



REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**BRIEF TO DIPLOMATS BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HON
SAM KUTESA ON THE UGANDA GENERAL ELECTIONS HELD IN THE
COUNTRY, 20TH JANUARY 2021**

Uganda successfully concluded the Presidential and General Parliamentary election, on Thursday 14 January 2021. The elections were held and concluded within the roadmap given by the Electoral Commission and conducted under the challenging COVID19 pandemic. Nonetheless, Ugandans came out in big numbers to vote, representing 57.22% of the registered 18,103,603 million voters. The election season in Uganda is still ongoing and shall end on 3rd February 2021.

In the face of the COVID19 pandemic, the Government ensured favorable space for a free, fair, peaceful and inclusive process that allowed candidates competing for various positions to canvass support from the electorate.

We welcome the resilience and determination of Ugandans all around the country, despite the challenges, to have come out in large numbers to freely and peacefully express their democratic choice. We congratulate them.

We welcome the support from local and international partners for the process and are grateful to the local and international Observer Teams that participated in our democratic process.

Messages of congratulations have been received. The Observers have referred to the elections as peaceful, free and fair, and the results reflecting the will of the majority of our people.

1. PROCESSES LEADING TO THE ELECTIONS

The electoral process began with the launch by the Electoral Commission of the Strategic Plan and the Roadmap on 18th December 2018 and an invitation to all stakeholders to prepare and participate in the electoral process. It was released early enough to ensure there was information to guide decisions and actions, as well as a fair transparent process. It further aimed at ensuring stakeholders made adequate and lawful preparations.

In September 2019, the re-organization of polling stations countrywide was conducted including the demarcation of Local Government Electoral Areas, to clearly define areas of representation for Directly Elected Councilors and Women Councilors for Local Government elections.

In November to December 2019, the Commission conducted a general update of the National Voters' Register in each parish throughout the country, to enable Ugandan citizens who had attained the age of 18 years and above, but not yet registered, to register as voters. The exercise also enabled registered voters who wished to transfer to new voting locations to apply and do so during this period. Registered voters also got opportunity to confirm their particulars on the National Voters' Register.

In February to March 2020, the Display of the National Voters Register was conducted to enable voters verify the correctness of their particulars on the Voters' Register. The public was also able to raise objections to the inclusion and/or removal of a voter's particulars from the Register.

In January 2021, the Electoral Commission issued Voter Location Slips to voters across the country to enable them conveniently locate their respective polling stations on polling day. The Slips were issued for a period of ten (10) days, from 3rd to 12th January 2021 at each Parish/Ward across the country.

Finally, as a measure to improve the management and conduct of elections through authentication of voter identity, the Electoral Commission acquired a biometric voter verification system (BVVS) to assist Presiding Officers confirm the identity of the voter as being the one on the Voters' Register of that particular polling station. The Biometric Voter Verification (BVV) machines were deployed at all the 34,684 (thirty-four thousand six hundred and eighty-four) polling stations. The reason for this BVV was to weed out any ghost voting/voter impersonation.

2. CAMPAIGN STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Uganda, like many countries around the world is still grappling with the consequences of COVID19. Ever since its outbreak, the Government of Uganda in its approach to the pandemic has prioritized the protection of human life. Since without the right to life it is impossible to enjoy the other rights including the right to vote.

To ensure that the country responded adequately and mitigated the impact of the COVID19 pandemic, the Government developed guidelines and standard operating procedures to align and standardize its response.

The measures included the suspension of electoral related activities as scheduled by the Electoral Commission. However, upon resumption of the

scheduled electoral activities, the Commission, in an effort to determine the manner in which the election activities, campaigns inclusive, ought to be conducted given the COVID19 pandemic, issued guidelines aligned to the Ministry of Health Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), aimed at prevention of the spread of the virus.

The guidelines were issued after engagement with relevant stakeholders, including candidates or their agents in a bid to agree on how best to drive the electoral process forward. Under the campaign guidelines;

- a) Campaigns were to be conducted between 7.00 am and 6.00 pm; and in accordance with the harmonized candidates' campaign programmes.
- b) The conduct of campaigns was to be done in accordance with the measures and guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) put in place by the Ministry of Health.
- c) Candidates would organise/hold campaign meetings, in a regulated manner, preferably outdoors, with limited attendance of a maximum of seventy (70) persons, to enable the observance of the 2-meters social distancing rule for the persons attending the meeting. However, the maximum number of persons attending campaign meetings was later revised to 200.
- d) Candidates and their agents would use non-contact means of communication to interact with the electorate. These included fliers, leaflets, brochures, posters, billboards and banners; radio and television programmes and talk shows; short messaging services (SMS), voice messaging, and digital media platforms and websites.
- e) Candidates would use the community-based Public Address Systems between 7:00am-9:00am and 4:00pm-6:00pm, as per the campaign programmes harmonized with the respective Electoral District Returning Officers.

When campaigns kicked off, the Electoral Commission noted with concern the non-compliance by some of the candidates with the said guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures. Although several engagements were made with the said candidates and/or their agents/representatives, there was no improvement as far as compliance with the SOPs concerned.

In December 2020, following a surge in transmission of the virus and deaths and following advice from Health experts; guided by Section 12 (1)(h) of the Electoral Commission Act; Section 21 (1) and (2) of the Presidential Elections Act, 2005; Section 20(1) of the Parliamentary Elections Act, 2005; and Section 172 of the Local Governments Act, campaign meetings for all elective offices in some parts of the country, were suspended.

Candidates were urged to comply with the SOPs and guidelines by restricting themselves to virtual campaigns – radios, televisions, social media, community-based Public Address Systems and other online platforms. Candidates were frequently reminded to adhere to these changes.

However, the conduct of some of the presidential candidates and their supporters from the first day of presidential nominations on 2nd-3rd November 2020 was open defiance to the measures. Their actions were characterized by the flouting of COVID19 Rules including but not limited to addressing the population on the roadside where the candidates and the population were not putting masks, defying EC campaign guidelines and programmes, defying lawful orders. This led to confrontations with the police and other security agencies. Other offenses included, inciting the public through negative propaganda, hate speech, incitement along sectarian lines, rejecting of both schedules and campaign venues earlier agreed on.

From the beginning of the campaigns these candidates talked about a 'Plan B'. Plan B was a plan to commit violent acts and an insurgency, circumventing the democratic path. To this day they have continued to stoke fear and incite violence, which was a clear and present danger to the security and stability of the country and its citizens. Would any country that upholds democratic values tolerate a Plan B? Uganda will certainly not accept this because we are committed to democracy.

It's against this background that the Government deployed the Army in Kampala and its surroundings. This was done to reassure the public that there would be order during the elections and to those who wanted to disrupt peace, the message was that please don't dare.

The temporary shutdown of the internet was a necessary step to stop the vitriolic language and incitement to violence, which was a threat to our democratic process and the security of the country and its citizens. It is noteworthy that despite efforts by internal and external actors to promote violence, the Government has been able to preserve the peace. Also, some of the social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter shut down Government and NRM party accounts leaving accounts of other political actors active. We considered this as an interference in our elections. We asked them to restore the closed Government and NRM accounts and they didn't heed. In response we shut them down to ensure equity.

We hope that all our Partners understand the gravity and severity of the statements made by some of the political leaders. The insurrection of November 2020 in Kampala and other areas of the country was unprecedented but not spontaneous. Some of these leaders aided and abetted the rioters.

3. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULTS

In line with the constitutional requirement to declare results within 48 hours after closure of polls, the results were duly announced by the Uganda Electoral Commission on Saturday 16th January 2021. The ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party was declared successful at both presidential and parliamentary level.

There were 11 candidates that contested in the presidential election. Below are the details of presidential candidates, in descending order, as per respective vote tally.

Item	Name of Candidate (Party)	No. of Votes	% Total Votes
1	YOWERI MUSEVENI (NRM)	5,851,037	58.64
2	ROBERT KYAGULANYI (NUP)	3,475,298	34.83
3	PATRICK AMURIAT OBOI (FDC)	323,536	3.24
4	MUGISHA MUNTU (ANT)	65,334	0.65
5	NORBERT MAO (DP)	55,665	0.56
6	HENRY TUMUKUNDE (IND)	55,141	0.50
7	JOSEPH KABULETA (IND)	44,300	0.44
8	NANCY KALEMBE (IND)	37,469	0.38
9	JOHN KATUMBA (IND)	35,983	0.36
10	FRED MWESIGYE (IND)	24,673	0.25
11	WILLY MAYAMBALA (IND)	14,657	0.15
12	TOTAL VALID VOTES	9,983,093	100
13	INVALID/SPOILED VOTES	381,386	
14	NOT CONCLUDED/YET TO BE DECLARED	694,229	

National Resistance Movement (NRM); National Unity Platform (NUP); Forum for Democratic Change (FDC); Alliance for National Transformation (ANT); Democratic Party (DP); Independent (IND)

4. PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION - BY PARTY

Below is the performance of political parties in the parliamentary elections

Item	Party	No. of Seats	%
1	NATIONAL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT (NRM)	316	63.5
2	NATIONAL UNITY PLATFORM (NUP)	61	12.2
3	FORUM FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (FDC)	28	5.6
4	DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP)	08	1.6
5	UGANDA PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (UPC)	10	2.0
6	JUSTICE FORUM (JEEMA)	01	0.2
7	PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP)	01	0.2
8	INDEPENDENTS	73	14.7

9	TOTAL SEATS	498	100
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Note: Results based on 498 constituencies

There are still outstanding MP elections not concluded and for special interest groups.

5. POLLING STATIONS

Item	Status	Number	%
1	DECLARED	33,461	96
2	NOT CONCLUDED/YET TO BE DECLARED*	1,223	4
3	TOTAL	34,684	100

*694,229 votes

Election results were declared based on 96% of the vote. The not concluded/yet to be declared votes would not significantly change the final outcome.

Elections of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) Representatives to Parliament and Workers Representatives to Parliament were held on 17th and 18th January 2021.

6. UPCOMING ELECTIONS

The remaining upcoming elections include the following;

- a) District Local Government Councils - 20 Jan 2021
- b) Female Youths Representative to Parliament (1) - 21st -22nd Jan 2021
- c) Older Persons Representatives (5) - 17-18 Jan 2021
- d) Municipality/City Division Chairpersons and Councilors - 25 Jan 2021
- e) Councilors for Older Persons to District Local Government Councils - 27 Jan 2021
- f) Councilors for Persons With Disabilities District Local Government Councils - 27 Jan 2021
- g) Councilors for Youths to District Local Government Councils - 27 Jan 2021
- h) Workers Representatives to District Local Government Councils - 27 Jan 2021
- i) UPDF Representatives to Parliament (10) - 29 Jan 2021
- j) Regional Youths Representatives to Parliament (4) - 31 Jan- 1 February 2021
- k) Sub County/Town/Municipal Division Chairpersons and Councilors - 3 Feb 2021

The Government is committed to ensuring domestic tranquility, the security and welfare of its citizens. The country has continued to enjoy peace without any major incidents of election violence, malpractice or common criminality. We would like to reassure the international community that this tranquility will continue to prevail beyond the immediate aftermath of the elections, into the future. We underline that Uganda has sufficient capacity to deal with its affairs and rejects meddling in its internal affairs.

Unfortunately, some of the political leaders, who lost in the election, have continued to make inflammatory statements aimed at inciting people to violence. Government continues to urge them to desist from making such statements and, if they feel aggrieved, to seek peaceful and lawful means of redress.

As we go into the next chapter in our democratic journey, many lessons have been learnt and the Government will continue to sensitize the people to understand and appreciate that in enjoying their rights, every person is under obligation to act in accordance with the law.

Finally, the Government appreciates the engagement with you because we are all Partners. In this regard, we look forward to continued engagement and support in the Government's efforts to promote democracy and the well-being of Ugandans.

Ugandans have spoken and the country must move on.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, KAMPALA
20TH JANUARY 2021