

Celebrating 30 years of NRM



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE UGANDA PEOPLE'S DEFENCE FORCES



General Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of Uganda and Commander in Chief of UPDF. In the background is the new plan for the UPDF Referral Hospital

Fulfilling the NRM manifesto in military and security:

In 1986, NRM liberated Ugandans from a government backed by neo-colonial army that was synonymous with extra-judicial killings, unspeakable violence and many other atrocities against the very people they were supposed to defend and protect. The NRM picked up the liberation struggle from earlier liberation struggles of the 1970's such as the Front for National Salvation and the Uganda National Liberation Front against dictatorship and state terror on the people.

The final liberation in 1986 deftly brought about the restoration of dignity amongst the people and the state after two decades. Since 1986, the NRM has built its Military and security forces from scratches to the current National force in a multi-party dispensation, carrying out regional peace and stability responsibilities on its shoulders.

This has been possible because the NRM leadership ensured Uganda builds a security force with a conscious knowledge that the interests of the people come first. These military and security forces have since 1981 bush struggle continually consolidated a strategic relationship with people doctrinally described by the Commander-in Chief:

"A well organized, well led, united people, with a legitimate cause can defeat an aggressor with superior weapons. Therefore the population, their attitudes towards a war effort, is part of the strategic forces. If the people are with us, we can win any war," he asserts

The security forces under the NRM leadership were able to encounter and defeat a host of insurgents, rebels and all terrorist groups in the country, including the LRA who were defeated and completely driven out of Uganda as per the NRM 2006 election Manifesto, as part of the continuing effort to ensure good governance in the country.

Maintenance of peace:

The NRM pledged, in the 2011 election Manifesto, the maintenance of peace and security as a fundamental policy priority. This has indeed been achieved because Uganda has remained totally peaceful, with all citizens assured of security of person and their property.

There were other three areas that the NRM pledged in 2011 Manifesto under the heading 'The Military and Security Forces'. They are; the continued professional development of the UPDF, the continued maintenance of high professional standards by the security organizations, continued investment

by the Defence and Security Sector in defence diplomacy. **Implementation of the Defence Strategic Infrastructural Investment (DSII) Plan:**

The implementation of the Defence Strategic Investment plan has been critical in the professionalization development of the UPDF. The Israeli Entebbe raid crippled Uganda's Air assets because much was destroyed and the 1979 liberation war against Idi Amin worsened the situation because most of the Defence infrastructure was lost.

The Defence policy and White paper on transformation of the Uganda People's Defence Forces proposes a small, well trained and equipped force with a view to improving the welfare of troops. since inception of the Defence transformation program, UPDF top leadership has been striving to increase UPDF efficiency and effectiveness by providing better health services, training, working and living environment.

The UPDF housing design evolved from one-room units in 2002 to two-bedroom housing Units in 2006 which is now its standard construction design.

In order to keep abreast with new set building standard design, In FY 2008/2009, MOD conducted a Needs Assessment, focusing on infrastructure requirements. The Needs Assessment estimated the total cost for the infrastructure development to be UGX 2.37 trillion.

Welfare:

One of the Objectives of the Implementation of the DSII is improvement of welfare of the Forces. The Ministry of Defence and the UPDF top leadership has put up several welfare improvement programs and three key ones are;

WAZALENDO SACCO, the biggest SACCO in Uganda, is a UPDF/MoD cooperative that enables its members to save together for the future and access loans to enhance their individual socioeconomic welfare. It is in line with Uganda's National Policy, "PROSPERITY FOR ALL". Starting with savings of Uganda shillings 238 million, WASACCO was registered in September 2005 under the Co-operative Act Cap 112 (Registration No 7419) and by December 2013, it had a savings portfolio of U Sh65bn, share capital of U Sh26.1bn, and a loan portfolio of U Sh76bn, with 71,687 members.

The Defence Forces Shop, one of the UPDF welfare Projects that provides building materials at subsidized prices.

ROWOSA, founded in 2000 stands for Reach Out Wives of

Soldiers Association. It aims at empowering wives of soldiers and those of fallen comrades with practical technical knowledge on how to harness the environment for the betterment of their wellbeing without husband's involvement.

High professional standards by the security organizations:

To have a professional Force, the Ministry of Defence ensures continued training for the defence forces, both locally and abroad. The UPDF continues to develop Training Infrastructure/ training schools to address the leadership and command challenges at recruit, Non-commissioned officer, cadet and officer Level. Locally UPDF has 23 Training schools spread across the Country with the same Mission but producing men and officers of the Army with different capabilities.

Continued investment in defence diplomacy:

The NRM Government has remained a bulwark for stability in the entire region, ably and decisively containing the threat of global and regional terrorism. MOD/UPDF is mandated among other things to contribute to Regional and International peace through Peace Support Operations. To this end, over time, the UPDF has generated capacity to deal with the volatilities in various parts of the region. Uganda has sent Military Observers to Darfur, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast.

UPDF as national army is guided by its mandate both within and outside the country. Its mandate has influenced its several engagements in several peace keeping missions outside the country notable of them; Liberia and presently in Somalia under the auspices of AMISOM and the UN.

The UPDF's recent rapid response and timely arrest of the fast deteriorating security situation in South Sudan and successful rescue of Ugandans trapped in the youngest Nation is one of the indicators of professionalism of the Force and its dedicated contribution to regional peace and stability.

The UPDF is now part of a bigger family of both Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF) and the African Union which have a joint capacity building mechanism for maintaining peace and security on the African Continent.

Conclusion

The MoD/UPDF will continue to build Defence Capability to guarantee a sustainable peace and security, which is a prerequisite for Economic Development and Prosperity of our people.