

# The Other Voice

For a fair and just society

The Other Voice also has four sister papers namely: Eporoto Je in Ateso, Dwon Mukene ni in Luo, Eiraka Ryawe in Runyankore, Munyenye in Luganda. Watch out for your copy every three months in Etop, Rupiny, Orumuri and Bukedde respectively.

Vol 4 No. 8 February 25, 2001

**The God given gift nobody should take away**

**Human rights:**

They are values that are inherent, God-given; the one thing no government has a right over, observes Gawayia Tegulle.

Human Rights are the moral or legal entitlements or endowments that accrue to a person just because that person is human. They are rights which every human being is entitled to enjoy and to have protected. They are fundamental principles that should be respected in the treatment of all men, women and children.

Human rights derive from two aspects - what is human and what is right. Human beings are animals, but they have the capacity to think, reason and make constructive decisions; something which distinguishes them from other animals.

The right to life is the most basic human right and it is everybody's quest to enjoy the gift of life to the maximum and without hindrance, his/her endeavour to enjoy the possibilities his/her potential affords him/her, that are translated into rights.

## Uganda to host 2002 Congress

By Anthony Mugeere

Uganda is to host the 8th International Women's Congress between July 21-26 next year, under the theme: "Gendered Worlds: Gains and Challenges."

The Interdisciplinary Congress, to be held at Makerere University, will enable women to take stock of the gains made by women and assess the challenges in women and gender focused research, interdisciplinary

scholarship and practice for effective development processes.

According to the congress' administrator, Florence Muhanguzi, it will bring together scholars, activists, civil society organisations, government agencies and other development practitioners for critical discussions of prevalent gender issues. About 1,000 participants are expected for the event being organised by the Department of Women and Gender studies in conjunction with the university administration.

"We hope that the congress will provide a forum for academic and professional exchange of information and ideas through lectures, papers and workshops, panel debates and informal discussions," says Muhanguzi. "It will also create public appreciation for women and gender issues and alternative ways of addressing them both locally and internationally. The congress will also explore new avenues and structures that will

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### Ugandans celebrate the coming of The Africa Prize



The Vice President, Dr Specioza Wandera Kazibwe, The Hunger Project's President, Joan Holmes and Minister of State for Primary Education, Namirembe Bitamazire arriving at Kalamaba epicenter where Ugandan women received the African Food Farmer Prize worth US \$ 200,000 on Wednesday.

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UGANDA MEDIA WOMEN'S  
ASSOCIATIONKisaasi/Bukoto. Plot 226 P.O.BOX 7263  
Kampala, Uganda. Tel:077-469-363  
e-mail:umwa@Swiftuganda.com**Editorial****The Electoral process  
needs more  
commitment**

CONCERN has been raised over the glaring absence of civic and voter's education during the on-going presidential elections. Different camps supporting different candidates are circulating a lot of misinformation and there is no chance of dispelling such lies. The voters have been thus left to the mercy of their candidates, the different camps and the media. Therefore this year, elections needed civic education more than before, as lots of issues need clarification.

THE reason which has been advanced by the Electoral commission is that the commission could not get adequate funding. They have received from government only 650/- million shillings for both presidential and parliamentary elections an exercise expected to take over six months. Most of this money is going to be spent on civic educators' allowances in one month alone.

LIKEWISE NGOs who have been very active in civic education before have said they could not participate fully this time because donors who normally give them the funds for the exercise were not willing to do so apart from election monitoring.

This raises some serious issues about government's and donors, commitment to the whole process. They say it is government's duty to educate its citizens on such matters. But why would donors be more interested in monitoring a process whose results are almost predictable such as poor turn up and lack of meaningful participation?

ALSO where is government's commitment and obligation to have citizens who are aware of their rights and obligations? The Electoral Commission should have raised or come out clearly on these shortcomings long before. This is a very expensive venture which government knew at that time of promulgating the 1995 Constitution. Therefore there should be no excuse.

GIVEN the importance of civic education to the whole electoral process it is only proper that the government, which preaches democracy and human rights, considers it part and parcel of the process and therefore gives it its due priority. Otherwise, if with scarce resources and funding the exercise ends up becoming a formality, then the whole purpose of democratising society will be defeated.

**Electoral Commission runs short  
of funds for civic education**

By our staff writer.

Civic education is likely to be halted long before the March 7<sup>th</sup> 2001 Presidential elections due to shortage of funds. As a result, the electorate's right to electoral information including voter education will be affected.

The Public Relations Officer, Electoral Commission, Mr. Dick Kizito confirmed that only 650m/= was released by government for civic education for both Presidential and Parliamentary elections 2001. This amount has funded civic education for only one month instead of the planned five.

**T**his is in contradiction to the recommendation of the *Report of the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections 1996* that civic education be continuous, reasonably facilitated and tailored for particular needs. "...with a more aggressive and continuous civic education programme, considerable impact could be created", says the report.

In previous elections, the Electoral Commission would carry out civic education for about two months and thereafter hand over to the donor-funded consortium of NGOs for another few months including the period of voter education.

Ag. Head of Civic education at the Electoral Commission Mr. Patrick Byakagaba confirmed that the lack of funds had crippled the exercise. He revealed that the department's budget which originally amounted to 3.5bn/= was revised to 1.7bn/= by the Electoral Commission when the institution's budget for the coming Presidential and Parliamentary elections was presented to the Ministry of Finance. This was further slashed when only 650m/= was approved.

*The Other Voice* has reliably learnt that even a directive from President



**A population which is inadequately prepared for elections is likely to be ill-informed and will not meaningfully participate in the exercise.**

Yoweri Museveni to the Finance ministry to give the Electoral Commission an additional 2.4bn for civic education has to date yielded nothing.

**T**he Electoral Commission has been forced to deploy one civic educator per parish instead of two. On 15<sup>th</sup> January 4,965 civic educators were deployed to nearly each of the 5000 parishes in the country. At a remuneration rate of 60,000/= each a month, they will consume about 300m/= in salary in one month alone, nearly half

**4,965 civic educators were deployed to nearly each of the 5000 parishes in the country. At a rate of 60,000/= each a month, they will consume about 300m/= in salary in one month alone, nearly half of the release.**

of the release. Yet the exercise, apart from the logistics and management of the deployment, also involved printing of civic education materials, i.e. manuals and their translation into 21 local languages, posters etc, and programmes in the media i.e. radio, TV, and press.

*The Other Voice* has also learnt that the donors who have partly shouldered

such an exercise in the past through funding a consortium of NGOs also withdrew support preferring to fund the election monitoring exercise to the tune of 4bn/= . Diplomatic sources revealed that the donors were dissatisfied with the Political Organisations Bill, which they had wanted quickly passed and with "reasonable provisions". When this did not happen, they reportedly withdrew from funding civic education. Other sources said donors argued it is the duty of government to

including review sessions which recommended a long term civic education programme.

According to the Electoral Commission the major importance of civic education is to ensure that every eligible voter votes and does so correctly. This notion is supported by the trend of statistics of invalid votes recorded from previous elections.

**F**or instance during the Constituent Assembly elections in 1994 where civic education was funded by the government, the country registered 3.5% invalid votes, this reduced to 3.2% during the Presidential elections in 1996. It reduced further to 1.12% during the Parliamentary elections in 1996. Last year, when voter turn-up for the referendum on political systems was the lowest at 51.50%, invalid votes were 3.0%. This is partly explained by the fact that it was the first national referendum in the country and voters were bound to be a bit confused. However, it is still a better percentage of invalid votes than the 1996 Presidential elections.



## News

# Africa Prize received in style

By John Eremu

**T**HERE was ululation. There was drumming and dancing. It was all fanfare Monday morning at Entebbe International Airport. Work came to a standstill at the VIP lounge as the anxious workers came to the stairs or peeped through the windows to catch a glimpse of what was going on at the tarmac.

For the Nigerian woman bearing the golden torch symbolising African women's determination to end hunger had landed.

Caroline Akinsami had brought the torch to Ugandan women, who this year scooped the African prize for sustainable end to hunger from The Hunger Project. High profile political figures were there to receive her. State Minister for Primary Education, Ms. Geraldine Bitamazire represented the Vice President, Dr. Speciosa Kazibwe.

A delegation from The Hunger Project headquarters in New York led by the president, Ms. Joan Holmes and 40 investors also witnessed the blissful occasion.

The replica of what



Ruth Namyalo(L) receiving the Africa Prize from Nigeria's Caroline Akinsami at Ssenge Kalamba Epicenter, Mpigi district where The Hunger Project runs its programmes.

happened at Entebbe was repeated on Wednesday at Senge Village in Kalamba sub-county, Mpigi, when Ruth Namyalo received the torch on behalf of the Uganda Women Food

Farmers. The occasion saw Kazibwe, Energy Minister Syda Bumba, that of State for Primary Education, Namirembe Bitamazire and her counterpart for

Agriculture, Dr. Kibirige Ssebunya joining the

traditional dancers on the floor. Always despised, the Ugandan woman just like any other woman in the Africa continent is responsible for producing 80% of the food with almost no extension services and with the crudest of tools.

She owns only 1% of the land, gets only 7% of the agricultural extension services and less than 10% of the credit given to small scale farmers, &quot;

according to Holmes.

While the rudimentary tools like the hoe, the machete and the axe are used in Uganda and Africa, the muscle remain the main source of energy and that muscle is that of a woman.

Dr. Kazibwe said that she is the human factory. Her role should therefore be recognised when making policies, which affect her daily activities, and she must therefore actively

participate in the formulation and implementation of these policies so that she is able to equitably benefit from the fruits of her labour, she adds.

According to Kazibwe, Uganda has the potential to become self sufficient in food production and indeed a food basket for the whole of Africa. This dream can, however, be only achieved by empowering the rural woman.

Holmes said it was in cognisance of their extraordinary contribution that The Hunger Project decided to empower the African Woman Food Farmer by awarding them the Africa Prize for leadership in 1999. This year Ugandan women received their share of US \$200,000, which will be put into a revolving fund to finance projects related to ending hunger. At the same time, The Hunger Project created the African Woman Food Farmer Initiative with the objective of empowering the African woman economically and as an advocacy thrust.

Over 13,000 food farmers in West Africa have since gained access to credit since the initiative. Now is the time for the African Woman Food Farmer to break through

the walls of suppression and to assert her right to the acknowledgement and support she so obviously deserves, says Holmes.

Through our advocacy, we shall train spokespeople, identify key messages and carry out a sustained advocacy campaign at both local and national level in every African country where we work, she adds.

Kazibwe says government's plan for modernisation of agriculture is geared at augmenting the woman's muscle, increasing productivity while reducing the workload on the women, increasing competitiveness and adding value through modern agro-processing techniques among others.

The symbolic torch was first carried in New York by Ms. Asseta, a food farmer from Burkina Faso to villages throughout her country. It was then passed onto a woman farmer in Benin who did the same before it was passed on to Ghana, then Senegal, Nigeria and now Uganda.

Namyalo is supposed to now inspire the Ugandan woman to rise to the challenge of feeding the nation better than they have been doing.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### It was an update not fresh registration

THE EDITOR-

Your issue of *The Other Voice* of January, 28, 2001 had an article by Tom Lomongin - titled - "Elections in a Young democracy need adequate preparations." The writer must be commended for the issues he raised.

However, the Electoral Commission wishes to clarify on some of the issues raised or commented upon.

The update exercise, which we have just completed, was not a fresh registration of voters for all voters but an update. During an

update only new voters and transfers are registered. Therefore, the time was enough for those few people. The already registered voters needed only to check on their names. In spite of a lot of publicity about updates, voters tend to think that it is a re-registration. So some many register again leading to an inflated register. Indeed, this is the kind of situation we get when you give a long period for the update. Another problem we encountered is that voters who would otherwise have applied to transfer

to other locations just register again instead of transferring and this means that their names still remain on the former register.

Another point is that students of voting age are allowed to register either in the places of origin or residence. This means that they can also register at their schools but the Electoral Commission cannot guarantee that the polling days for all elections will always be during school terms.

They are also allowed to transfer to either place when there is update/ registration exercise. For

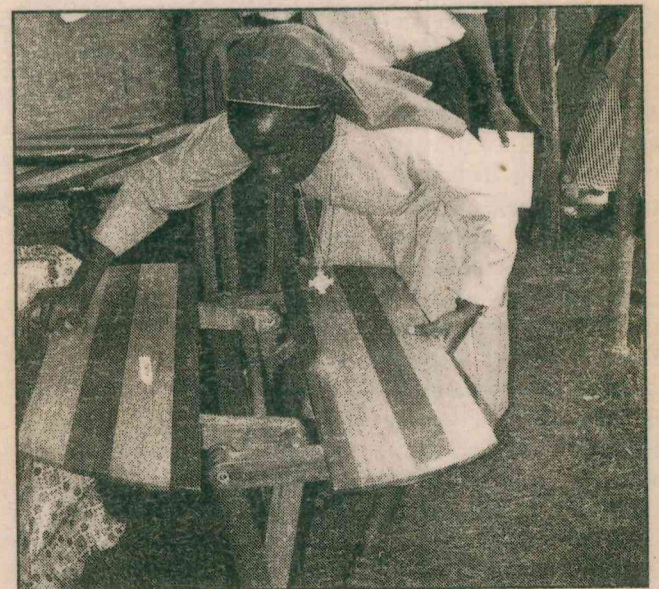
those who register at their places of origin the Electoral Commission usually requests the Ministry of Education to offer a half term holiday.

The Electoral Commission has indeed made a similar request this time.

Finally the writer is correct to say that there is room for improvement on the Electoral process on the part of Government, Parliament and other bodies.

Dick Kizito  
Public Relations  
Officer/Electoral  
Commission.

### Bwanda sisters: A team to reckon with



Sr Vicencia Nakawuka, the head of the carpentry workshop at Bwanda Conventry, demonstrating how a small table folds. This is one of the many items made by the sisters. Others include shoes, coffins and rosaries



## Profile

The PEOPLE's manifesto was launched on December 19th last year long before any presidential candidate had prented his

# What do the people want from their elected president?

By Edith Kimuli

Ugandan women and children recently launched the people's Manifesto in which they state what they the elected president should do for them.

According to manifesto compiled by the Uganda Women Network (UWONET), democracy is a system, where all people participate not only at state level, but also up to the smallest nucleus of the state, the family. It is very crucial for the development and realization of women's rights and that there cannot be true and substantive democracy without equal participation of women.

The manifesto demands that the ministry of Women and Gender be reinstated and financially supported by government. It also demands that since women participate in elections more than men do and they are the majority, they should be given more posts at cabinet level, National Executive Committees and Secretariat.

On human rights and family stability, the manifesto says that government should implement the gender policy at all political and administrative levels and legislators should enact laws that protect the rights of women, men and children in a family for example the Domestic Relations Law which it says should check sexual offences and domestic violence. The manifesto also demands that "abusive cultures" like the payment of bride price, widow inheritance, child sacrifices, child marriages, polygamy and genital mutilation be outlawed.

Uganda has experienced a state for armed conflict for over 20 years, which has caused immense suffering especially to women, children. It has caused loss of lives because of involvement in both



(Left-right) The Co-ordinator UWONET, Sheila Kawamara-Mishambi, Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Janat Mukwaya and Chairperson UWONET, Lydia Rugasira at the launching of the people's manifesto last year.

combatant and non-combatant roles. Basing on this, and in order to promote peace and unity in the country, the manifesto demands that government reduces expenditure on arms and promotes disarmament and abolishes the production and use of land mines in Uganda.

In the manifesto, the people demand that a curriculum on peace studies and conflict management in schools and institutions of higher learning and in adult functional literacy.

They say that warring factions, including government respect humanitarian laws in cases of armed conflict and stop using women and children as a shield by any warring faction.

They also urge government to give a clear picture of impending or on going wars, so that women take timely decisions to avoid horrific situations. They suggest that

The newly formulated cost-sharing under the health sector, should consider exempting children because they form the majority of the poor beneficiaries of health services in Uganda. This should be done in the short-run and in the long run be abolished, even for women and men.

government puts up a mechanism of evacuating people caught up in armed conflict and making sure that they are secure. Priority in such cases should be given to women, people with disabilities and children.

According to the manifesto, Uganda Human Rights Commission should be strengthened and

perpetuators of war be prosecuted and held accountable. "The cries of women in Gulu, Kitgum, Aura, Soroti, Luweero, Kasese and Bundibugyo should be listened to," the manifesto says.

On the economy, the manifesto says increasing investment in human resource development; building of the country's infrastructure and enabling

the poor get access to credit facilities and natural resources like land, would guarantee food security and improve people's livelihood.

It also says the present tax system is unfair and a burden to the poor. Lack of transparency in the assessment and collection of graduated tax is neither convenient nor cost effective, it says.

Other demands include:

- Government should intensify its fight against corruption, embezzlement and misallocation of public funds and revenue and work closely with the civil society organisations to eliminate the scourge out of our society.

- Government policy on investment should favour and encourage local investors and should set a minimum of expatriates that come along with foreign investors so as to curb unemployment in Uganda.

- Government should develop a policy and regulatory framework to promote the exportation of labour services.

- The elderly should be exempted from taxes and that government broadens the tax base.

- Government should ensure effective participation of women in the formulation of economic policies and in planning at all levels. It should also promote women's access and control of livestock, credit, technical and business training as well as appropriate technology.

- Government should increase its support to

agricultural extension and offer relevant advice and information on weather forecast, improved farming technologies and post harvest support.

- Government should increase its funding to the provision of health services and improves the channels of distributing these services. It should develop a gender budget to ensure that ample funding is put aside for the promotion for reproductive health care.

- The newly formulated cost-sharing under the health sector, should consider exempting children because they form the majority of the poor beneficiaries of health services in Uganda. This should be done in the short-run and in the long run be abolished, even for women and men.

- Government should improve the facilitation of health units and drug supply at the community level and intensify its efforts to curb the importation of expired drugs.

- The new government should enforce the education and recognition of reproductive rights as integral part of human rights, whose violation should be punishable by law. It should also improve and strengthen access to health facilities to cater for needs of people with disabilities.

- The People of Uganda in the manifesto say, "We are committed to attain sustainable development and maintain a health environment if, government emphasises the protection of forests and wetlands in its plan for modernisation of agriculture and gazettes industrial areas where pollution regulations are strictly observed."

- The people also urge government to intensify its efforts to provide alternative affordable energy sources and subsidise and enforce the utilisation of electricity in order to protect the environment and enhance agricultural production and



## Obituary

# In death there is a lesson

"She gave me a gift a small plaque with the words 'the family that prays together, stays together.' She gave it to me because she thought of some family sorrows of mine. Now I will think of her family's sorrows and pray for them with those same words," says Judy Lyons Wolf a friend to Kulsum.

By Lillian Nalumansi

November 16th 2000 started as a normal day for the Wakabi family in Kawempe. Jamal Wakabi first drove the children to school and then dropped his wife Kulsum at the Law and Advocacy for Women-Uganda (LAW-U) offices at Parliament Avenue just opposite the British High Commission.

At the office where Kulsum was Chairperson of LAW-U and founder member of the NGO registered in 1997 she was her usual smiling self, in perfect health and sat behind her desk to resume the day's work. Little did Jamal, the children, and her work-mates know that that was the last day they would ever see Kulsum again.

A few minutes after she had settled down, Kulsum collapsed to her death. "I was devastated and sincerely thank each and each of you who came to be with me minutes after the tragedy. I still implore God to show me what he wants me to learn from this great loss. I trust that He will answer me in his own time," said Dora Byamukama Director LAW-U and founder member at the 'Celebrating Ms Kulsum Wakabi's Life' memorial lecture organised by LAW-U at the International Conference Centre recently. In recognition of the late Kulsum's vast devotion to fighting for women's rights in Uganda, different women activists discussed the 'Election 2001: The Wake-Up Call for Action on Women's Rights', at this lecture.

Kulsum was one of the founder members of LAW-U an NGO



Kulsum managed to advance her career and at the same time remain a devoted wife, mother and friend to many. Unfortunately she never lived to see what she had always advocated for.

composed of Ugandan women lawyers with an interest in women's rights issues. In 1995, Kulsum was one of the beneficiaries of the Leadership and Advocacy for Women in Africa (LAWA) project and the Women in Law and Public Fellowship Policy Program at Georgetown University Law Centre (GULC) in the United States of America.

Under the fellowship program by the United States International Development Agency (USAID), Kulsum undertook a 16 months training on gender issues and attained a Masters of Law degree

"I wish I could be with you as you mourn Kulsum's death and celebrate her life. She was truly a remarkable person who had an impact on everyone she met. Her vision and leadership on

women's issues in Uganda were inspiring," said Susan Deller Ross from Georgetown University Law Centre in her condolence message.

"Indeed she is the only student I have ever had who told me she enjoyed taking an exam!! It was for her course on International and Comparative Law on the Rights of Women and she found the topics so

Kulsum never lived to see what she had always advocated for- the passing of the Domestic Relations Law, the spousal co-ownership of land law, the law on the rights of widows and widowers, law on HIV/AIDS, lack of direction on the issue of prostitution, no direction on abortion, and no equal employment laws among other contentious issues.

interesting enjoyed writing about them even in a highly pressured situation," Ross said.

"I have just been rereading her superb graduate paper Domestic Violence: Strategies for Combating Wife Battery in Uganda. In it she lays out a comprehensive framework for understanding and countering domestic violence in Uganda.

It is beautifully written, reflects a thorough understanding of law, policy, and culture and proposes a complete set of legal remedies. As was typical of Kulsum, this was only the first of the many steps she took to make her vision become reality," Ross continued in her message read by Emma Ssali from LAW-U.

While at Georgetown, Kulsum with Byamukama began planning for the founding of LAW-U. According to Ross they were the first participants in Georgetown's program on LAWA to take this momentous step." And soon they began work in earnest on the problems Kulsum had marked out in her graduate paper."

By March 1<sup>st</sup> 2000, LAW-U had completed a comprehensive research programme and written a study 'Research Findings on Domestic Violence In a Study Carried out in the

Districts of Iganga, Kabale, Kampala and Kitgum: Documenting the extent of domestic violence in Uganda. A major contribution to the literature on the subject came in its findings that polygamy and bride price were key causes of domestic violence in Uganda," Ross said.

Kulsum gave a presentation of her graduate paper in Nairobi to the International Association of Women Judges. A year later she presented the same paper in Trivandrum, India, at the inaugural conference of Global Alliance for Justice Education to a group of law professors and NGO lawyers from around the world.

Kulsum believed that socio-cultural issues like bride price, polygamy and early marriages precipitate domestic violence in Uganda.

"Fear of violence often deters women from exercising their right to demand protective sex, thus leaving them open to life-threatening diseases like AIDS. Such issues are of great significance in an AIDS-ravaged country like Uganda, demonstrating the urgency for a specific law on domestic violence," Kulsum stated in her domestic violence report.

According to the late Kulsum's father, his daughter was not only cherished by her family but many because of her extraordinary friendliness. "In the last days of her stay on earth, Kulsum called me and her mother and took us on a very interesting tour to all the nice places we had longed to visit in Kampala. We had a very wonderful time during the last weeks and she acted like one who knew she just had a few days left," the father said. "Every morning she got to office, Kulsum used to call me and her mother to greet us and check on how we were doing.

She always called again in the evening before she left office. As a child she liked

helping people a lot and was always obedient to her mother and me. She just had this extraordinary devotion towards helping others and those who worked with her can bear witness to this," the father said.

In honour of the late, Judy Lyons Wolf from Washington who first met her in 1994 when Kulsum was a staff lawyer at FIDA (the Uganda Association of Women Lawyers) had this to say: "My memories of Kulsum are so many, so lovely. She was committed. When I first met her in 1994, she was at FIDA as a staff lawyer, describing her work. I see her still. Then in Washington 1995-1996 so many thoughts and pictures, such determined work. I remember her coming to my office each week from August 1995 until she went home to Uganda at the end of November 1996 to discuss the founding of LAW-U: such dreams and plans," Wolf said.

"Home to her beloved family, to make LAW-U a reality, to set up her chambers. 1997-2000: such a productive time, so many issues tackled, such bravery.

In October last year, I saw her at Entebbe. She gave me a gift a small plaque with the words 'the family that prays together, stays together.' She gave it to me because she thought of some family sorrows of mine. Now I will think of her family's sorrows and pray for them with those same words," Wolf continued.

Kulsum was born on November 23rd 1964 and started primary school in the 1970's. She went for her secondary school education at Namasagali College where she stayed until 1978 when she completed her 'A' level and joined Makerere University for a degree in Law, which she acquired in 1987.

By the time of her death, Wakabi who had an over 10 years legal experience had her own law firm, Wakabi and Company Advocates.



## Human rights

Where human rights are observed, happiness prevails and where they are violated, misery takes on its fullest meaning as the victims are lowered to the sewers in terms of dignity.

From page 1

**H**uman rights is a very old concept. The underlying idea of human rights existed in some form in all cultures and societies.

The only qualification for one to enjoy human rights is that they be human beings. This means human rights have always been there. You can not talk of "when they started" because they are as old as humanity.

In the early days of human life, human rights existed in the form of morality. The most important and basic right - the right to life - was held sacred.

For example, in every society murder was abominable and highly criminal.

Societies largely observed the natural law - unwritten, but observed with respect.

However, there was no legal framework of today's magnitude, that defined and documented these rights and ensured their observance.

### Stages of evolution

There are three stages in the evolution of formal observance of human rights. The first stage featured the Civil and Political Rights and can be traced to the 15th and 16th centuries, during the industrial revolution of Europe. This was an era of enlightenment, as man woke up to an awareness of life about him. This was the time when great philosophers in Greece, the Roman empire and Asia enjoyed great influence.

Their views on life and contemporary happenings shaped public opinion and thought patterns. They helped people to start questioning the almost unlimited powers of the ruling monarchies.

They asked; is it right for a small group of people to rule and dominate society, oppress fellow men, just because they were born into a ruling family?

Why should people pay taxes to the King and have no say in how the taxes are used? The result was the series of revolutions like the French Revolution of

1769, that overthrew monarchies and bore republics.

The subsequent revolutions in the 18th and 19th centuries changed the world order, from monarchical governments to republics.

Notable in these revolutions was the emergence of men like Napoleon Bonaparte, gifted in statecraft, who issued codes of law that featured strict human rights stipulations, that were adopted by other governments all over the world.

The formation of republican governments and Constitutional monarchies was the foundation of formal observance of Civil and Political human rights.

### The Bolshevick revolution

The Bolshevick revolution of 1917 in Russia was another key landmark in the evolution of human rights. The Bolsheviks argued that there was nothing in the Civil and Political rights to protect the workers.

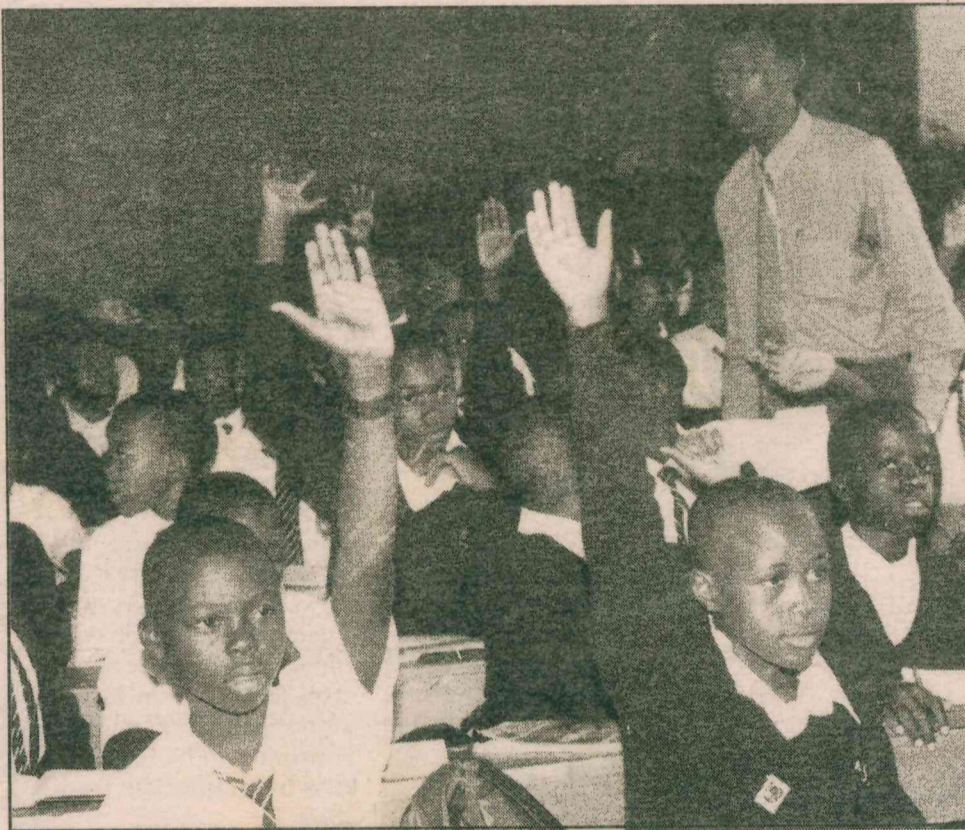
**T**hey introduced what today is known as the Economic, Social and Cultural rights. After the great economic depression of the 1930's, that was characterised by unemployment and poverty, the capitalist world discovered the necessity to incorporate some of the principles of socialism.

It was an attempt by the capitalists to sustain their system, so that in times of economic crisis, there would be no revolts from the public.

By the time of World war II, there were two sets of rights but not in any formal international document. When Hitler was defeated in 1945, the victorious powers assembled a document called the United Nations (UN) Charter on June 26, 1945 in San Francisco, USA, to safeguard against any other emergence of Hitlerism in Europe.

### The 1945 UN Charter

The 1945 UN Charter had its origins in the Atlantic



Education is right too but is still elusive to many Ugandans.

Charter of 1941 where American President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill met on a battle ship on the Canadian coast and issued a statement of their hopes for the future of humanity: "The UK and US respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of

three years and on December 10, 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 217 (III) which established the UDHR.

### The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

This declaration covers

include the right to a fair trial, freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expression.

**U**nder the Economic, Social and Cultural rights, governments are supposed to try progressively to improve the living conditions of their citizens. The citizens have therefore, without exception, a right to food, clothing, housing, medical care and protection of the family. It also includes, the right to social security, education, and employment.

Both sets of rights go hand in hand and can hardly work independent of the other. Both sets aim to give all people freedom from fear and want. They are the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

It is the responsibility of governments to protect rights proclaimed in the declaration.

The foundational premise of the Universal Declaration of Human

**Human rights is the one language all humanity must speak in order to breed tolerance, democracy and cohesion in society.**

government under which they will live and they wish to see sovereign right and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."

The debates and negotiations of the 1945 San Francisco meet - against a global backdrop of immense human suffering under the likes of Hitler and Mussolini, resulting in the death of millions - took

two broad sets of rights: the Civil and Political rights on one hand; and the Economic, Social and Cultural rights on the other.

Under the Civil and Political rights, all governments are to protect the life, liberty and security of their citizens.

This includes: no enslavement, arbitrary arrest, detention without trial or torture. They also

Rights is that "all human beings are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward each other in a spirit of brotherhood. This is a disposition pre-requisite to peace, stability and well-being.

**B**ecause of the need to impose the force of law into the UDHR, the UN in 1966, passed two instruments - the Convention on Civil and Political rights and the Convention on Economic, Social and Political rights. By ratifying these conventions all nations that did so were bound to incorporate the conventions in their national legal frameworks. The third stage in the evolution of human rights is the group or collective rights.

This is a post-independence dispensation, that became popular in the 1970's.

This emphasizes the rights of minorities, women, children, environment, people with disabilities and development. This accounts for, in the case of Uganda, the inclusion of these rights in the 1995 Constitution. This feature is one of the most fundamental difference between the 1995 and 1967 Constitutions.

The sanctioning of human rights is a declaration of the fact that people are the world's most important natural resource.

It is also an effort by humanity, by society to protect itself, to uphold what it holds dear and sacred, to preserve the sanctity of the human race, to uphold the aspirations of all people everywhere.

Human rights are practically the only laws in the world that know no border; though this does not necessarily mean they are not violated. They are the only values that are inherent, God-given; the



## Presidential elections 2001

# Elections 2001 : Did you know this?

### ● Why are we holding the 2001 Presidential elections?

Chapter 105 of Uganda's Constitution provides that a person elected to be the President of Uganda shall hold office for a term of five years. It also provides that no person will be elected President for more than two terms.

The current term of President Yoweri Museveni who was sworn in on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1996 expires on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2001. The Constitution of Uganda therefore requires that Ugandans hold presidential elections since the current presidential term is expiring.

The elections for the next President of Uganda will be thus held on **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2001**. The elections were originally set for 6<sup>th</sup> March until the Mufti of Uganda recently confirmed that the Muslim holiday of Idd Aduha may fall on 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> March 2001. The Electoral Commission accordingly announced the new date.

The presidential election is governed and guided by an electoral law officially known as the Presidential Elections Act, 2000 which Parliament duly passed last year. The Electoral Commission headed by Mr. Aziz Kasujja is in charge of conducting this election.

Accordingly it has to:

- Ensure free and fair elections;
- Organise, conduct and supervise elections;
- Demarcate constituencies
- Ascertain, publish and declare in writing under its seal the results of the election;
- Compile, maintain, revise and update the voter's register;
- To hear and determine election complaints arising before and during polling; and
- To formulate and implement civic educational programmes relating to elections.

The Constitution of Uganda further gives every citizen of Uganda of 18 years of age or above the right to vote and the duty to register as voters for public elections. It also provides for a fundamental human right of every Ugandan citizen to participate in the affairs of government individually or through his/her representatives. Since voting is one way of such participation, every citizen of Uganda is obliged to register as a voter and should actually vote.

### ● Nominations

The Electoral Commission duly nominated seven candidates. Nominations were done in January when seven candidates were nominated. Charles James Senkubuge, Mohammed Kibirige Mayanja, Chapaa Karuhanga and Kizza Besigye were nominated on Monday January 8<sup>th</sup>. Bwengye Francis, Aggrey Awori and Museveni Kaguta Yoweri were nominated the next day on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January. After nomination each candidate was given Ug. Shs 15 million, a four-wheel vehicle, and 15 police guards to facilitate their campaign trail. The candidates were given 54 days from nomination to complete their countrywide campaigns.

One candidate Charles James Senkubuge has since withdrawn from the race citing intimidation and threats to his life, which he has not yet substantiated. He was ordered to refund the facilitation he had acquired from the Electoral Commission. The race now remains between: Awori Aggrey, Besigye Kizza; Bwengye Francis; Chapaa Karuhanga, Mayanja Kibirige Mohammed and Museveni Kaguta Yoweri.

### Voters' civic education

The Electoral Commission on 15<sup>th</sup> January deployed a civic educator in almost every parish in the whole country. A total of 4965 civic educators are deployed in the 5000 parishes countrywide. They will conduct voter education for about one month.

Civic education manuals have also been printed and translated into 21 local languages. In addition, posters on voter education have been printed as programmes run on radio, TV and in the press.

### ● Registration

Registration and update of the voters' register took place from January 11<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> 2001. The exercise, which was supposed to last till 20<sup>th</sup> January, was extended for two more days. The President further announced a public holiday on January 19<sup>th</sup> to give the voters more time to participate in the registration and voter update exercise.

The army did not report any restricted area to the Electoral Commission. Therefore, every registered Ugandan will vote on a gazetted polling station of his/her area. The legal provisions of voting in a restricted area will therefore not apply.

### ● Voter's register

The Electoral Commission received all filled forms by 26<sup>th</sup> January. Since then they have been working day and night processing the data on applications for registration and transfers and deleting names of the deceased and those who have left the polling areas concerned. The Commission has for the past two weeks had to hire over 300 temporary staff working in two shifts of 7am to 7pm and 7pm to 7am, in order to expedite this exercise. Because of this effort, the voters' register is expected to be ready by the end of the week (ending 18<sup>th</sup> January). The Electoral Commission has registered 1.6 million new voters.

### ● Register Display

Once the register is ready, the Commission will in the week starting 19<sup>th</sup> January announce the date for display of registers. Although the law requires that registers be displayed not less than 21 days from polling day, the Electoral Commission Act also empowers the Chairman of the Commission to take a decision to reduce on that period depending on the prevailing circumstances. And in this case, this provision will have to be invoked because the time is not enough and the registers aren't displayed yet.

Unlike previous elections when registers were displayed at villages, this time the registers will be displayed at the polling stations. There are 20,000 polling stations in the country. The registers will be displayed in open places where they will be accessible to anyone including non-voters, stakeholders, agents, etc.

There will be no registration during display of voters' registers. Only corrections regarding removal of deceased or ghost voters, or regarding the registered voters will be entertained.

It is therefore the responsibility of everyone to go to their polling station to check and ensure that their name appears and is correctly written. If your name is not on the register and you are sure you registered, or if you spot a name of a dead person, underage person, or a non-citizen then inform the display officer.

### ● Voter's cards

New voters cards are going to be issued to all registered voters in the country. Given the time constraints, this will take place concurrently with the display of voters' registers. The voter card will only be collected by the voter himself or herself who will sign for it. Unclaimed voter cards will be returned to the Electoral Commission alongside all other display materials so that these cards do not remain floating among the electorate thus the possibility of being abused.

### ● Voting

Only Ugandans whose names appear on the voters' register will be allowed to vote. Voters will vote from

a polling station on which they are registered. Polling time will be from 7 00 am to 5 00 pm on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2001.

### ● Campaigns

The candidates officially started campaigning after nomination. They have 52 days in which to campaign. Each candidate and his task force drew up their programme of campaigns in such a way that candidates would not be in the same place or venue at the same time.

Candidates are therefore holding separate meetings in different areas of the country although the law allows individual candidates meetings as well as joint campaign meetings if the candidates agree and consult the Electoral Commission. Candidates' agents are also allowed to hold campaign meetings. All candidates are entitled to equal time and space in the state-owned media.

The Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) has also organised joint political debates on UTV involving so far the candidates' agents but which are expected to eventually bring the candidates themselves together on the floor. The programme is aired on Uganda Television on Sunday at 3pm.

Everyone is free and has a duty to attend these campaign meetings in their area because they provide the chance to assess the candidates and decide whom one can vote for.

### Myths and realities

#### ● Are UPDF soldiers registered? If so who registered them?

The UPDF soldiers were registered in their barracks by political commissars approved by the Electoral Commission. This registration included even civilians who ordinarily reside in the barracks like soldiers' spouses, children and other dependants. Display of voters' registers will be outside the barracks so that everyone including non-residents of the barracks can scrutinise them and raise any complaints with the Electoral Commission.

Polling will also be outside the barracks on a polling station where two presiding officers appointed by the Electoral Commission from outside the barracks will work alongside two officials appointed from within the barracks, the agents and observers can be able to access polling stations.

Where there is a small population of soldiers like a unit, the registered soldiers will vote with the civilians on a polling station in the area and their register (which will have been earlier compiled by an army political commissar) will be appended to the main register. The Electoral Commission has been compiling polling stations of the army and they will soon be gazetted.

#### ● The Electoral Commission is not independent and is being used to rig the elections by tampering with the registers.

The Electoral Commission is only implementing the law to the letter, and which law does not condone partiality. The late passing of the Presidential Elections Act by Parliament and the limited funds released by Treasury to fund the elections are a huge handicap on the Commission's ability to organise well and in time, but their independence is guaranteed.

Most of the powers over the registers are with the Tribunal at the parish. This tribunal, which is legally set up by the Electoral Commission Law, constitutes three members of the local council parish executive one of whom must be a woman, one elder and the parish chief. Any decision made by the Electoral Commission officials regarding deletion of a name,



# The Other Voice

For a fair and just society

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## Uganda to host 2002 Congress

establish platforms and promote women and gender issues," she adds.

The congress will create a forum for networking and collaboration among gender specialists, academicians, institutions and organisations that work to promote women and gender issues in the development process both locally and internationally.

"Participants will deliberate on the most sound practices among the successful interventions or practical inequalities especially on the African continent and create momentum for a more concrete interdisciplinary and multifaceted research, teaching and information gathering in relation to women and gender issues," said the congress administrator.

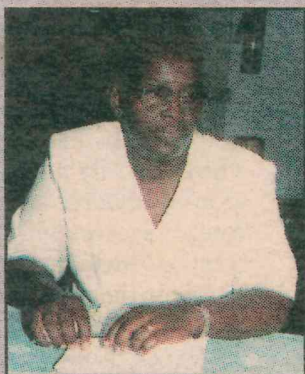
Uganda will be the first African country to host such an international congress. The previous congresses were held in Israel (1981), Netherlands (1984), Ireland (1987), USA (1990), Costa Rica (1993), Australia (1996) and Norway (1999).

Muhanguzi attributes Uganda's choice as host to the progress it has made in terms of women's emancipation and gender mainstreaming in the areas of politics, economics, education, organisation and the women's movement.

"The political and constitutional framework in which women are specifically recognised offers ample environment for the congress," she said.



**Congress Co-ordinator  
Florence Muhanguzi.**



**Dr Grace Bantebya  
acting head of dept of  
Women and Gender  
Studies.**

"Locating it in our country holds great potential for illuminating the voice from the south in general and of Africa in particular, within the global women's movement."

Among the high profile participants expected for the congress are Mrs. Graca Machel, wife to former South African President Nelson Mandela, the president of the International Development Research Centre in Canada and the UNDP president.

About 30 themes will be discussed during the six-day event expected to be opened by the head of state.

They include; Gendered Identities/Constructions of Gender, Gender Patriarchy: An African perspective, Gender and Leisure/Sports, Feminist



**The building that housed the department of women studies for many years. NORAD has provided funds for the erection of a new four-storied structure to replace the old one and it is hoped it will be ready in six months time.**

Leadership, Linking Theory and Practice and Gendering the Economy.

Other proposed themes include; The Girl Child, Women and Disabilities, Women and the Media, Women and Refugees/Migrants and Potrayal of Women in Language and Literature.

An exhibition of items produced by rural women will also be held at the congress. The items will also be up for sale, say the organisers.

Muhanguzi says one key note address focusing on the main theme will be organised. Plenary sessions will be about each of the sub themes. "Resource persons will be invited to prepare presentations for the sessions," she explained.

Panel discussions will be organised which will comprise a co-ordinated set of papers dealing with a particular topic or issue. Papers by diverse authors will be organised by the congress steering committee along the main theme and related topics to form a comprehensive paper session.

Participants will also be able to discuss with the various authors of research papers presented during workshops.

An official from the university secretary's office said the administration is fully supportive of the congress and will provide all the necessary funds and logistics for its success. "We are proud to host this congress on our campus and will do all it requires to achieve its objectives," said

the official.

Organisers are still calling for papers and proposals for the congress. These may take the form of a panel, a paper or poster/exhibition.

Presenters will need to exemplify the nature of work, the challenges faced in addressing women and gender issues and creating an enabling environment for gender equity and equality in the development process.

Abstracts of 300 words or less should be submitted to the Co-ordinator Women's Worlds 2002 Department of Women and Gender Studies, Makerere University, P. O. Box 7062, Kampala. E-mail: [gendemu@swifuganda.com](mailto:gendemu@swifuganda.com).

### Myths and realities in the forthcoming presidential elections 2001

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addition etc, has to be endorsed by the tribunal whose members also sign forms to back a decision. How the voters register turns out is largely attributed to the tribunal.

I have to take my complaint on the register to Electoral Commission headquarters in Kampala and it is very far

No! There are four officials in every district working on the electoral process namely: the Returning Officer and the Assistant Returning Officer, and the District Registrar and the Assistant District Registrar. These are the people to whom aggrieved voters should address complaints in their areas.

Besides these, there are sub county chiefs who supervise the parish chiefs, and the temporary staff that the Electoral Commission hires. These too can be approached for any assistance. Even when the complaint comes to Kampala first it has to be referred back to these district electoral officials because they are in charge of those specific areas. The complaint can only be brought to Kampala after these officials have failed to handle or resolve it.