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## **UACE S101 General Paper section A: to what extent has freedom of speech been promoted in Uganda**

**Freedom of speech** is a principle that supports the freedom of an individual or a community to articulate their opinions and ideas without fear of retaliation, censorship or legal sanction. The right to **freedom of expression** has been recognized as a human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law by the United Nations.

This right serves as the cornerstone of a democratic society, enabling individuals to engage in open debate, challenge authority and hold their government accountable. It is a fundamental pillar of a free and just society, fostering informed decision-making, promoting transparency, and empowering individuals to express their diverse perspectives.

To some extent freedom of speech in Uganda has been promoted in the following ways

Uganda has ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law by the United Nations.

The 1995 constitution of Uganda enshrines the right to freedom of expression, which encompasses the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas

Uganda government has liberalized media outlets encourage freedom of expression. There now may independent private television stations, radio station and news prints promoting and protecting freedom of expression

Access to internet promotes freedom of speech on social media.

Media courses in the university and other tertiary institutions promote safe use freedom of speech.

Civic education promotes freedom of expression

Human rights are protected in the constitution including the freedom of expression.

Registration of various non-government organizations to protect human rights such as **Action Aid International Uganda (AAIU)**

However, the right to express oneself does not extend to inciting violence, spreading hate speech or infringing upon the rights of others. The government of Uganda is taking advantage of this close to suppress the freedom of speech with prolonged Museveni's rule in the following ways

- Imprisonment of media men
- Prohibition of public gathering
- Obstructing opposition public rallies and assemblies enforced by Public Order Management Act (POMA), 2012
- Requirement of telecom operator censor
- Surveillance and arrest social media 'abusers'
- Use of vague close in several media, journalist, and communication acts.

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