

EU statement on International Anti-Corruption Day

Today December 9 is the International Anti-Corruption Day. European Union (EU) member states present in Uganda and the EU delegation join Ugandans in observing this important day.

This year's theme is *'Citizens' participation in the fight against corruption: A sustainable path to Uganda's transformation.'*

Taking Ugandan citizens as the point of departure in the fight against corruption is of paramount importance. First, because it is the citizens who are mostly negatively affected by corruption and secondly, because citizens have an important role to play in the fight against corruption.

Let us start by looking at the negative consequences of corruption, which often affect the poorest and most vulnerable Ugandans:

- A baby or a mother dying during childbirth because the family could not afford to 'facilitate' the health worker at the hospital.
- A patient failing to access vital drugs in a hospital because they will or cannot afford to pay a bribe.
- Human life being exposed to risk of road accidents or a collapsing bridge due to shoddy works on public infrastructure.
- A small-scale entrepreneur whose business is destroyed due to demands for bribes.

These examples are the reality for many Ugandans. Both Transparency International and the East African Bribery Indexes confirm this reality



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when they conclude that Uganda remains one of the most corrupt countries in the world.

However, often citizens do not report bribery, because of scepticism that the authorities will take no action. Such apathy is deeply concerning, but fortunately, there are courageous Ugandans across the country — often supported and empowered by local civil society organisations — who have chosen to stand up against such malpractices.

For instance, last year, the Teso Anti-Corruption Coalition worked with community-based accountability structures in the region to recover funds misappropriated by certain school headteachers.

Also, when the Apac Anti-Corruption Coalition worked with community accountability monitors to recover drugs stolen from a health centre.

“We believe the fight against corruption in Uganda can only be won if concerned citizens and accountable state institutions work together.”

These are concrete examples of efforts by civil society organisations (CSOs) working with citizens in monitoring public expenditure and social service delivery.

These efforts have helped to increase vigilance of citizens in reporting misuse of public resources across the country.

In addition to citizens' mobilisation against corruption, we as development partners also support powerful alliances between concerned and empowered citizens and state institutions such as the Inspectorate of Government (IG). For example, through the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF), we have supported the Rwenzori Anti-Corruption Coalition's collaboration with the IG's regional office to ensure recovery of embezzled funds from corrupt officials and to follow up contractors to rectify defects on newly constructed classroom blocks.



The Inspector General of Government, Irene Mulyagonja, holds a placard during a march to launch the anti-corruption campaign last year

As development partners in Uganda, we remain committed to supporting state institutions, the private sector, civil society organisations and the media to join forces to fight corruption. We also encourage all citizens of Uganda to join this fight by saying no to corruption at all levels, from top to bottom.

We believe that the fight against corruption in Uganda can only be won if concerned citizens, as “the rights holders”, and accountable state institutions as “the duty bearers”, work

together.

This does not take away the responsibility of political leaders, quite the opposite. It is also critical for them to support this effort by being good examples, by sending a clear message that any corrupt officials at all levels of the state, can and will be prosecuted, showing that impunity has no place in Uganda.

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BY EDWARD ANYOLI
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A 76-year-old woman, popularly known as Mama Kisanja, who is claiming land occupying several families at Namavundu in Wakiso district, has again been dragged to the land probe over alleged fraudulent acquisition of prime land worth sh21b in Kira Municipality.

Hezekia Mukibi, a retired surveyor, has dragged Penninah Kalenge, her daughter Natasha Kalenge and six others to the land probe in a bid to recover land, allegedly grabbed under controversial circumstances by Kalenge.

“When I appeared before the commission on November 12, as a witness in the complaint by Stanley Lwanga, Justice Catherine Bamugemereire directed that in addition to my testimony that day, I make an official complaint regarding my land on Kyadondo Block 185 in Kira Municipality,” he said.

“My complaint is over the same group of persons “the land fighter” who grabbed Stanley Lwanga and my land at Namavundu,” Mukibi told the commission.

Kalenge is jointly accused with Juma Kayondo, Yusuf Semakula, Daisy Nantongo, Lule Kamoga, Ruthmans Segawa and Michael Kintu.

ALLEGATIONS

Mukibi alleges that Kalenge,

WHY MAMA KISANJA HAS BEEN DRAGGED TO LAND PROBE AGAIN



Commissioners Rose Nakayi, George Bagonza and Justice Bamugemereire during the land probe recently. Mukibi has dragged Kalenge to the commission in a bid to recover his land allegedly stolen

her daughters and others have been acting in connivance and with assistance of the Police to grab his land.

Busingye, Kalenge and another family member, Eria Mubiru, are not new to controversy. They are also the beneficiaries of a recent controversial court judgment, where court declared that National Forestry Authority is a trespasser on Kajjansi forest reserve.

According to the commission, the forest was purchased at sh8b under controversial

circumstances.

Mukibi lodged a complaint against the leadership of Kira Police, headed by Shifah Kiribwa, some members of the late Kuprian Kisonokole, family of late Antonio Sewatti, George William Bitaata and Girado Ndawula Kirere.

He also filed a complaint against city lawyers Paul Kenneth Kakande, Samuel Muyizi and Caleb Alaka of Alaka & Company Advocates.

Mukibi filed another complaint against Wakiso district

surveyor Dr Joseph Batume.

Mukibi said his land has been grabbed, houses razed, titles forged and that he was arrested and detained, subjected to endless demands, harassment and intimidated to surrender his land.

According to the documents filed by Mukibi at the commission of inquiry on November 29, he said he owns plots at Kyadondo, Block 185, plots 2548, 385, 386, 749, 8153, 8151, 8153, 755, 508 7427 and 507.

Mukibi accused Kalenge group of torturing him and his family members.

MUKIBI'S COMPLAINT

Mukibi contends that Kakande, acting on behalf of Timothy Mawomelo and Christopher Mafabi on September 30, 2016, sued Josephat Bisase, Myres Bisase and Templar Bisase (who perished in the boat), the administrators of Kuprian Kisonokole.

Mukibi said on October 17, 2016, the parties entered into a consent judgment in favour of Mawomelo and Mafabi and gave away his land to them.

“The parties entered a consent judgment by which the defendants (Josephat, Myres and Templar, the surviving administrators of Kuprian Kisonokole) who did not even bother to file a written statement

of defence or attend a mandatory court supervised meditation gave away my land,” he said.

Mukibi said the surviving family of Kisonokole recognise Mawomelo and Mafabi as the bonafide occupants of his land, instead of recognising him.

“By description of the land in the consent judgment and decree, the defendants granted a *Kibanja* to the plaintiffs over land, including all my land comprised on Block 185. The “land fighters” were the sponsors of the whole scheme,” he said.

Mukibi said the Kalenge group, after securing a consent order, confronted him and forcefully grabbed his farm land on Block 185.

Mukibi alleged that Kakande filed yet another case on behalf of Suzan Nabadda, Christopher Walugembe and David Goloba in which they sued Anthony Sewatti, Josephus Bisase and Templar, administrators of the estate of late Kisonokole, adding that a consent judgment was reached without following due process.

TORTURE

Mukibi accused Kalenge group of torturing him and his family members, razing his son's house and his farm, uprooting crops and mature trees.

He wants the commission to investigate his complaint, bring those responsible, such as the Police officers, lands ministry officials and district staff surveyor, to book.