

T H E   E L E C T O R A L   C O M M I S S I O N



# **Stakeholders crucial** **in delivery of improved** **electoral processes** **and systems** – **Byabakama**

**The National  
Consultative  
Forum** for Political  
Parties and Political  
Organisations

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**Profiles of Members**  
of the Electoral  
Commission

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**Ugandan elections**  
**still have loopholes**  
– analysts

A brief  
history of  
elections in  
Uganda  
1958–2021



## **ELECTORAL COMMISSION**

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## About the Electoral Commission

**T**he Electoral Commission is established under Article 60 of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, and is mandated under Article 61 of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (as amended) to:

1. Ensure that regular, free, and fair elections and referenda are held;
2. organize, conduct, and supervise elections and referenda following the Constitution;
3. Demarcate constituencies by the provisions of the Constitution;
4. Formulate and implement voter educational programmes related to elections;



*The Management and Staff of the Electoral Commission congratulate the Members of the Commission on the successful completion of their term of office for the period 7th January 2017 to 7th January 2024. Seated: Hajjat Aisha M. Lubega Basajjanaku, Deputy Chairperson (left), and Justice Byabakama Mugenyi Simon, Chairperson (right). Standing, from left to right: Mr. Mulekwah Leonard (Secretary/EC), Hon. Stephen Tashobya, Mrs. Justine Ahabwe Mugabi (Nov. 2009 – Nov. 2023), Ms. Nathaline Etomaru, Al- Haji Sebyggala M. Kigozi, and Mr. Emorut James Peter, Commissioner.*

5. Compile, maintain, revise, and update the voters' register;
6. Hear and determine election complaints arising before and during polling; and,

7. Ascertain, publish, and declare in writing under its seal the results of the elections and referenda.

As an independent body, the Constitution mandates the Commission to be free from any direction or control of

any person or authority in the performance of its functions (Art. 62). The Constitution also directs Parliament to ensure that adequate resources and facilities are provided to the Commission to enable it effectively discharge its mandate (Art. 66).



## Legal Framework

**T**he Electoral Commission executes its mandate within the following main legal framework inclusive of the enabling laws as passed by the Parliament, namely:

1. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 (as amended);
2. The Political Parties and Organizations Act 18 of 2005;
3. The Electoral Commission Act, Cap 140;
4. The Presidential Elections Act 16 of 2005;
5. The Parliamentary Elections Act 17 of 2005;
6. The Local Governments Act, Cap 243;
7. The National Women's Council Act, Cap 318;
8. The National Youth Council Act, Cap 319;
9. The National Council for Disability Act, Cap 2003;
10. The Referendum and Other Provisions Act 1 of 2005;
11. The Kampala Capital City Authority Act;
12. The National Council for Older Persons' Act of 2013;
13. The Public Health (Control of COVID-19) Rules, 2020 (SI 83/2020); and
14. Other statutory instruments/guidelines.



### Our Vision

To be a Model Institution and Centre of Excellence in Election Management



### Mission

To organize, conduct and supervise regular, free and fair elections and referenda through citizen participation, stakeholder engagement and information sharing to enhance democracy and good governance.



### Our Goal

To promote participatory democracy and good governance.



### Our Core Values

Accountability, Service Orientation, Impartiality, Professionalism and Innovation (ASIFI).



### Strategic Themes

1. Stakeholder participation
2. Institutional effectiveness,
3. Trusted and democratic elections.

The Electoral Commission

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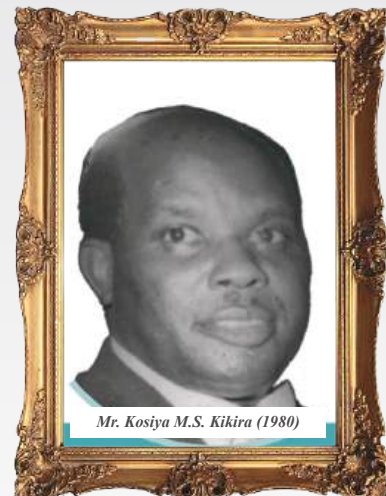
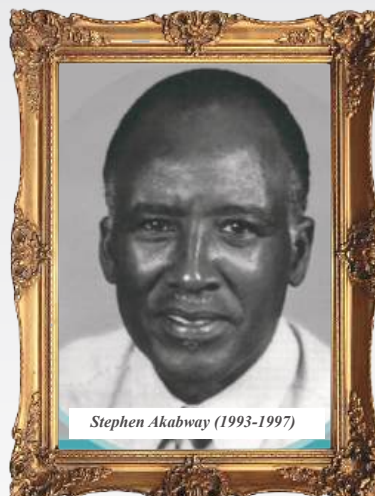
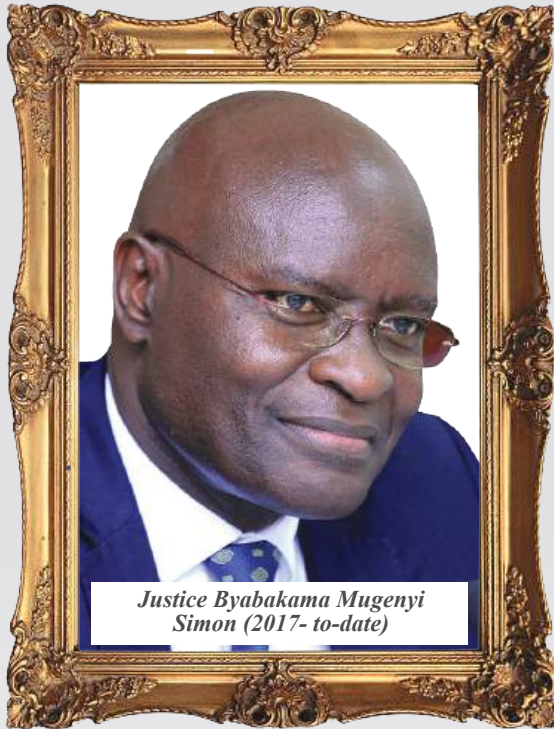
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# Electoral Commission Chairpersons







# Stakeholders crucial in delivery of improved electoral processes and systems

EC Chairperson Justice Byabakama Mugenyi Simon

You are serving a second term as Chairperson. How would you rate the performance of the Commission during your first term?

**O**ne needs the input of other stakeholders if they are to appropriately rate themselves. How do they rate one's performance? I however want to think that the commission did well given the circumstances under which we operated. We met most of our targets. We held elections that held the country together and we were able to address a number of factors.

One of the things that was prevalent when we came in was the low pay for the staff. They had not received any salary increments in sixteen years. We addressed that, which galvanised and motivated the staff. They were then able to respond to our call for team effort and development of a team spirit that enabled us to deliver on our mandate. That is just one of the indicators, but by and large, the first term was in my view very successful.





## You talked of “under the circumstances”. What sort of circumstances are you talking about?

First of all you have to recognise that some of the stakeholders have an unnecessary negative perception of the Commission. However much we endeavour to be transparent, they remain suspicious of our activities and conduct.

Secondly, the resource envelope. At times the necessary resources do not come at the particular time that you need them. We then have to craft ways of ensuring that we do not lag on the execution of our mandate.

I keep emphasizing that elections cannot be postponed because they are clearly spelt out in the law with specific timelines. Whereas you can postpone the issuance of passports and driving permits, you cannot postpone elections because the constitution stipulates that you have to hold elections within a specific time. So whether the resources are available or not you must ensure that you have elections within the time spelt out in the law.

## What are you trying to do to change the perception that the commission is biased?

When you have a bad or negative opinion about an individual the onus is upon you to reach out and engage them so that you clear the mist or misgivings you have about them. We have an open door policy. Any political party which wants to discuss any cause of discomfort with us, or where they feel that we are not transparent, is free to come and we discuss. Let them come and engage us so that we clear any grey area.

## But have you engaged any of the political parties?

If I have a problem with you, it is me who is meant to come to you and say “I have a problem with you”. I have to state the problem with you. I therefore expect any political party or individual that has problems with the commission to approach us and say, “Electoral Commission we have a problem with you”. We expect them to come forward if there are matters that pertain to the overall work or execution of the mandate of the Commission. It is not for us to go and say, “Do you have a problem with us? Can you come and we talk?”

## You said that there is a problem of perception which you know about. So the monkey is on your back so to speak. Why then are you not the one reaching out?

We have deliberately informed all political parties that they can come and engage us if there are issues that have come up in the course of driving their political work forward. One can only improve if there are people assessing them and pointing out the areas on which they should be working in order to improve. That is why I am saying let them come and tell us. I cannot go any party and say, “okay tell me”. They are the ones that should come and say “EC the problem is this. The challenge is this one”. Let us not wait for general elections to come because at around that point in time people are heated up. This would be the appropriate time to engage.

We have met with the Democratic Party (DP) and the National Resistance Movement (NRM). Besides, political parties can always engage us under the umbrella National Consultative Forum (NCF), which brings together all registered political parties including those that have no representation in parliament.



We also engage with their supporters at different platforms like tertiary institutions where we engage the students and academic staff. Our staff in the field also engage communities whenever we are given the opportunity to tell our story.

## What are some of the challenges that you had to deal with?

**C**ovid-19 was a major challenge, but the role of stakeholders is high up there too. One of the issues that impacts on the work of the Commission is the lack of appreciation of the role that the different stakeholders play in ensuring that we have free and fair elections.

Some of the ills that undermine the possibility of having a peaceful and free election is not the work of the commission. It is the work of other stakeholders like political parties, candidates and supporters. When supporters of party X engage in violence; when a candidate defies the guidelines issued by the Commission on how they should conduct themselves; when candidates defy the law; when candidates bribe voters and; when candidates use incendiary rhetoric and divisive and sectarian language, all that impacts on an election.

So our main emphasis now is to tell the people that know your role, know you are a key player in this process and act in accordance with the law if you want a peaceful, free and fair election. It is very easy to have a peaceful election if the different stakeholders realise their role and act in accordance with the law.

## Some quarters have described the 2021 general elections as the most difficult ones that Uganda has had. How was it like to manage it?

Elections in Uganda take on a carnival like atmosphere. People dancing, others half naked, others on top of trucks, boda-bodas zooming



around exhibiting all manner of riding skills and so on. All that was put aside. Lives had to be saved. The Commission issued some guidelines in line with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) put in place by the Ministry of Health. Unfortunately some people thought that they were aimed at restricting their campaign efforts. The apparent defiance promoted law enforcement to step in which resulted into the November 2020 unrest in which we unfortunately lost many young lives.

Covid-19 was particularly challenging. It disadvantaged the candidates. They could not campaign in the normal way we know. The voters too could not come up in huge numbers to show support for their candidates. It was a difficult election, but we thank God that we managed to hold a peaceful credible election and we are moving forward as a country.

## Voter turn up has been below 70 percent in the last four election cycles. 69.19 % in 2006, 59.29 in 2011, 67.61 in 2016 and 59.2 in 2021. What would be the cause for this?

First of all, I have to say that low voter turnout is of great concern to the Commission because we believe we have done enough sensitization.





We believe that we publicise the process nationwide. Covid19 and the restrictions and SOPs that came with it could have affected the turn up in 2021, but we are undertaking a study to establish what could have happened over the years and what can be done to improve on the turnout.

I have however come to realise that some Ugandans have not yet taken cognizance of their duties as citizens as stipulated under Article 59 of the constitution. They do not know that it is the duty of every citizen to register to vote and that it is a right for them to vote. I think people have not appreciated the power of their ballot in the process of democratisation and determining the calibre of leadership they should have.

Civic education is critical there. The citizens must be rallied to their rights and duties. They must be rallied to recognise the weight and value of their vote. We need to tell them that they should not complain about the calibre or quality of the leadership they get if they do not turn up to vote.

The Commission, other bodies like the Human Rights Commission and civil society must reach out to the citizens about the power of their vote, the duty to involve themselves in electoral processes and most importantly, for them to come out on polling day and cast their vote.

The Commission prepares the register. In 2021 there were about 18.5million registered voters on the national voters' register. We printed over and above that to allow cases where a voter who unintentionally spoils a ballot returns to the presiding officer and demands for another ballot paper, so you print millions of ballot papers for all levels of elections only for the turn up to be so low. Over 10million ballot papers are wasted. That is money lost.

We need to engage Ugandans and sensitize them about their rights and duties when it comes to elections. Those percentages are unacceptable. We need to improve them.

**When you look at that turn out and the number of spoilt or invalid ballots in every election does it not suggest that there are weaknesses in your voter education processes? And are you trying to address it?**

So many stakeholders have told us that we are weak in the area of voter education. The law says that we are supposed to carry out continuous voter education. We do not have to wait for the electoral cycle. Unfortunately, we are given only Shs320million every financial year to conduct voter education nationwide. We have argued our case before parliament and the Ministry of Finance, informing them that we need at least Shs3billion per year in order to do that, but the money has not been forthcoming.

We tend to be more robust when it comes to general elections because the budget for general elections is bigger, but my humble view is that by then the ground is stirred by so many players jostling for the same audience. The Commission's voter education message gets lost in the noise.

If we had adequate resources, the best time to conduct voter education would be now. I would



have loved to have a process of voter education which is purely arranged by ourselves, but having said so, I am sure that the problem can be fixed if all stakeholders could embrace the role of sensitizing Ugandans about their civic rights and duties under the constitution.

### **We are preparing for the next general election. Do you think the existing legal framework is adequate?**

I am not underplaying the need for an adequate legal framework in the conduct of elections, but I must point out that having the most comprehensive legal frameworks may not necessarily enable you to achieve what you want. Uganda is for example said to have one of the most elaborate anti-corruption legal frameworks, but you can see what people are saying about the incidents of corruption. Is it because of lack of an adequate legal framework?

In my view, the people play a critical role. We must comply and act in accordance with the law.

As Managers we have at the conclusion of every election made recommendations on where reforms are required. We have already communicated to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs on those areas where we think reforms are needed.

You know the law is not static because society is not static. The legal framework should always be in tandem with the aspirations of the people in the prevailing circumstances. The legal framework is necessary for purposes of improving the areas where there are gaps in the existing framework. You may need amendments or a new law.

One of the areas where we need to reforms is in the area of campaign financing. People have

been voicing concerns about the increased commercialisation of our politics. This is auctioned democracy, which is unacceptable. We must have democracy that is based on principles, values and ideas for the betterment of our country. So we have recommended that we have a law capping what one should spend on elections.

We have made the proposals, but what happens if they are not constituted into laws? Does it mean that we cannot conduct a credible election?

The Commission strives to deliver a credible free and fair election in the prevailing circumstances. When we were confronted with Covid-19 we did not say that, "now that Covid-19 is here we cannot have a credible election". We said, "No. In the context of Covid-19 we must ensure that we have a credible election". That is what we went ahead to do.

So a legal framework is good, but even if it does not come through, it is our duty as Managers to ensure that we execute our mandate to deliver a free and fair election.

### **You have previously talked about building a better electoral system for stronger democracy in Uganda. What deliberate steps have you taken to achieve that?**

I have at every opportunity emphasized that having an improved electoral system, delivery of a peaceful, free and fair election is the work of the Electoral Commission alone. The Commission cannot work in isolation.

Improving electoral systems and processes is a comprehensive and holistic engagement in which all stakeholders must be involved. This, along with a peaceful, free and fair election can be delivered if political parties, their supporters, candidates, security agencies and whoever else



has a stake in the country were to work together with one singular objective. However much the Commission introduces measures for a smooth electoral process, it will not be possible unless other stakeholders are flowing in the same direction as the Commission.

The Commission may for example deliver electoral materials and all the appropriate technology to the polling station in time, but then you have people who invade the polling station, grab the ballot papers, they pre-tick and stuff them into the ballot boxes. Now is it because the EC acted shabbily? Or was it because it did not deliver the materials on time? No. It is the conduct of stakeholders, but then you hear, "Oh! At such and such a polling station, people came and invaded, they grabbed the ballot papers and stuffed the boxes, but the EC has done nothing. Where are they? What are they doing?"

So stakeholder engagement is crucial when we talk of improving electoral processes and systems because stakeholders play a key role in ensuring a stable and free and fair election. That is why we are emphasizing that everyone should stick in their lane. It is like when you are competing in athletics, what happens when you cross from this lane to the other lane? You are disqualified.

That is why we have previously proposed that the EC be given powers to summarily punish candidates who do not comply with campaign regulations and guidelines. We proposed to parliament that we be given power to for example suspend one's campaigns but the proposal was shot down.

## Finally from your side, what sort of election should we expect in 2026?

It is like asking a chef going to the kitchen that, what sort of meal are you going to give us? What will he tell you? He will tell you that he is going to give you the best.

Similarly, our projection, planning and objective is to deliver a credible, free and fair election, devoid of the kind of mishaps and unfortunate episodes including violence and death that occurred in 2021.

We should not be losing lives in any election. That is not democracy, but again can the commission deliver this by itself if other stakeholders are not willing to abide by the law?

If the Commission issues guidelines, which apply to all of us, let us comply. If you have queries please come engage us.

Uganda does not exist for elections. Elections are not what defines what makes Uganda tick for everybody. It is the peaceful environment that enables us to go and work or conduct our business in a peaceful manner and sleep peacefully that defines us.

We should look at elections as an end in themselves. They are just a means of fostering leadership that is geared at introducing measures and policies that will enhance the wellbeing of the people of Uganda.

We want people to realise that we need to work for a Uganda beyond the general election of 2026, one that is peaceful and stable for us to continue to live peacefully and in harmony.

**We must have  
democracy  
that is based  
on principles,  
values and  
ideas for the  
betterment  
of our  
country**



*Members of the Electoral Commission pose for a group photograph with representatives of the National Consultative Forum for Political Parties (NCF) after a joint meeting. The NCF is an umbrella organization of all registered political parties and political organisations in Uganda and is charged with the responsibility of building consensus and dialogue amongst its members.*



SSION





# Clean election only possible if all actors do the right thing

## Interview With EC Secretary Mulekwah Leonard

**You rose through the ranks to become Secretary of the Commission. How would you describe your journey through the ranks?**

I think it is the right thing because you grow and understand the institution. Even a child

starts by lying down, it sits, crawls and you expect that it will begin walking. I think it is also good because it gives encouragement to the other colleagues in the institution. They realise that it is possible to actually rise through the ranks.



## How has been the journey been like?

I think the journey has been one of commitment and working with passion. I have not regretted any of the years I have worked with the Commission despite the challenges and perceptions out there. What is important is that you are doing the right thing.

## Where did the journey begin?

I worked as an ad-hoc member of staff before joining the Commission on full time basis. I first tried to work with the Commission in 1980, but they said, "You are too young". I thought I would be registered to vote, but they chased me away. They again still said, "You are too young".

The break came in 1992 when I was appointed a County elections Supervisor for Mukono ahead of the Resistance Council (RC) elections. The following year I was appointed a District Registrar for Pallisa. That was ahead of the Constituent Assembly elections of March 1994. That was when we participated in the preparation of handwritten Register, which formed the foundation for the digitized voter's register that you have today.

The CA election and the 1996 election that followed were organised by the Interim Electoral Commission (EC). I still worked as a district registrar in 1996. I think I excelled. The late Commissioner Ganyana Miiró told in Pallisa that, "You have done well. You are the kind of people we would want form the core of the commission".

The CA outputted with the promulgation of the Constitution and that led to the enactment of the Electoral Commission Act, which led to the birth of the Electoral Commission as we know it. I was privileged to be part of the first permanent staff.

In 1999 and I was named the district Registrar for Pallisa. In 2002 they transferred to the

headquarters and named deputy head of the election management department under Mr Joshua Wamala. That time saw a lot of changes including the sending away of the entire human resource department. I was sent to human resource as an extra assignment.

Around 2004 I was appointed head of voter training and education. I remember that I was very visible visiting media houses all over town during the 2005 referendum.

In 2007 I applied and was named to the position of Director of Elections and Operations, which I held until July 2020 when I was named Acting Secretary of the Commission.

## So what do you think is that single factor that drives you?

Passion for work. I feel it. If you asked anybody in this institution they will tell you so. I also think I have passion for the Commission.

I apportioned my work and time. I have time for deskwork. I come here quite early and not because I am Secretary to the Commission. That is how I have been. I arrive at work as early as 6 am and deal with the desk work. At 9 am I start attending to the public. At 10 am I start attending meetings. That has also helped me meet the demands of the office.

## Upon your appointment the Chairperson described you as the right fit for the job. Are you?

The Chairperson is my supervisor and a part of the appointing authority. I think he knows. I however cannot say that I was the right person. There are so many right people. It is like in elections. There are many qualified candidates, but if there is one seat, it can only go to one person.



## So how has it been like to work as Secretary of the Commission?

The advantage was that I knew the work of the Commission and I think I have put a lot of building blocks on this institution.

Even the concept of a roadmap is my baby. I thought it, formulated it and introduced it. I think it has helped the Commission to organise better elections. In the past I think we used to organise elections over a period of 4 months, but that had very many challenges. You cannot do so much in a very short time.

I read the constitution and understood the time lines. I laid out the activities that are time bound and those that are not. I then developed the document based on the chronology order by which elections are meant to flow. Management bought the idea first time, but the Commission chased me out of the Board room when I first presented it. "Where has it worked before?", I was asked. I said I did not know. "How then can you present something which you do not know where it ever worked?" they asked. "I just thought about it and think it will work," I said.

I think the idea is big and I feel proud that I was able to think out something which was adopted by the country and constitutionalised.

## So what did you have to do to make them accept it?

I sensitized the Commission. I walked them through the challenges we were having and showed them that it was a tool that could help us overcome them. I also pointed out that it would also help the government by spreading out the financial burden. The budget for elections stands at around Shs800billion. That is too much money to be found in a period of four months. The pressure would be too much and you know spending so much in so short a time would cause inflation.



Back to my work as Secretary, I had not been involved in financial management. I had been a technical. I now had to learn that. When I first came in the Auditor General asked me what I was going to do about certain queries. I promised to sort them out by the end of the financial year. We have been audited and Auditor General commended us for adherence to the financial guidelines. It not easy for the Auditor General to say "keep it up" so I am proud of my work there as well.

Then there are the expectations to deal with. People expect the Secretary to meet all their expectations, which is not possible because the budgets we operate and the regulations governing those budgets do not allow free spending so to speak.





**You were assigned this role shortly before the 2021 elections. How was it like to practically jump into the deep end?**

You see this is not about the Secretary, but the institution.

**Yes, but the Secretary is the fulcrum?**

I had been the Director for Elections and Operations. I had been supporting the Secretary on all technical matters around elections. The fact that I was already aware of some of those things made it easier for me to adapt. Besides, I had drawn up the roadmap. I knew what was meant to come and at what, I had participated in the budgeting so I knew

what was in the budget. And since was working with a team of people who knew me, it was much easier.

The biggest challenge we had was Covid-19. Remember that we forced the country to open up from then lockdown because of elections. The constitution dictated that we have elections. The constitution does not know Covid19. It does not know war. It never anticipated those issues.

The Chairperson has previously talked about building a better electoral system for stronger democracy. What is your role in that process?

On our part as EC, the constitution dictates what we do and we are lucky that the electoral law in Uganda is more explicit than other laws I have seen. So our work is to follow what it says. That is why many times when some people go



to court to say “you have not done this” or “you did not do this” we simply point to the law. We simply say, “But the law says this”. They in most cases do not win.

I doubt that there is any law that the Commission has not followed. By following what the constitution says, we are promoting the rule of law and therefore contributing to the growth of democracy. Democracy is about the rule of law and enabling the people to participate and enjoy the rights that go with the participation.

Of course we are at times challenged. The people want to enjoy their rights, but do not want to embrace the responsibilities that come with those rights. Rights, they forget, come with responsibilities. We say “come and register as a voter”, but they do not. Come election day and they turn up demanding that they be allowed to vote.

We say, “Come and check the correctness of your names and where you are voting from”, they do not come, but on voting day they show up at some polling station demanding that they vote from there.

Of course we can achieve that by mobilising the people to get to understand their rights and responsibilities and get to actively participate because democracy cannot grow unless they participate.

Besides, the few who participate decide for those who do not, but should a few decide for many? That is not democracy. Democracy is supposed to be for the many.

**You talked of negative perceptions. What are you trying to do to cure those ones?**

We have tried to encourage people to participate in the electoral processes, but that is not enough. Many do not know that there

are responsibilities. So now going forward we are planning to broaden our civic and voter education. We have been doing voter education, but now want to broaden it to civic and voter education. It will include awareness. We are going to address the question of, “Why should you vote?” instead of simply saying, “Come out and vote”. We shall also address the consequences of their nonparticipation.

Secondly, we want to address some of the promises. A candidate comes out and says, “If you vote me I will grade this road” yet no MP has capacity to grade a road. So we need to tell people to focus on voting people who should legislate properly and not those who are saying they will grade the roads.

It is however unfortunate that we do not have civic education programme which should mobilise people for not only elections, but community work too.

It would perhaps help people know that the commission needs their support. Many people think the conduct of free and fair elections is about the Commission. Even if the Commission does what they are supposed to do rightly, it can never achieve that required level of elections if the other players in the field are not doing the right thing.

You for instance go announce that elections are to be held on such and such a date, but a politician goes and tells the same people that, “You will vote next work”. So you realise low turn up because the politician thinks he will get less votes in a particular locality if all the voters there turned up on the right day.

You tell a politician that these are the guidelines, he says, I am not going to follow them, which in the process leads to violence. The Commission will have done everything, but is still blamed yet it is the other players that are not doing the right thing.



*An election official uses a Biometric Voter Verification Kit to verify the identity a voter on polling day. The integration of technology in the operations and systems of the Electoral Commission is aimed at improving accuracy, security, efficiency, and credibility in the delivery of electoral services.*









# A brief history of elections in Uganda 1958–2024

## Introduction

**H**istorically, Uganda is among the few African countries with a heritage of kingdoms and chieftainships characterised by centralised leadership systems. Under this system, hereditary leaders administered their societies through institutionalised councils, for example, the Lukiiko in Buganda Kingdom, or the Orukurato in Bunyoro and Tooro kingdoms (assemblies that had representatives drawn from each

clan and other royal appointees), and the Council of Elders in other pre-colonial communities.

In either case, the representatives had to meet prescribed criteria to qualify to rule or represent the people. Hence the concept of legitimacy of leadership is not a new concept. However, elections have since become the basis of ensuring legitimacy of government, as those who are governed express their consent through (regular) elections.



*Governor of Uganda Sir Andrew Cohen with Yusuf Lule former President of Uganda.*

## A brief history of elections in Uganda (1958 to-date)

The practice of leaders assuming office through elections in Uganda can be traced to pre-independence period, when the British colonial government made a statute that allowed Africans to participate in local elections starting with the Legislative Council (Legco) which was a precursor to Uganda's independence in 1962.

### 1958

Following the enactment of the Legislative Council (Elections) Ordinance, No. 20 of 1957 on October 16 1957, the Colonial Government organised the first direct elections in

Uganda in 1958, which were characterized by limited African/Ugandans franchise and representation to the Legislative Council (Legco).

In the same year, the government convened a Constitutional Conference that debated the preparations for independence. The Governor, Sir Andrew Cohen, appointed Hon. J.V. Wild, the Colonial Administrative Secretary, to chair a committee to recommend the form of elections and the functions of members of LEGCO which would be introduced in 1961. The Wild Committee was also to determine the number of seats in the LEGCO, their allocation among the Protectorate regions, and to set up structures to organise elections leading to independence.





*Edward Muteesa II Kabaka of Buganda*



*Oct. 10, 1962 - Mr. Milton Obote, takes the oath as Uganda Prime Minister.*

## 1961

In March 1961, the Colonial Government organised direct elections, in which two political parties, namely, the Democratic Party (DP) and the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) contested. Buganda Kingdom boycotted the elections, and insisted on its demand to have its representatives elected by the Lukiiko, its local legislative assembly. DP won the elections with 43 seats, while UPC got 37 seats; hence DP formed the first ever internal self-government, headed by the Chief Minister, Benedict Kiwanuka.

representatives to the National Assembly, who represented the Kabaka Yekka (KY) Party.

On 25th April 1962, the Colonial Government organized the National Assembly Elections, in which DP won 24 seats, while UPC won 37 seats. UPC made an alliance with KY Party who had 21 representatives, and formed a UPC-KY government, headed by UPC's Milton Obote as the first Prime Minister of Independent Uganda.

## 1964 and the first referendum in Uganda

## 1962

The 1961 elections were considered unrepresentative because of the boycott by Buganda; hence the Colonial Government organized fresh elections in 1962. Buganda Kingdom was granted its request to hold indirect elections and its Lukiiko [local assembly] nominated 21

In 1964, the new government organized the first Referendum in Uganda, in accordance with provisions of the 1962 Constitution, to determine whether the counties of Buyaga and Bugangaizi, (which had been transferred from Bunyoro Kingdom to Buganda Kingdom in 1894-95 by the colonial administration) should remain in Buganda or be returned to Bunyoro. Voters in the two counties overwhelmingly voted to return to Bunyoro Kingdom.

*Gen. Idi Amin Dada (President 1971-1979)*





## 1964–1980: Abeyance of elections

Although the 1962 Constitution had provided for holding elections after every five years, this did not happen; post-independence elections scheduled for 1967 were not held because of the effects of the political crisis of 1966, which saw the abolition of kingdoms in Uganda and establishment of a Republic.

The anticipated elections of 1971 were canceled by Idi Amin when he took power through a military coup, and abolished the Constitution. From 1971 until 1979, Uganda was ruled by decree.

## 1980–1985

After the overthrow of Idi Amin's military regime by the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF) in 1979, the transitional government, the Military Commission, appointed an Electoral Commission headed by Kosiya M.S. Kikira, to organise and conduct General Elections in 1980. Other members of the Commission were: S. Egweu, Kera A. Bilali, and M. Matovu, with Vincent Sekkono as the Secretary.

Four (4) political parties participated in this election held on 10th and 11th December, 1980, namely, the Conservative Party (CP), the Democratic Party (DP), the Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM) and the Uganda Peoples' Congress (UPC).

Four ballot boxes were used at each polling station, one for each political party. At the closure of polling, Mr. Muwanga Paulo, the Chairman of the ruling Military Council, took over control of Electoral Commission, and declared he was the only one to announce the final election results.

UPC was eventually declared winner of the elections; however, DP and UPM disputed the results; and a guerilla war ensued, involving several fighting groups opposed to the UPC government led by Apollo Milton Obote.



*Kirunda Kivejinja with Yoweri Museveni at a UPM rally in 1980*

The government was overthrown in a military coup on 25th July 1985, just as preparations for General Elections were underway.

In January 1986, the National Resistance Army (NRA), led by Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, overthrew the military government and established the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government.

## 1986–2005: Movement System of Governance

For the period between January 1986 and July 2005, Uganda had a 'no-party' system of governance also known as the Movement system, which considered individual merit as a basis for election to political office, and not party affiliation.



## 1988: The Uganda Constitutional Commission

In 1988, the National Resistance Council (NRC), which served as the Parliament, enacted Statute No.5 which established the Uganda Constitutional Commission (UCC) to collect views on constitutional issues from the population and institutions, and draft a new constitution for Uganda.

The Commission comprised of 21 members and was chaired by Justice Benjamin Odoki, with Prof. Dan Mudoola as Deputy, and Fr. John Mary Walligo as Secretary.

After nationwide consultations, the Odoki Commission produced a draft Constitution in 1993.

## 1989: Resistance Council (RC) Elections for Expanded NRC

In February 1989, country-wide elections were held to expand the 38-member National Resistance Council (NRC), which served as the Parliament at the time, to a membership of 270, comprising 38 historical members, 149 County Representatives, 19 City/Municipal Council Representatives, 20 nominated members, and 34 District Women Representatives.

The election mode was by lining up behind the candidate of choice, while electoral colleges were used to fill positions at Local Government Councils.

## 1993

The Government appointed a Commission for the Constituent Assembly (CCA) for the purpose of organising elections of delegates to the Constituent Assembly (CA), representing all constituencies in Uganda which debated and passed the Draft Constitution.

The CCA had Mr. Stephen Akabway as Commissioner, and Vincent F. Musoke-Kibuuka as Deputy Commissioner, in Charge of Technical Affairs while Gladys M.K. Nduru (Mrs) was Deputy Commissioner in Charge of Finance and Administration.

## 1994 Constituent Assembly Elections

The CA elections were held in March 1994; the delegates debated the draft constitution and finally promulgated a new Constitution for Uganda in October 1995. Article 60 of the new Constitution provided for establishment of a permanent Electoral Commission with a mandate of organizing, conducting and supervising regular elections and referenda.





## 1996

An Interim Electoral Commission (IEC) was appointed by government to organise the 1996 General Elections. The IEC was chaired by Stephen Akabway, with Mrs. Flora Nkurukenda as deputy. Other members of the Commission were: Charles Owor, Margaret Sekajja, Philip Idro, Syda Bumba, and Aziz K. Kasujja. This Commission organized the 1996 Presidential and General Parliamentary elections, which were Uganda's first general election in 16 years.

## 1997 - Enactment of The Electoral Commission Act (1997)

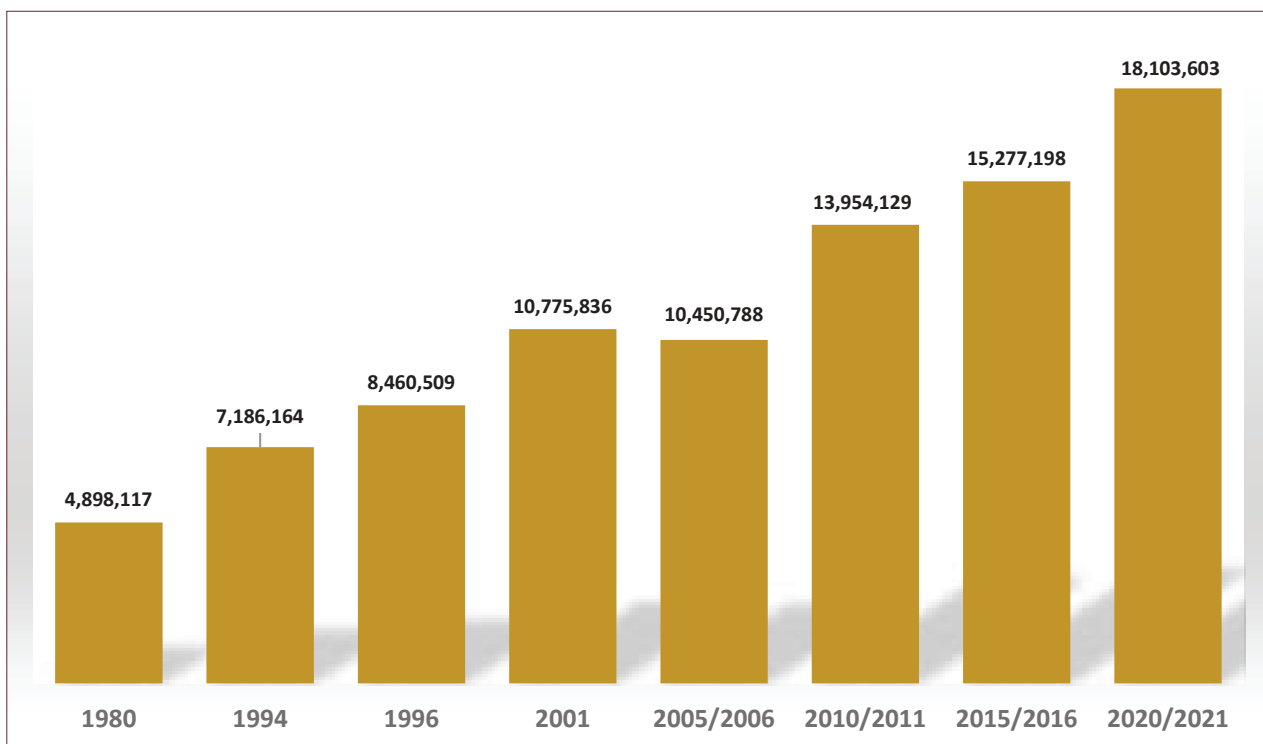
Parliament enacted the Electoral Commission Act in May 1997, hence establishing a permanent and independent election management body to organise, conduct and supervise elections and referenda. This marked a significant achievement for the revival of democratic governance in Uganda.



**The 2011 General Elections were the second to be successfully organised by the Electoral Commission under a multi-party dispensation in Uganda.**

The EC Act provided for appointment of a Commission comprising seven members, to serve for a seven-year term, which could be renewed only once. The first permanent

## Registered voters for elections in Uganda since 1980–2021





Electoral Commission comprised Hajji Aziz K. Kasujja (Chairman), Flora Nkurukenda (Deputy) and five commissioners, namely, Ted Wamusi, Robert K. Kitariko, Nassanga H. Miir, Charles D. Owiny, and Mary I.D.E. Maitum, with Mr. Muwonge Andrew as the Secretary.

In 1999, the Commission adopted a management structure with directorates and technical departments, and also established permanent district offices to handle continuous voter registration and other election related activities at the district level.

In 2000, Mary Maitum was appointed High Court Judge, and Sr. Margaret Magoba, was appointed as the seventh member of the Commission.

## 1998-2002

In accordance with the Constitution, the Kasujja-led Commission organized the 1998 Local Council Elections, the Referendum on Political System (July 2000), in which voters chose to retain the Movement system of governance; the 2001 General Elections and 2002 Local Council Elections as well as several by-elections during the period 1997-2002.

## 2002

On November 17, 2002, a new Commission was appointed, with Eng. Dr. Badru M. Kiggundu as Chairperson and Sr. Margaret Magoba as Deputy Chairperson. Four other commissioners were appointed, namely: Tom W. Buruku, Stephen D. Ongaria, Dr. Jenny B. Okello, and Joseph N. Biribonwa, with Mr. Sam Asiimwe Rwakoojo as Secretary.

This Commission was responsible for organising and conducting all the elections, by-elections and a referendum during the seven-year period (2002-2009).

## The 2005 Referendum on Political System

In the referendum on change of political system, held on July 28, 2005, Ugandans voted to adopt a multiparty system of governance. The Political Parties and Organizations Act 2005

## The Political Parties and Organizations Act 2005

Following results of the July 2005 plebiscite, was enacted. It provided, among others, for the registration, regulation and organisation of political parties and organisations. The Act entrusted this oversight role to the Electoral Commission.

## The 2005/2006 General Election

In February 2006, H.E. Ambassador Dr. Sisye Tomasi Kiryapawo, was appointed the seventh member of the Electoral Commission, and in the same month, the Commission successfully organized the first multi-party General Elections in Uganda since 1980. Seven parties sponsored candidates for the Presidential Elections while nine (9) and thirteen (13) parties fielded candidates for Parliamentary and Local Council Elections, respectively.

## 2009

In 2009, the term of office for members of the Commission was renewed for a second 7-year period, except for Sr Magoba, who retired. A new member, Justine Ahabwe Mugabi (Mrs) was appointed as Commissioner, while Joseph N. Biribonwa was appointed Deputy Chairperson.

## The 2010/2011 General Election

The 2011 General Elections were the second to be successfully organised by the Electoral Commission under a multi-party dispensation in Uganda. The elections, in which voters elected leaders from diverse political backgrounds, were described as testimony to the commitment of Ugandans to pursue peaceful and democratic means of determining their leaders.



*From left: Dr. Abed Bwanika (Peoples' Development Party), Amama Mbabazi (Independent), Yoweri Kaguta Museveni (centre greeting candidate Mbabazi) Baryamureeba Venansius (Independent) and Benon Buta Biraro (Farmers Party of Uganda) before the 2016 Presidential Debate.*

## The 2015/2016 General Election

The 2016 General Elections were the third in Uganda to be organised and conducted after a return to a multi-party political dispensation ushered in by the Referendum. This election period witnessed a higher level of improvements and was better conducted compared to the 2006 and 2011 General Elections as attested by the Presidential Election Court Petition and Judgement (2016), largely due to legal amendments and consolidation of the gains and lessons learnt from previous General Elections and implementation of best practices in Election Management.

## Some of the new Innovations during the 2016 General Elections included:

- a) The Voter Location Slips, a simple print-out (on hard paper) of a voters' bio- data, photograph and details about his/her voting location, whose aim is to ease identification of one's voting location and minimized time spent by voters in locating their polling areas.
- b) SMS Facility, where voters could get to know their voting location



by sending a mobile Phone SMS containing their National ID, Voter or Application Number to 8228 as well as direct inquiry using the same information on the Electoral Commission website [www.ec.or.ug](http://www.ec.or.ug)

- c) The use of Biometric Voter Verification System (BVVS), to improve identification of voters through biometrics. This ensured that no one voted more than once in a particular election. It also directed a voter where he/she was to vote from in case he/she was not registered at a particular polling station in a particular District;
- d) The Electronic Results Transmission and Dissemination System (ERTDS) was used to improve the way results were electronically managed at the District and at the National level.

One of the fastest evolving systems in the Electoral Commission is the Technical Information and Technology operations geared towards improving and easing the delivery of its mandate. The Commission has since



2021

**The Commission further issued Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the various election activities (pre-nomination, nomination, campaigns and polling day) to address the unique health and safety challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic**

been ensuring that its technological initiatives match with modern technological demands present in the entire electoral cycle as well as in the overall general administrative sectors of the Commission.

## 2016: End of term of office

On 17th November 2016, Eng. Dr. Badru M. Kiggundu and Commissioners Dr. Joseph N. Biribonwa (Deputy Chairperson), Dr. Jenny B. Okello, Mr. Steven D. Ongaria, Honorary Consul Tom W. Buruku, and Mrs. Justine Ahabwe Mugabi, concluded their term of office.

## January 2017 to-date: A new Commission

A new Commission comprising Justice Simon Mugenyi Byabakama (Chairperson), Hajjati Aisha Lubega (Deputy Chairperson), Mr. Peter Emorut, Mr. Stephen Tashobya, Nathaline Etomaru and Hajji Mustapha Sebaggala Kigozi, was appointed and sworn into office 17th January 2016. Mrs. Justine Ahabwe Mugabi (Commissioner 2009–2016) was appointed as a member of the Commission for a second 7-year term.

## The 2020/2021 General Election

The 2021 General Elections were the fourth to be successfully organised by the Electoral Commission (EC), under a multi-party dispensation in Uganda. The elections are remarkable as they were held amidst peculiar challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The peaceful conclusion of these elections, in which voters elected leaders from diverse political backgrounds, at Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Government Council levels, is testimony to the strong and determined spirit of Ugandans to pursue peaceful and democratic means of determining leaders.

The successful completion of the Roadmap for 2021 General Elections can be attributed to the Commission's well-timed adoption of a Strategic Plan in 2018 for the period 2018–2021. Under this



On 7<sup>th</sup> January 2024, the 7-year term of the Office of the Commission came to an end, and a new Commission was appointed and sworn into office on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024. Justice Byabakama Mugenyi Simon (Chairperson), Hajjat Aisha M. Lubega Basajjanaku (Deputy Chairperson), Hon. Stephen Tashobya (Member) and Mr. Emorut James Peter (Member) were re-appointed for a second 7-year term, while Hon. Okello Anthony (Member), Ms. Beinamaryo Caroline Bright (Member), and Dr. Kayunga Sallie Simba (Member) are new appointments.

Roadmap, the Commission undertook effort to build and strengthen linkages with various stakeholders in the electoral process, to achieve a peaceful and successful exercise.

The Roadmap was implemented in a phased manner during which the Commission undertook various administrative and logistical activities to professionally and efficiently organise and conduct the elections. Some of these activities include the procurement of specialised equipment, materials software and motor vehicles, the re-organisation of polling stations, the general update of the National Voters' Register using new biometric technology, display of the National Voters' Register, and printing of the final Register, bearing 18,103,603 registered voters of whom

9,504,391 (52.5%) were female and 8,599,212 (47.5%) were male.

The Commission further issued Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the various election activities (pre-nomination, nomination, campaigns and polling day) to address the unique health and safety challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The SOPs incorporated measures and guidelines put in place by the Ministry of Health and the outcome of consultations made by the Commission with various stakeholders in the electoral process to prevent and combat person-to-person, person-to-object and object-to-person spread of the COVID-19 -19 during the conduct of election activities.





*An election supervisor makes final verification of particulars on polling kits ahead of dispatch to the respective polling stations in the 11 cities and 135 districts across the country. A total of 34,684 polling stations were gazetted for purposes of the 2020/2021 General Elections.*



## Conclusion

The struggle for independence was an expression of a demand for self-determination, and elections were considered a critical means of achieving agreeable and representative leadership. Six decades later, the Electoral Commission continues to facilitate Ugandans to have a say concerning political, economic and social direction the country should take.

The Commission has been resilient and has successfully delivered its

Constitutional mandate through the following foundational strengths:

- a) An experienced and knowledgeable work force;
- b) Consensus of the members of the Commission in decision making processes and policies aimed at improving the delivery of its mandate;
- c) A strong and professional working relationship between the Commissioners and members of Management;
- d) Government commitment to funding the implementation of the General Elections as a project over a period of three (3) Financial Years – called the Roadmap;
- e) A sound Constitutional and legal framework;
- f) Good working relations with the various stakeholders in the electoral process. The Commission reiterates a deep commitment towards promoting participatory democracy and good governance for the country's prosperity, and call upon all Ugandans to support us so that together, we consolidate the gains so far achieved, and build an even better electoral system for an even stronger









*An election official conducts a voter education session with students. The Electoral Commission has designed and implemented voter education outreaches that engage students about civic issues, including the importance of elections. The integration of voter education in the Primary and Secondary School curriculum aims to ensure that all Ugandans aged six years and above are taught about the importance of elections.*





Left to Right: Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja, EC Chairperson Justice Simon Byabakama and Justice Minister Norbert Mao at the launch of the 2026 Strategic Plan & Roadmap on in Kampala 2nd August 2023.

# The Electoral Commission Strategic Plan (2022/23–2026/27)

**T**he preparation of the Electoral Commission Strategic Plan (2022/23 – 2026/27), ECSP3, provided an opportunity for the Commission to design programmes, strategies and actions for continuous improvement in the management of elections. This Strategic Plan runs from FY 2022/23 – 2026/2027 and will guide the conduct and administration of the 2025/2026 General Election.

This Strategic Plan seeks to build on the successes of the preceding plan to consolidate

the conduct of free, fair and credible elections, and promotion of good governance and security before, during and after elections. The plan will help the Commission in improving performance in respect of its mandate over the next five years. I therefore, call upon all stakeholders to support the implementation of this Strategic Plan.

**Justice Byabakama Mugenyi Simon**  
Chairperson, Electoral Commission



## Summary of the highlights from the strategic plan

The vision of EC is to be a model institution and centre of excellence in election management. This Strategic Plan is aligned to National Development Plan III in content and to the Governance and Security Programme Implementation Action Plans (GSP-PIAPs).

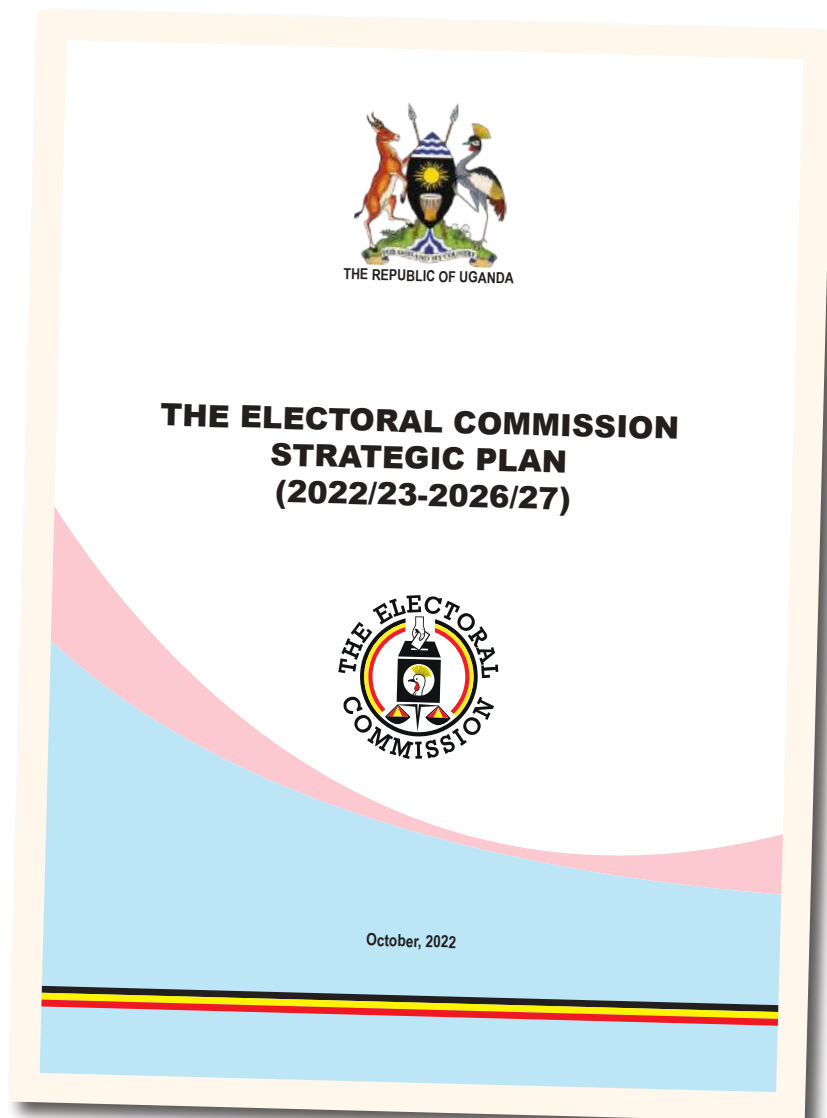
The process of developing this Strategic Plan involved a comprehensive review of the previous plan, election reports, recommendations from observers and courts, extensive engagement with staff of the Commission, as well as stakeholders' validation engagements.

A review of the EC Strategic Plan (2015/2016 – 2021/2022) indicated improved services and performance in management of elections, voter participation, inclusive stakeholders' outreaches, political party activities, deployment of innovative tools and systems, as well as improvement in delivery of election materials. There are, however, certain noticeable constraints and challenges, including inadequate office and storage space, late enactment of enabling laws, failure to adhere to the deadline for creation of Administrative Units, the Covid-19 pandemic, voter apathy resulting into low turn up, inadequate and late release of funds, inadequate tools and equipment for mobilizing citizens to participate in elections, and misinformation by some sections of the public on electoral activities.

During the implementation of the Strategic Plan, the quality of internal and external communication will be improved by enhancing

coordination among the directorates and departments of the Commission and between the Headquarters, Regions and District/City Offices, as well as between EC and other stakeholders in the electoral process.

Special attention will be given to the deployment and use of ICT and new media platforms in the entire electoral process for efficiency and effectiveness. The Commission will strengthen digitization, research and development in order to innovate and develop projects. A key step towards building trust and ensuring effectiveness, credibility and accountability of the Strategic Plan, is the development of a Monitoring and





Evaluation (M&E) Framework and System. This will be accomplished through routine data collection, surveys, progress monitoring, management reviews, stakeholder meetings and annual, midterm and end term reviews.

## The Policy and Planning Context

This Strategic Plan contributes towards transforming the country from a peasant to a modern and prosperous society within a period of 30 years and achieving the overall national development goal of increased Household Incomes and Improved Quality of Life of Ugandans by 2040, as articulated in the Uganda Vision 2040. Over the next five years, EC shall ensure that citizens and stakeholders are adequately empowered to actively participate in governance and democratic processes.

## The Purpose of the Strategic Plan

The purpose of this Plan is two-fold; to translate the mandate and function of EC into strategies and priority actions in light of new developments in democracy and governance; and to leverage on the innovations and reforms introduced during the implementation of the previous Plan, lessons learnt and address the challenges that were encountered therein in order to improve the management of future electoral processes. This Strategic Plan forms a basis for the formulation of the 2025/2026 General Elections Roadmap which provides detailed plans and strategies for the conduct of the next General Elections.

## The process of developing the Strategic Plan

The development process commenced with a review of the implementation of the previous strategic plan, analysis of election observer reports, court decisions, assessment survey, documentary analysis and a series of regional and national workshops/retreats for staff and other stakeholders, as well as drawing lessons from post-election evaluation of the 2020/2021 General Election.

“

**Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) will help track progress during implementation of all the interventions in the electoral cycle**

## The strategic direction of the Electoral Commission

This Strategic Plan was informed by a review of the previous Strategic plan, gaps identified, emerging issues, health and safety measures identified and lessons learnt.





## Objectives of the Strategic Plan

The objectives include to enhance inclusive citizen participation in the electoral process; Strengthen stakeholder collaboration and engagement in the electoral process; Deliver regular free and fair elections and referenda; Improve timely, gender and equity responsive and accurate information sharing, public trust and confidence in the electoral process; and strengthen the institutional capacity of Electoral Commission.

## Financing framework and strategy

The source of funding for the implementation of this plan is the Government of the Republic of Uganda. The total funding requirements for the 5 years, including the 2025/2026 General Elections, is estimated at Shs2,541,408,871,289. The available resources allocated to the Electoral Commission over the five years is (Shs566.20b).

## Communication and stakeholder engagement strategy

To enhance delivery of participatory free and fair elections, the Communication Strategy

shall create an enabling environment for dissemination, coordination and flow of information between the Commission and multi-sectoral stakeholders involved in electoral processes.

## Monitoring and evaluation of the plan

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) will help track progress during implementation of all the interventions in the electoral cycle. This will be done to ensure the resources allocated towards the implementation of the Plan are converted into outputs which translate into the desired Commission's achievements. The M&E strategy will have two components, namely, the narrative and the results framework components.

## Project profiles

The Commission has proposed three projects with their descriptions, expected deliverables, outputs, resources and timelines.



# Trend in Growth of **Parliamentary Representation**

**T**he Directly elected Members of Parliament and District Woman Representatives to Parliament are elected by universal adult suffrage through the secret ballot. The representatives of Special Interest Groups in Parliament (Youth, PWDs, Workers, Older Persons, and Army) are elected by prescribed electoral colleges. Arising out of creation of new counties and districts, and demarcation processes in accordance with Article 63 of the Constitution, the size of parliament has grown over the period as summarised in table 1.7 below.

## The trend in the Growth of Representation in Parliament of Uganda since 2005/2006

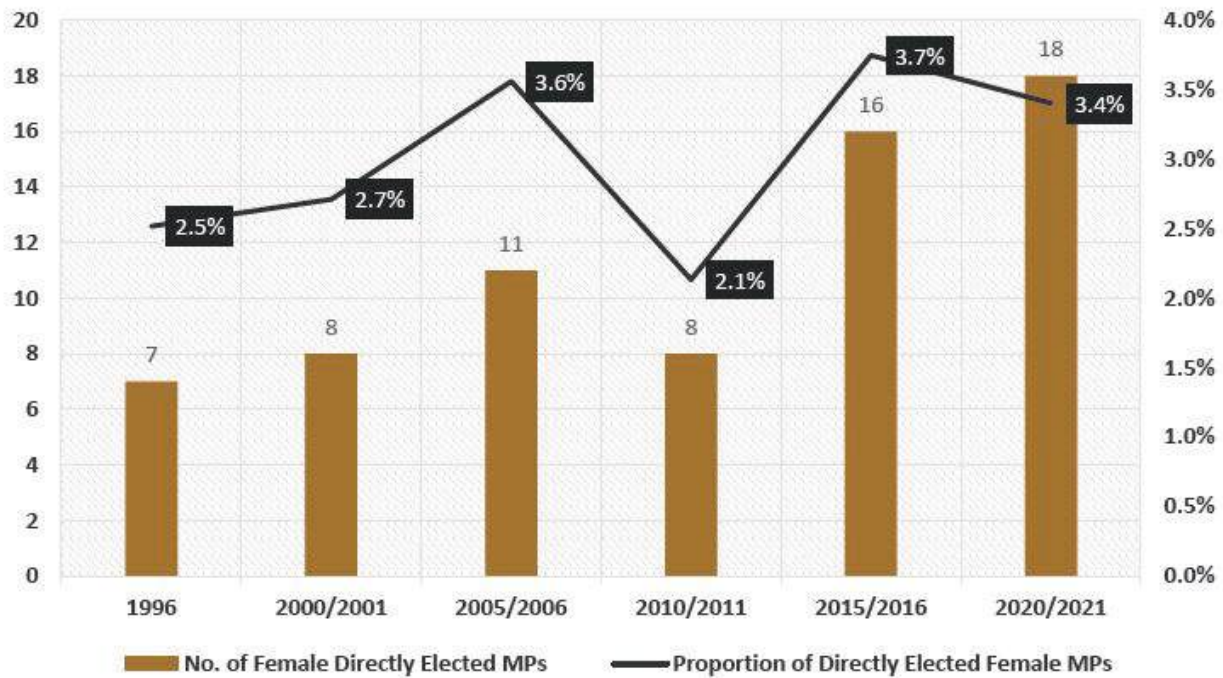
Category of Representation	1996	2000/2001	2005/2006	2010/2011	2015/16	2020/21
Members of Parliament Representing Constituencies	214	214	215	238	290	353
District Woman Representatives to Parliament	39	56	69	112	112	146
Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF)	10	10	10	10	10	10
Workers	5	5	5	5	05	05
Youth	5	5	5	5	05	05
Persons with Disabilities (PWD's)	5	5	5	5	05	05
Older Persons	0	0	0	0	0	05
<b>Total Elected Representatives</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>529</b>

## Representation by Political Party/Independent in Parliament from 2005/2006 to-date

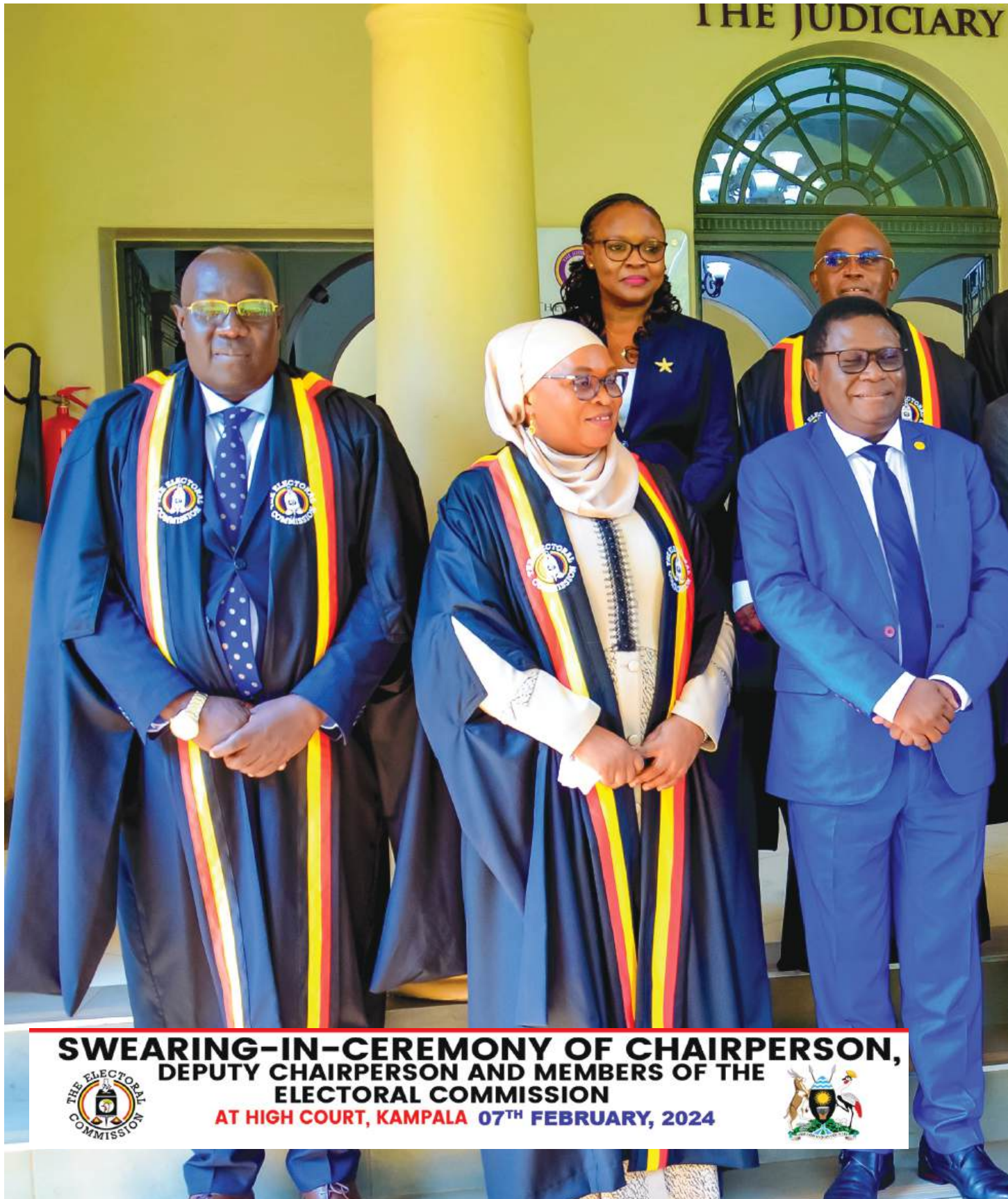
Party/Independent	2005/2006	2010/2011	2015/2016	2020/2021
NRM	212	264	293	337
UPC	9	10	6	9
FDC	37	34	36	32
DP	9	12	15	9
JEEMA	1	1	1	1
NUP	0	0	0	57
PPP	0	0	0	1
CP	1	1	0	0
ARMY	10	10	10	10
Independent	40	43	66	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>529</b>



## The Trend of Female Directly Elected Members of Parliament since 1996







**SWEARING-IN-CEREMONY OF CHAIRPERSON,  
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS OF THE  
ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**AT HIGH COURT, KAMPALA 07<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2024**









# Profiles of Members of the Electoral Commission

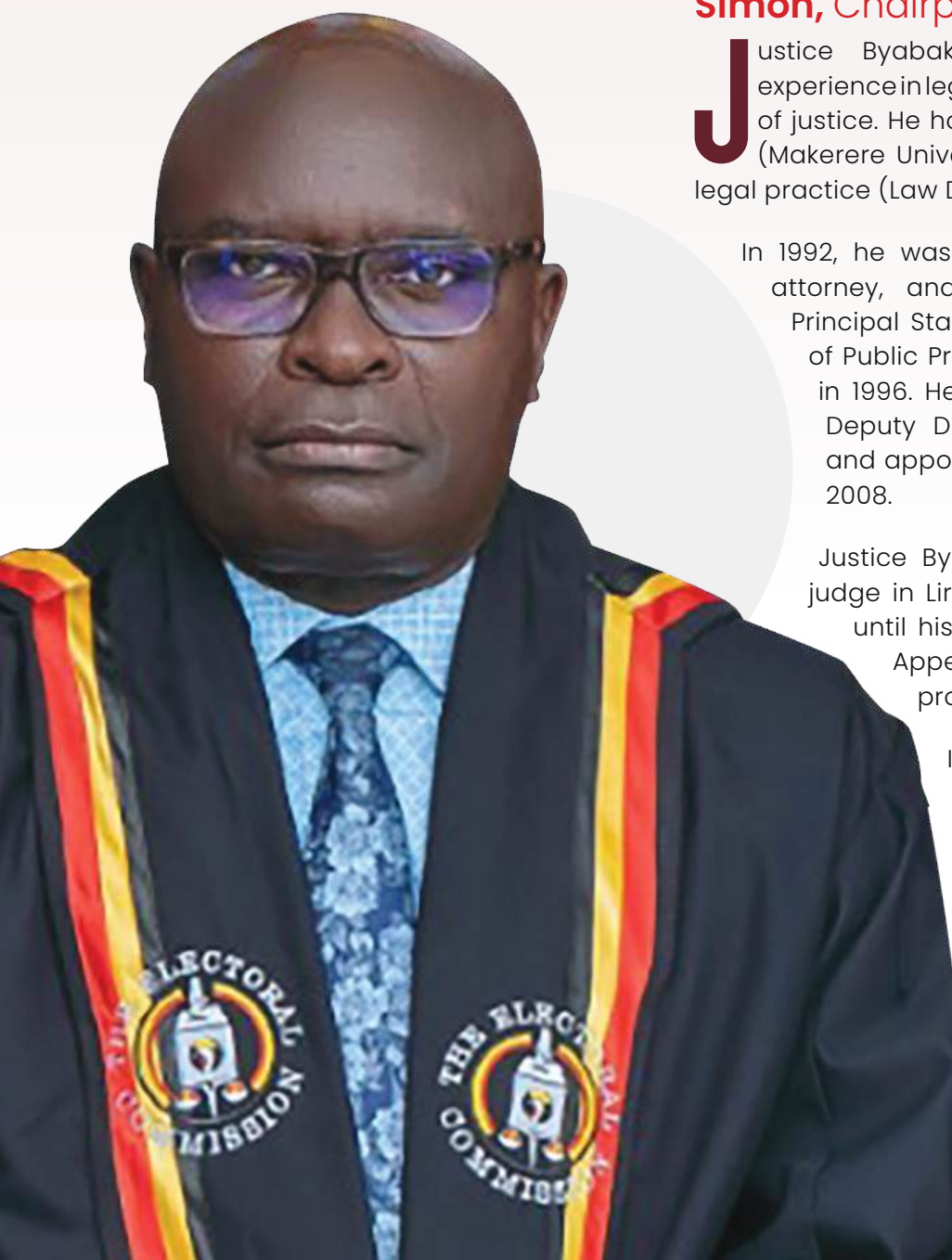
## Justice Byabakama Mugenyi Simon, Chairperson

**J**ustice Byabakama has over 35 years' experience in legal practice and administration of justice. He holds a Bachelor of Law Degree (Makerere University, 1980) and a diploma in legal practice (Law Development Center, 1980).

In 1992, he was appointed a principal state attorney, and later promoted to Senior Principal State Attorney at the Directorate of Public Prosecution (DPP) headquarters in 1996. He was elevated to the rank of Deputy Director of Public Prosecution, and appointed High Court Judge in May 2008.

Justice Byabakama served as resident judge in Lira, Soroti and Masindi districts until his appointment to the Court of Appeal/Constitutional Court on promotion in October 2015.

In November 2016, Justice Byabakama was appointed Chairperson of the Electoral Commission for a seven (7) year term. He was reappointed for a second seven Year term commencing 7th February 2024





## Commissioner Aisha M. Lubega Basajjanaku, Deputy Chairperson

Hajjat Aisha Lubega is the Deputy Chairperson of the Electoral Commission and is a teacher by profession. She obtained her B.A in Education and M.A in Education (Planning and Administration) from Makerere University, Kampala, and also holds a post graduate diploma in Public Administration obtained from the Uganda Management Institute, Kampala.

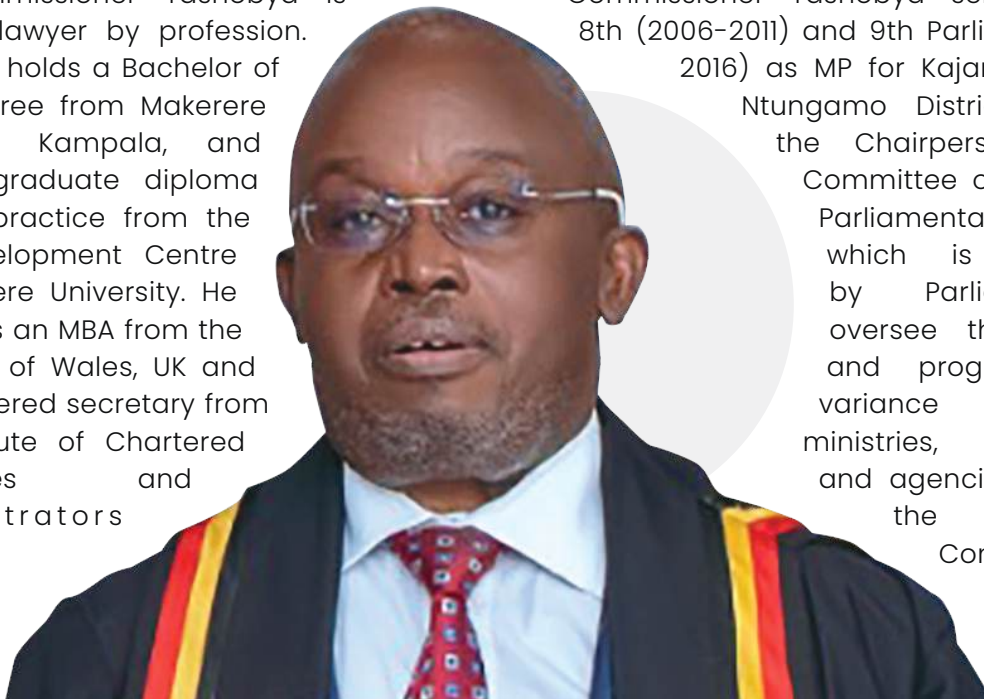
Hajjat Aisha Lubega is an experienced administrator with almost three decades in education sector. She has spent almost two decades as Head teacher of Nabisunsa Girls Secondary School, one of the best and oldest girls' school in Uganda.



## Commissioner Stephen Tashobya

Commissioner Tashobya is a lawyer by profession. He holds a Bachelor of Laws degree from Makerere University, Kampala, and a post graduate diploma in legal practice from the Law Development Centre at Makerere University. He also holds an MBA from the University of Wales, UK and is a chartered secretary from the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ICSA).

Commissioner Tashobya served in the 8th (2006–2011) and 9th Parliament (2011–2016) as MP for Kajara County in Ntungamo District. He was the Chairperson of the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, which is mandated by Parliament to oversee the activities and programmes of variance government ministries, departments and agencies, including the Electoral Commission.



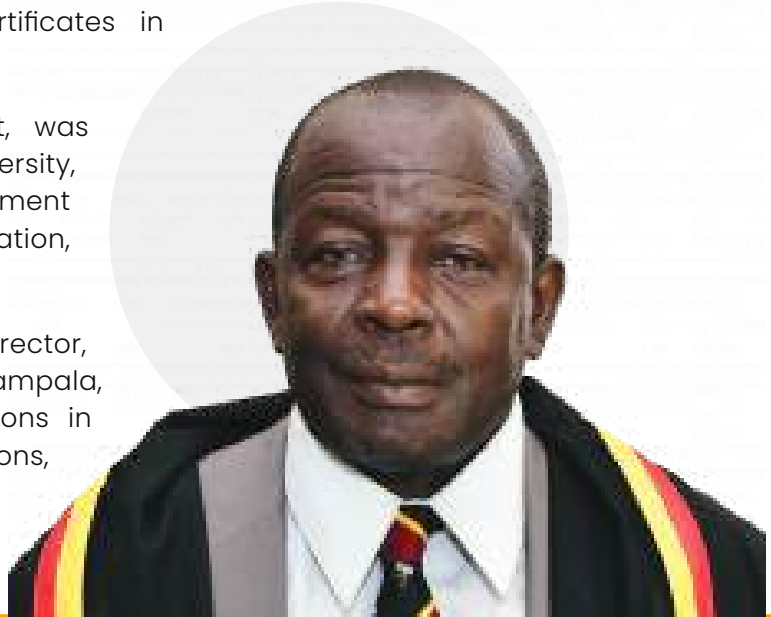


## Commissioner **Dr. Kayunga Sallie Simba**

**D**r. Simba holds a BA in Social Science Degree majoring in Political Science from Makerere University (1984); a Master's Degree in Public Administration and Management from Makerere University (1996); and a PhD in Political Science (majoring in Democratic Governance) from the Roskilde University Denmark, together with several certificates in various disciplines.

Dr. Simba, before this appointment, was a Senior Lecturer, at Makerere University, Kampala, and served as Head Department of Political Science and Public Administration, at Makerere University (2008- 2012).

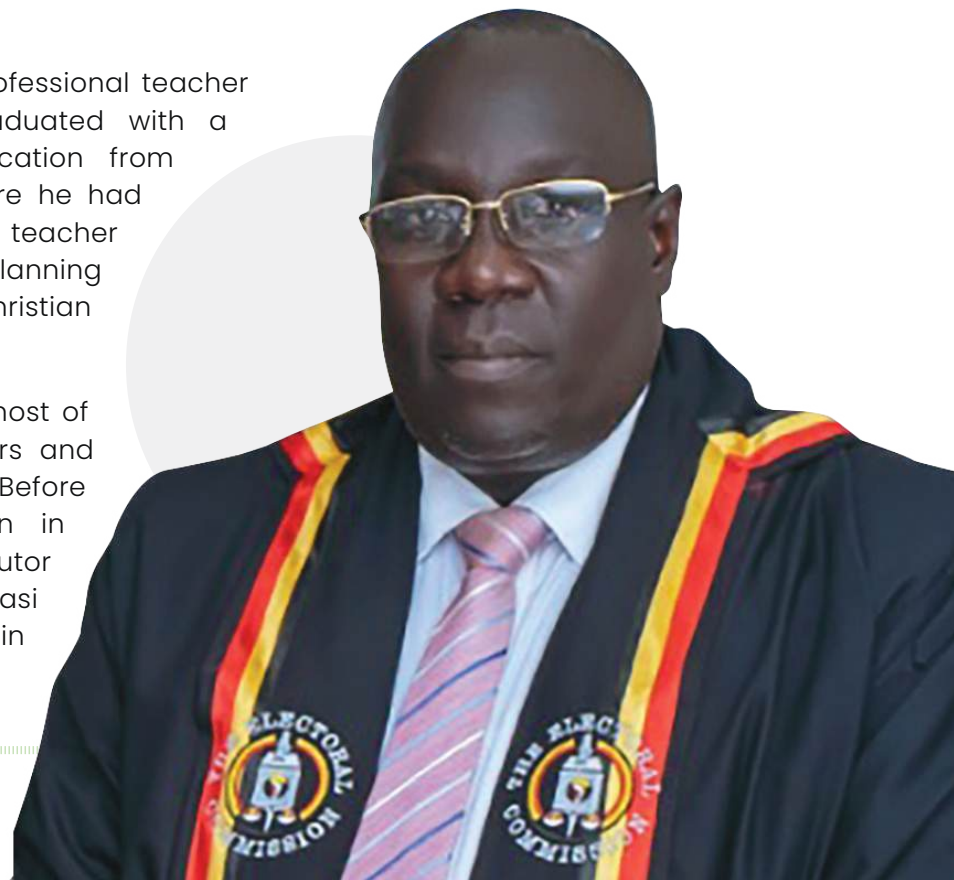
Dr. Simba also served as the Executive Director, the Centre for Basic Research, Kampala, and held various membership positions in professional bodies, councils, associations, and committees.



## Commissioner **Emorut Peter James**

**C**ommissioner Emorut is a professional teacher and administrator. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in education from Kyambogo University in 2001, where he had earlier attained a diploma in teacher education (1996). He also holds MA (Planning and Administration) from Uganda Christian University.

Commissioner Emorut has spent most of his career training school teachers and managing educational institutions. Before joining the Electoral Commission in January 2017, Emorut was a senior tutor and deputy principal at Kabwangasi Primary Teachers' Training College in Paliisa district.





## Commissioner

### **Hon. Okello Anthony**

Hon. Okello holds a Master's degree in Business Administration – Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI) (2021), having obtained a Degree (Hons) in Social Science at Makerere University in 1999, among other professional trainings.

Before this appointment, Hon. Okello was a Member of the Presidential Advisory Committee on Budget (PACOB).

Hon. Okello was a Member of Parliament of Uganda representing Kioga County (2011 –2021), and served as a Member of the Committee on National Economy from May 2011 to May 2021; Member of the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development (May 2011 – May 2019); Vice Chairperson Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development (July 2013-May 2016) and Member of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (July 2019 to May 2021).



### **Commissioner Ms. Beinamaryo Caroline Bright**

Ms. Beinamaryo holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Makerere University (2009); a Master's Degree in Psychology from Makerere University (2014); and a Diploma in Business Administration from Nkumba University (1999).

Before this appointment, Ms. Beinamaryo, worked as a businesswoman, specializing in the export of fresh commodities since 2015, and services (labour externalization).

Ms. Beinamaryo also served as the Secretary General of the Association of Recruitment Agencies in Uganda during the period 2019-2021.





The Eleven candidates nominated to contest for the 2021 Presidential Elections: Mwesigye Fred (Indep.); Kalembe Nancy (Indep), Amuriat Oboi Patrick (FDC), Tumukunde Henry Kakurugu (Indep), Yoweri Kaguta Tibuhaburwa (NRM), Robert Kyagulanyi Sentamu (NUP), Mayambala Willy (Indep), Kabuleta Kiiza Joseph (Indep), Katumba John (Indep), Mugisha Muntu Gregg (ANT), Nobert Mao (DP)

# The National Consultative Forum for Political Parties and Political Organisations

## Brief on the National Consultative Forum for Political Parties and Political Organisations (NCF)

### Background

**T**he National Consultative Forum (NCF) for Political Parties and Political Organizations is an umbrella organization with representation from all registered Political Parties and Organizations

in the country.

The Forum is established under Article 71(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and is operationalized under Section 20 of the Political Parties and Organizations Act (PPOA) of 2005, (as amended).





## Vision

The Forum envisions being an inter-disciplinary platform for excellence in consensus building and sustainable democracy; and seeks to create harmony and peaceful co-existence through mediation, dialogue, capacity building and conflict resolution amongst political and non-political players as a means of promoting and sustaining democracy in Uganda.



## Core Values

- i) Integrity and responsibility;
- ii) Accountability and Transparency;
- iii) Equity and Gender Sensitivity;
- iv) Commitment to the cause, and
- v) Sense of common purpose.





## Composition of the Forum

The Forum, in line with Section 20(2) (a-d) of the PPOA is composed of the following;

- One representative from every registered Political Party or Organization appointed by the Party or Organization;
- The Chairperson of the Electoral Commission or his or her representative;
- The Attorney General or his or her representative, as an ex-official member; and
- The Secretary of the Electoral Commission, who is the secretary (to the Forum)

## Leadership of the Forum

Section 20A of the PPOA maintains that the Chairperson of the Forum shall be nominated from members of the NCF by the Majority Party in Parliament and the Vice Chairperson shall be nominated from members of the NCF by the Majority opposition party in Parliament.

## Mandate of the Forum

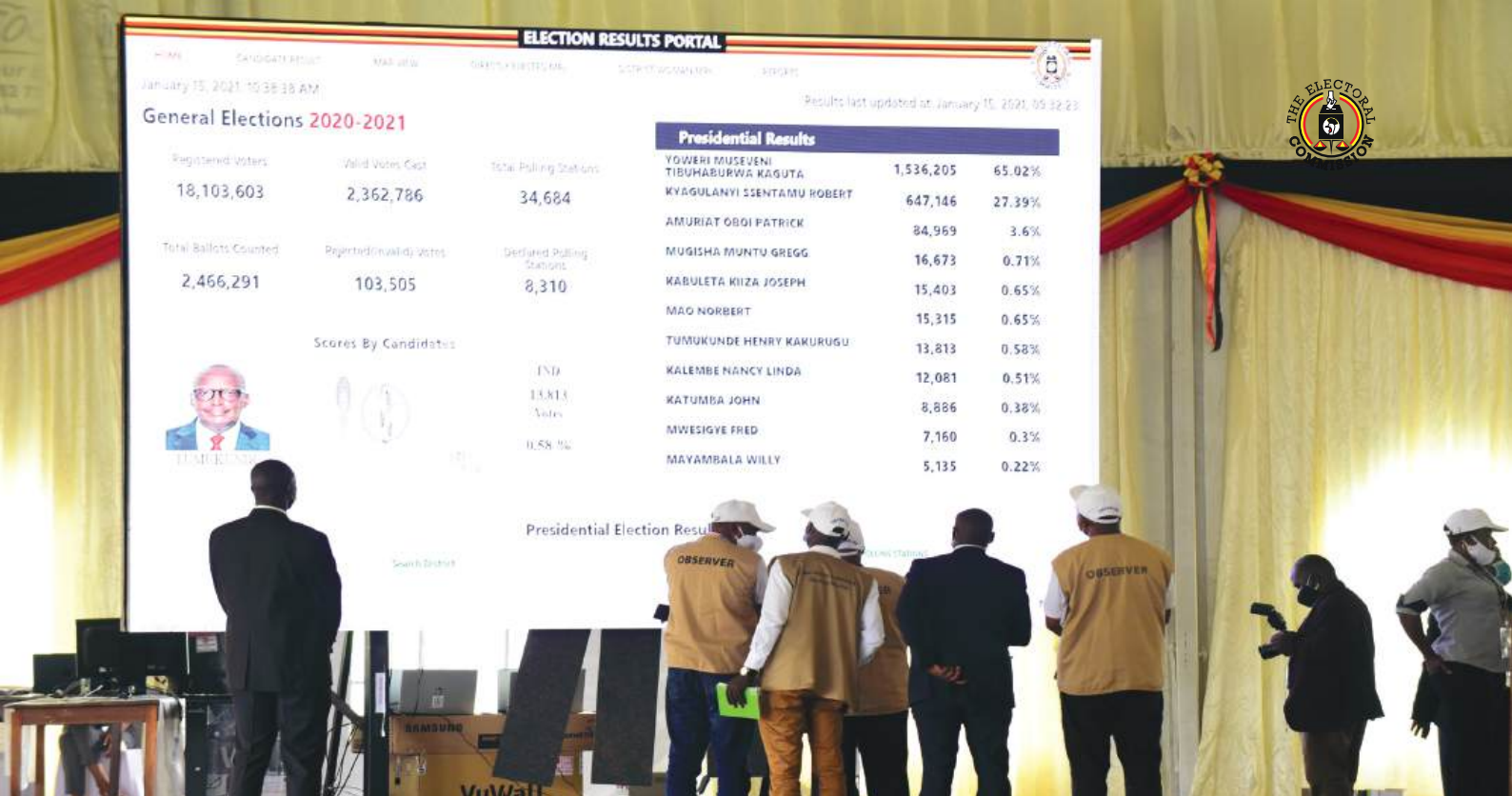
Section 20(4) of the Political Parties and Organizations Act, 2005 (as amended), mandates the Forum to execute the following functions:

- (a) Liaising with the Electoral Commission on matters about Political Parties and Organizations;
- (b) Ensuring that Political Parties and Organizations comply with the Code of Conduct prescribed in Section 19;
- (c) Communicating the complaints and grievances of Political Parties and Political Organizations to the Electoral Commission;
- (d) Representing Political Parties and Organizations in any case where the Political Parties and Organizations have to give a common position;
- (e) The resolution of disputes among Political Parties and Organizations;
- (f) Making recommendations to the Minister on any matter under this Act; and
- (g) Such other functions as may be prescribed by the Minister with the approval of Parliament.



Address: Plot 1327, Kansanga off Ggaba Road, P. O Box 22678, Kampala





# Use of **technology** in elections

**T**he increasing penetration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Uganda, has opened up additional avenues of facilitating the conduct of free, fair and credible elections. The Electoral Commission recognized that technology have the potential of delivering strategic benefits to the electoral process by enhancing the efficiency and integrity of critical electoral operations. The ICT function in the Commission is, therefore, regarded as an integral component of the electoral process.

The Supreme Court in the Presidential Election Petition No. 1 of 2016 recommended amongst other major reforms, the need to adopt technology in the election process to provide efficient, transparent, auditable and credible results. Section 12 (1a) of the Electoral Commission Act gives the Commission the discretion to adopt technology in the management of elections in the exercise of its powers. Further, the Commission is mandated to put in place an electronic display system

at every tallying centre on which the votes being tallied shall be displayed to the general public (Section 12(1b) of the Act). Section 56 (2) of the Presidential Election Act was amended and requires every Returning Officer upon completing the return to transmit the election returns and documents to the Commission electronically.

During the 2020/2021 General Elections, the Commission applied relevant, value for money technology in the management of the electoral processes; technology was used for biometric registration of voters; made available electronic channels for voters to check their voting locations; voter identification and results transmission; upgraded systems to allow the online access to registration status, and in the entire electoral process to reduce Person to Person, Object to Object and/ or Person to Object transmission of COVID-19 virus and technology was used for transmission of results to enhance transparency.



# Approved Key Roadmap Milestones To The 2025–2026 General Elections

No.	Electoral Activities Milestones	Period	FY
1.	Benchmarking on Electoral Participation by Citizens in Diaspora, Prison, PwDs, and Special Institutions	3 <sup>rd</sup> June – 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2023	2023/2024
2.	Procurement of Materials and Services for the Demarcation of EAs and Reorganisation of Polling Stations	3 <sup>rd</sup> April – 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2024	
3.	Recruitment, Training, and Deployment of Parish and Sub-county Supervisors for purposes of Reorganisation of Polling Stations	29 <sup>th</sup> May – 27 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	
4.	National Training Workshop for Staff on Commencement of Roadmap, Demarcation of EAs, and Reorganisation of Polling Stations	13 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	
5.	Regional Stakeholders Engagement Workshops on Strategic Plan, Roadmap, Demarcation of EAs, and Reorganisation of Polling Stations	22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2024	
6.	Field Demarcation of Constituencies and Electoral Areas and Reorganisation of Polling Stations	4 <sup>th</sup> – 13 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	2024/2025
7.	General Update of the Register in each Parish. In line with Art. 61 (1) (e)	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	
8.	Compilation of Youth, PwDs, Older Persons, Workers, UPDF, and Professional Bodies Voters Registers. In line with ECA Sec. 18(1).	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	
9.	Cut-off of Update of the National Voters' Register and Compilation of Youth, PwDs, Older Persons & Workers Registers. In line with ECA Sec. 19(7) & 19(8)(a).	24 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	
10.	Display of the National Voters' Register at each Polling Station. In line with ECA Sec. 24(1) & Sec. 25(1).	18 <sup>th</sup> April 2025 – 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	
11.	Display of the SIG Committees Voters Register in each Village/ KCCA/UPDF/EC/Workers Offices.	18 <sup>th</sup> – 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2025	
12.	Display of Tribunal recommendations at each Parish. In line with ECA Sec. 25(1a).	9 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	
13.	Nomination of Village SIG Committees Candidates (OP, PwD, Youth).	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	
14.	Nomination of Parish/Ward SIG Committees Candidates (OP, PwD, Youth)	26 <sup>th</sup> June 2025 – 27 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	
15.	Deadline for establishing academic papers with the EC by aspiring candidates		2025/2026
	Local Governments	3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2025	
	Presidential	1 <sup>st</sup> August 2025	
	Parliamentary	16 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	
16.	Deadline for resignation by public servants intending to contest		
	Local Governments	2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2025	
	Presidential	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2025	
	Parliamentary	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	



No.	Electoral Activities Milestones	Period	FY
17.	Nomination of Sub-county, Town, and Municipal Division SIG Committees Candidates (OP, PwD, Youth)	14 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	2025/2026
18.	Holding of Sub-county Conferences to elect Nonunionised Workers Delegates to the District	11 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	
19.	Nomination of Municipality/City Division SIG Committees Candidates (OP, PwD, Youth)	24 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	
20.	Nomination of District and City SIG Committees Candidates (OP, PwD, Youth).	11 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> August 2025	
21.	Holding of District Conferences to elect Nonunionised Workers Delegates to the Regions	7 <sup>th</sup> August 2025	
22.	Nomination, Campaigns, and Polling for National Youth Council Committee	27 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> August 2025	
23.	Nomination of Candidates (Local Governments including SIGs). In line with Section 119(1)	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> September 2025	
24.	Nomination of Candidates (Parliamentary). In line with Section 9	16 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2025	
25.	Nomination of Candidates for Presidential Elections	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2025	
26.	Nomination of candidates for SIGs Representatives to LGs	8 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2025	
27.	Polling Period for Presidential, Parliamentary, and Local Governments Councils including SIGs Representatives in line with Article 61(2)	12 <sup>th</sup> Jan – 9 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2026	



# Engaging Young People

**Y**oung people are a critical constituency of our work at the Electoral Commission, and indeed for our country, Uganda. Young people constitute a significant demographic of our country, with people in the age bracket of 18 to 35 years, making close to 60 percent of our population. To be specific, a total number of 7,392,676 youths (above 18 years and below thirty years) were registered for the 2020/2021 General Elections, which make 40.8% of the total

number of registered voters (18,103,603).

This makes young people key stakeholders in all aspects of Uganda's political, social and economic spheres. For this reason, the Commission considers it critical to sensitise them in respect to your rights, duties and responsibilities in promoting a prosperous Uganda through peaceful participation in elections, governance and public administration.



*EC Chair Addresses Students of Dr. Obote College, Boroboro, Lira*



*Deputy Chairperson Electoral Commission Hajat Aisha Lubega Addresses Students of Gayaza High School*



# Arua Regional Election Office Takes Shape

**O**n 15th December 2023, the Electoral Commission conducted the ground-breaking ceremony, to mark the first day of construction of the first Regional Office and Storage facilities for the Electoral Commission.

To effectively and efficiently fulfill our Constitutional mandate, the Electoral Commission operates offices and storage facilities at the national, regional, and district/city levels.

The Arua Regional Centre is purposely designed to house the Regional Election Office, storage facilities and the host District/City Election Administrator's Office. The Commission is confident that the facilities will provide a conducive working environment and an enhanced professional image. We also believe the facilities will give our stakeholders and the general public, a pleasing environment for engagement and satisfactory service delivery





# Political Parties

## with their contact persons and mailing addresses

The Electoral Commission, guided by the Political Parties and Organizations Act (PPOA) and through the Political Parties Unit, which is under the Legal Department, maintains the Register of all

registered Political Parties and Organizations (PPOs) in Uganda. The number of registered political parties and organisations in Uganda stands at twenty-six. A brief detail of the PPOs is shared here below:

PARTY NAME	CONTACT PERSONS	POSITION	ADDRESS
National Resistance Movement (NRM)	H.E Yoweri Kaguta Museveni	President / Chairman	Plot 10 Kyadondo Rd. Box 7778, Kampala.
	Rt. Hon. Richard Todwong	Secretary General	
People's Progressive Party (PPP)	Dr. Saddam Gayira	Chairman	Bukoto, Box 9252, Kampala. 041 505178,
	Mr. David Opi Alila	Secretary General	
Forum for Integrity in Leadership (FIL)	Mr. Emmanuel R. Tumusiime	President General	Carol House, Bombo Road, Box 7606, Kampala.
	Mr. Tugume Gideon	Secretary General	
Republican Women and Youth Party (RWYP)	Ms. Stella Nambuya	President General	Plot 588, Kikaya, Kawempe Division, Box 7590, Kampala.
	Mr. Mulumba Jackson	Secretary General	
National Peasants' Party (NPP)	Mr. Segujja Wamala,	President General/ Chairman	Plot 123, Katwe Rd, Sapoba Hse, Box 39709, Kampala.
	Mr. Wanaba Luqman	Secretary General	
Uganda Economic Party (UEP)	Mr. Wantetena James	President General	Margaret House, Zana Entebbe Road, Box 72605 Kampala.
	Ms Ropan Proscovia	Secretary General	
Forum for Democratic Change (FDC)	Eng. Patrick Oboi Amuliat	President General	Plot 9, Entebbe Rd, Najjanankumbi, Box 26928, Kampala.
	Hon. Nandala Mafabi	Secretary General	
Conservative Party (CP)	Hon. Ken Lukyamuzi,	President General	P. O. Box 5145 Kampala.
	Mr. Bukenya Kasozi	Secretary General	
National Unity Platform (NUP)	Hon. Kyagulanyi Ssentamu Robert	President General	Plot 831/1023 Bombo Road Makerere- Kavule P.O Box 122964, Kampala
	Mr. David Lewis	Secretary General	



PARTY NAME	CONTACT PERSONS	POSITION	ADDRESS
Ecological Party of Uganda (EPU)	Mr. Bbale Charles Lwanga	President General	Namugera Building, Mirim Rd Ndejje (Off Entebbe Rd) Email: apouganda@yahoo.com P. O. Box 25645, Kampala.
	Mr. Bakyayita Kentos	Secretary General	
National Convention For Democracy (NCD)	Mr. Degaulle Kawuma	President General	Plot 86, Jjunju Road P. O. Box 25351, Kampala.
	Mr. Kagimu William	Secretary General	
Liberal Democratic Transparency (LDT)	Kiggundu Abdu Nool	President General	Cape Hill Road, Munyonyo P.O. Box 33235, Kampala. 041 235414
	Mr. Mukasa Zaid	Secretary General	
Uganda People's Congress (UPC)	Hon. James Akena	President General	Uganda House, Plot 10 Kampala Rd, Box 9206, Kampala. 041 256875,
	Hon. Alfred Ebil Ebil	Secretary General	
Justice Forum (JEEMA)	Hon. Basalirwa Asuman	President General	Mengo, Rubaga Division, P.O. Box 3999, Kampala.
	Mr. Katerega Mohamed	Secretary General	
Social Democratic Party (SDP)	Hon. Michael Mabikke	President General	Opposite Rubaga Hospital, Rubaga Division, P. O. Box 21782, Kampala.
	Mr. Henry Lubowa	Secretary General	
Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM)	Dr. Edward Ssembatya	President General	Busabala Home Clinic, Box 2083, Kampala.
	Mr. Mawerere	Secretary General	
Democratic Party (DP)	Hon. Nobert Mao	President General	Plot 3, William Street, Box 7098, Kampala. Tel: 041 232704
	Dr. Hon. Siranda Geral Blacks	Secretary General	
People's United Movement (PUM)	Mr. Shadrack Ogemba	President General	P O Box 72605, Kampala.
	Mr. Ssewagudde Sam	Secretary General	
Society for Peace and Development (SPD)	Mr. Hassan Mwinyi	President General	Box 27126, Kampala. Box 795, Mbale.
	Mr. Mwinyi Hisharm	Secretary General	
People's Development Party (PDP)	Mr. Kisembeko Rogers	Ag. President General	P. O. Box 25765, KAMPALA. Makerere Hill Rd, Relief Bldg (Opp. LDC) Tel: 031 273553
	Ms. Kugonza Carol Mary	Secretary General	

PARTY NAME	CONTACT PERSONS	POSITION	ADDRESS
Congress Service Volunteers Organisation (COSEVO)	Mr. Bisase Zacharia Saddam	President General	Basesa Building next Bwaise Market, Bwaise town along Kazo-Nabweru Road, P. O. Box 22061 Kampala Tel: 0414 250921
	Mr. Mudibah Moussa	Secretary General	
Activist Party (AP)	Mr. Bampigga Stephen	President General	Plot 8/10 Uganda House Ground Floor, Nkurumah Road, P. O. Box 24780, Kampala
	Mr. Nsubuga Tonny	Secretary General	
Green Partisan Party (GPP)	Hajji Jamil Ssali Sulaiman	President General	Opposite Freedom City, Namasuba Town, Entebbe
	Mr. Sentongo Muzafalu	Secretary General	Road, P.O. Box 35596, Kampala
Uganda Federal Alliance (UFA)	Kizito Charles James	President General	P.O. Box 14196, Kampala
	Mugasira Johnbosco	Secretary General	
Revolutionary People's Party (RPP)	Mr. Kaswabuli Joshua Clinton	President General	Plot 8/30 Bombo Road P.O. Box 2640, Kampala. Tel: 0784740943, Email: <a href="mailto:partyrevolutionary@yahoo.com">partyrevolutionary@yahoo.com</a>
	Mr. Isaac Igambi	Secretary General	
Alliance for National Transformation Party	Rtd. General Mugisha Muntu	President General	Plot 87, Buganda Road, Kampala – Uganda, Email: <a href="mailto:theallianceug@gmail.com">theallianceug@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:info@theallianceug.com">info@theallianceug.com</a>
	Alice Alaso Asianut	Deputy National Coordinator Finance and Administration	



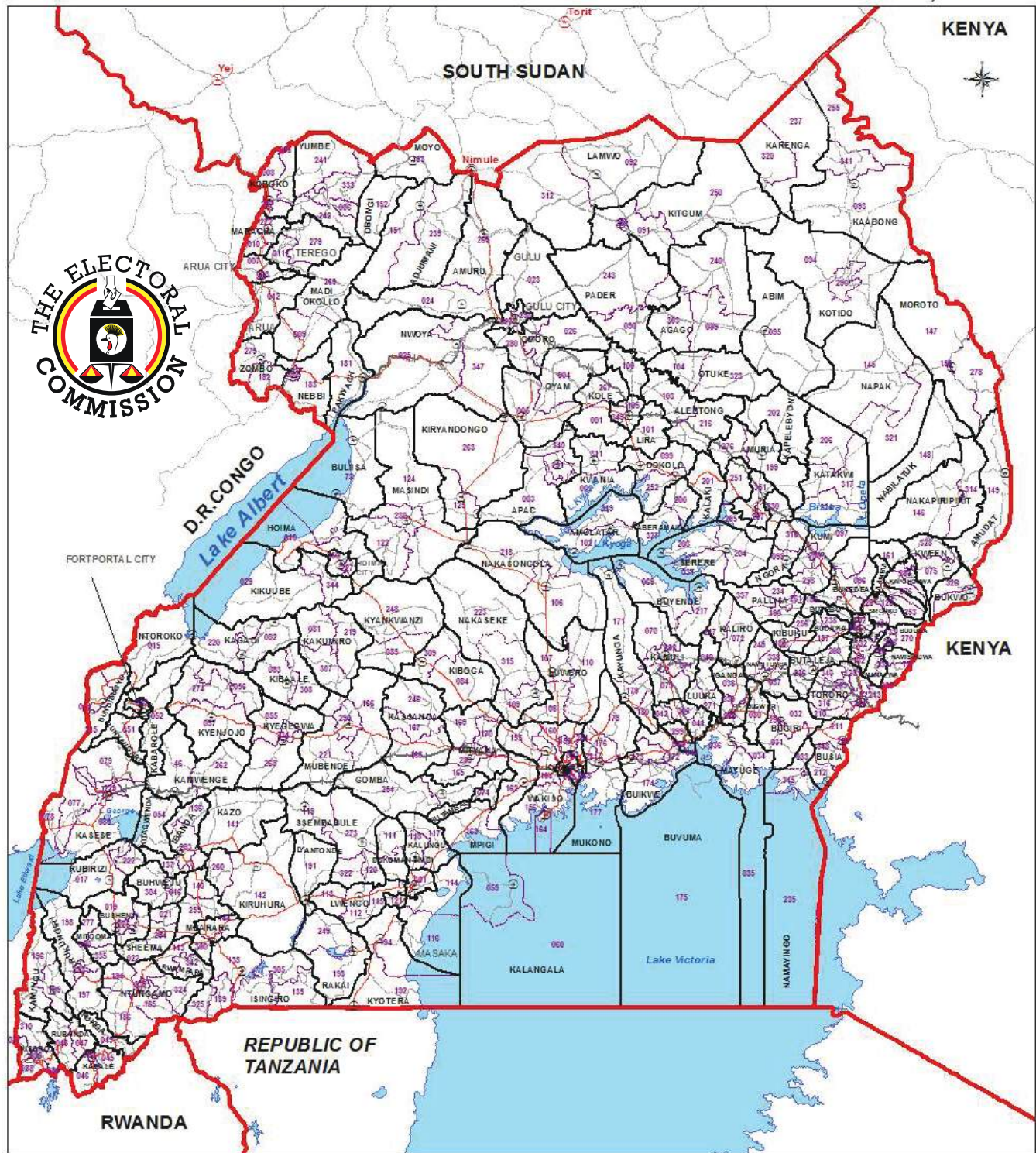
*A woman casts her vote during a Local Government Council by-election. A total number of 9,502,809 female voters were registered for the 2020/2021 General Elections, making 52.5% of the total number of registered voters (18,103,603).*







## UGANDA PRESIDENTIAL/PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES AS OF FEB, 2021



- Key towns in South Sudan
- Capital\_City
- Major towns

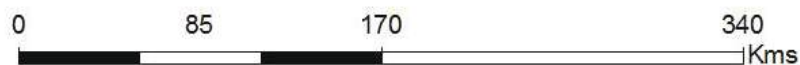
-  International boundary  
 UGANDA DISTRICTS  
 CONSTITUENCIES

- Tarmac road  
--- Murrumbidgee road  
+— Railway line

 Lakes



Scale: 1:2,400,000



Constituencies=353