaking Point*, describes how the basic needs of residents are not met in the country's most specialised mental health institution. Monitors found evidence of inhuman and degrading conditions, deprivation of liberty and severe overcrowding, as well as widespread use of chemical restraints.

The report is based on observations made by a team of MDAC representatives in May 2017 during a visit that was approved by the Ministry of Health. The report has been shared with the Ministry in advance of publication but no official response has yet been received from the Government.

Felicia Mburu, MDAC Projects Manager said: "Butabika fails to provide basic, dignified conditions or treatment. Sadly, the situation seems to have declined since MDAC released reports assessing mental health and human rights in Uganda in 2014. Urgent reforms are needed to guarantee all Ugandans quality mental health care across the country and end the crisis at Butabika."

The Parliament of Uganda is currently reviewing a Mental Health Bill. Unfortunately, the Bill lacks aspiration and will do little to protect the human rights of people with mental health issues in Uganda today. MDAC calls for a fundamental rethink before the Bill is enacted. In the meantime, urgent assistance must be provided to the residents of Butabika. MDAC urges the Parliamentary Health and Human Rights Committees and the Human Rights Commission to inspect the hospital without delay.

