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HIGH COURT RULING JEOPARDIZES EDUCATION OF MORE THAN 12,000 UGANDAN PUPILS

Kampala, 4th November 2016: The High Court in Uganda today dismissed a Bridge International Academies petition to reverse the 25th July 2016 directive from the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) to close 63 Bridge International Academies across Uganda. Bridge International Academies management was not afforded a chance to defend themselves against the allegations raised in a report that was the basis of the closure order. Nonetheless, Justice Patricia Basaza Wasswa ruled that the decision to close the academies was properly issued, even after noting that “licensing of private schools in Uganda is a process and not an event”, and acknowledging that Bridge has started this process. This ruling threatens to undo the critical work Bridge has done to broaden education opportunities that provide many thousands of Ugandan children the best chance they have to escape generational poverty and achieve success.

“We are extremely disappointed for our pupils and disagree with this ruling that affects the 12,000 Ugandan children in our schools, who have just finished their mid-term exams,” said Godwin Matsiko, the Liaison Officer for Bridge International Academies Uganda. “We plan to appeal, on behalf of the more than 20,000 Ugandans who have decided to send their children to our schools. They do this because they want an affordable quality education. They want the best for their children, and this court ruling throws that into doubt. “

“Inspection reports have never been shared with us, and they admit to not visiting all our of schools. How can you close a school you admit to having not inspected?” said Matsiko. “Furthermore the Judge referenced positive Health Inspection reports we submitted from the relevant District Local Governments. She claims these support the closure directive, yet the signatures appended to those very reports by District staff support for our application for a license. We agree with the Judge that licensing is a process and not an event, and we are in the process of licensing all of our schools. Many are endorsed by the relevant authorities already. We want to work with the Ministry to now finish that process.”

Solomon Serwanjja, Public Relations Manager for Bridge in Uganda, added, “The court cannot invalidate our commitment to the thousands of children whose families send their children to Bridge schools. We now urge the Ministry of Education and Sports to consider their future.”

Bridge International Academies will appeal the ruling and will continue our work to provide an affordable high quality education to tens of thousands of children in Kenya, Liberia and India. Our focus at Bridge will continue to remain on what matters most—learning and achieving success in the classroom for children.

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Notes for the editor

About Bridge International Academies:

Bridge International Academies is the world's largest education innovation company, empowering communities to deliver a world-class education accessible to all. Bridge strives to support its teachers in providing engaging lessons to the more than 100,000 pupils who attend its nursery and primary schools across Africa and Asia.

Bridge is data-driven and technology-enabled. Its model leverages research, technology, and data analysis in order to drive continuous improvement across all aspects of operations, ensuring its pupils receive the world-class education needed to progress and thrive. Bridge uses its expertise in lesson design, teacher training and support, and software development to partner with governments and NGOs to strengthen education systems across the world.