

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

Uganda Monthly Briefing September 2018

Uganda Summary 15 September 2018

Unidentified assassins kill former assistant superintendent of police, Muhammad Kirumira, intensifying concern over security and political stability in Uganda. Independent legislator Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu, aka Bobi Wine, calls on the United States (US) government to cease providing military aid to Uganda. The European Union (EU) parliament issues a statement warning the Ugandan government to desist from committing human rights violations. State-owned Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC) signs a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC) for exploring and developing new oil fields that will expand Uganda's oil production capacity beyond the gazetted 6.5 billion barrels.

Former police chief Kirumira assassinated

Unidentified assassins shot and killed prominent former assistant superintendent of police and commander for **Buyende** district, **Muhammad Kirumira**, on 8 September.¹ The assassination revived local and international concerns about political stability and the personal safety of public officials in **Uganda**, following similar politically motivated killings in the recent past (see *ARC Briefing Uganda April, June 2018*).² The assassins rode a motorcycle allegedly belonging to the **Uganda Police Force (UPF)** and shot Kirumira, who was in his car with a friend near his home in **Bulenga (Wakiso District)**.³ Kirumira was a staunch critic of the UPF, particularly its top leadership, for corrupt practices.⁴ He frequently criticised the former commissioner of police, General **Kale Kayihura**, accusing him of incorporating criminals in the police force through the **Crime Preventers** vigilante squads.⁵ Kirumira reportedly told close associates he was being followed and received frequent death threats before his assassination.⁶ He also reportedly received emissaries from unnamed senior police officials asking him to desist from revealing details of institutionalised corruption within the police force.⁷

Several prominent figures have been assassinated in recent years. **Arua** municipality member of parliament (MP) **Ibrahim Abiriga** was killed in a similar way to Kirumira in June.⁸ Other politically motivated killings include those of the former assistant inspector of police, **Andrew Kaweesi**, in March 2017, and former senior principal state attorney, **Joan Kagezi**, in March 2015.⁹

Preliminary investigations reportedly point to the assassins as being from the UPF's **Flying**

¹ Daily Monitor, 8 Sept 2018.

² Daily Monitor, 8 Sept 2018.

³ Daily Monitor, 8 Sept 2018.

⁴ Daily Monitor, 8 Sept 2018.

⁵ Daily Monitor, 8 Sept 2018.

⁶ New Vision, 15 Sept 2018.

⁷ New Vision, 15 Sept 2018.

⁸ Daily Monitor, 8 Sept 2018.

⁹ New Vision, 15 Sept 2018.

Squad Unit (FSU).¹⁰ However, several commentators have accused former UPF commander General Kayihura of being responsible for Kirumira's death, since the assassination followed Kayihura's release from military detention on bail on 28 August.¹¹ Kayihura is currently in hospital in **Nairobi (Kenya)**, where he was admitted on 5 September.¹² Kayihura reportedly fears for his life because of growing public suspicion that he is behind Kirumira's death and those of other prominent political figures.¹³ Kayihura has not publicly responded to the accusations.¹⁴

The assassination of public figures in Uganda is partly a result of internecine struggles within the ruling regime, which is mainly drawn from the security services.¹⁵ Victims of political assassinations are often incorruptible officials, whose activities may threaten the interests of other groups and individuals within the governing coalition.¹⁶ Corruption and criminality within Uganda's police services increased when Kayihura created the Crime Preventers unit, which was purportedly aimed at improving community policing.¹⁷ However, the unit mainly functioned to attack opposition activists, particularly during elections.¹⁸ The irregular recruitment process, which did not entail sufficient vetting of applicants, led to criminals infiltrating police, which President **Yoweri Museveni** (1986-present) has often described in televised speeches as "*weevils*".¹⁹

Political assassinations are likely to have a negative effect on Uganda's economy, since they indicate increasing insecurity and potential for further instability.²⁰ The assassinations also expose the limits of President Museveni's power and control, which may diminish the level of confidence that prospective investors have in the government.²¹

MP Bobi Wine urges US to end military aid to Uganda...

Popular musician and independent MP for **Kyadondo East, Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu**, also known as **Bobi Wine**, asked the **United States (US)** government on 8 September to cease providing military assistance to President Museveni's government.²² Although the United States government is unlikely to accept Kyagulanyi's request, it may review and whittle down its collaboration with Uganda's military, which ranges from training to the provision of military equipment to maintain peace and stability within the conflict-prone **Great Lakes** region.²³ Kyagulanyi accuses Museveni's government of using the military resources to stifle dissent in Uganda.²⁴ Kyagulanyi is currently in the US, where he has been receiving medical attention since arriving on 1 September.²⁵

Kyagulanyi's detention in August attracted global condemnation (see *ARC Briefing Uganda*

¹⁰ New Vision, 15 Sept 2018.

¹¹ The East African, 28 Aug 2018.

¹² The East African, 28 Aug 2018.

¹³ Chimp Reports, 12 Sept 2018.

¹⁴ Chimp Reports, 12 Sept 2018.

¹⁵ Source, analyst, London

¹⁶ Source, analyst, London

¹⁷ Source, analyst, London

¹⁸ Source, analyst, London

¹⁹ Source, analyst, London

²⁰ Source, analyst, London

²¹ Source, analyst, London

²² Al Jazeera, 11 Sept 2018..

²³ Al Jazeera, 11 Sept 2018..

²⁴ Al Jazeera, 11 Sept 2018..

²⁵ Al Jazeera, 11 Sept 2018..

August 2018). The **Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF)** arrested and detained Kyagulanyi on 13 August, and charged him with treason following accusations that he had participated in the stoning of President Museveni's motorcade in the northern Uganda town of **Arua** on the eve of a by-election for the Arua municipality seat.²⁶ In an interview with **Al Jazeera**, Kyagulanyi said,

*"Police shot my driver dead, thinking they'd shot me... it is important, especially [for] the US taxpayers, to know that much of the military aid that we get is actually used to oppress and brutalise the citizens of Uganda... The gun that killed my driver, that could have probably killed me, is an **American** gun."²⁷*

In a televised speech on 9 September, President Museveni responded with a warning that his government would not tolerate any foreign interference in Uganda's domestic politics:²⁸

"Interfering with the internal affairs of other countries is morally and practically wrong. Morally wrong, because the question is what kind of intelligence do you have to think that you can understand the problem in my house better than we the occupants. If we have a problem in our house, we, the occupants will solve it. It is also practically wrong because outsiders cannot have enough information about a foreign situation. They are most likely going to make mistakes. If there is any problem in Uganda, I will surely handle it better than the outsider."²⁹

Museveni claimed that several foreign-funded non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been secretly channeling funds and other resources to opposition activists to destabilise Uganda.³⁰ The government has since deported two expatriate workers, **Anne Whitehead**, a **Canadian** communications consultant, and US citizen **Jackie Wolfson**, who coordinated the **Shule Foundation**, a children's charity organisation, accusing them of providing support to the opposition.³¹

A **Toronto** (Canada)-based analyst denied that Kyagulanyi's **People Power** movement has a foreign agenda:

*"People Power is an indigenous movement with no foreign connections. Bobi Wine is just trying to create foreign ties [now] ... The US and **United Kingdom (UK)** disliked Bobi Wine for his views on sexual minorities before he became a politician; the UK even denied him a visa one time. [The deported expatriate professionals] were not necessarily in Uganda to foment discord, but worked with Bobi Wine well before he became a politician. [The deportation] is just paranoia from state agents. The state ... has been trying to find a connection between Bobi Wine and any foreign agents, but they have come up with nothing."³²*

The People Power movement is fast gaining popularity in Uganda, as a coherent voice calling for political change from President Museveni's 32-year old regime.³³ It has resonated mostly with people below the age of 35, who constitute over half of Uganda's population.³⁴ Bobi

²⁶ Al Jazeera, 11 Sept 2018..

²⁷ Uganda legislator, Robert Kyagulanyi in interview with Al Jazeera, 11 Sept 2018.

²⁸ Reuters, 9 Sept 2018.

²⁹ President Museveni in televised address, 9 Sept 2018.

³⁰ Reuters, 9 Sept 2018.

³¹ Reuters, 9 Sept 2018.

³² Source, analyst, Toronto

³³ Source, analyst, London

³⁴ Source, analyst, London

Wine's political appeal also rests on his popularity as a musician. His personal journey entailed overcoming poverty, a challenge familiar to many Ugandans.³⁵

The US is unlikely to cease military cooperation with President Museveni.³⁶ The US regards Museveni as a crucial ally in fighting terrorism and armed insurgencies in the region, and provides military training and equipment on this basis.³⁷

... as EU parliament warns Uganda about human rights record

The **European Union (EU)** parliament issued a warning on 13 September to Uganda's government about the state of human rights in the country.³⁸ The arrest and torture of several legislators after the by-election in Arua put the human rights situation in Uganda under international scrutiny and tarnished its international image.³⁹ In a 14-point resolution, the EU parliament asked Uganda's presidency to uphold the independence of parliament and cease persecuting legislators whom the army and police arrested on trumped-up charges:

*"The EU Parliament expresses its deep concern at the arrest of opposition parliamentarians in connection with the Arua by-election; stresses that it is vital for Ugandan democracy that the President and government of Uganda respect the independence of the country's Parliament as an institution and the independence of the mandate of its members, and ensure that all Members of Parliament can freely pursue their elected mandates, and calls on the Ugandan authorities to drop what appear to be trumped-up charges against Bobi Wine and to stop the crackdown against Opposition politicians and supporters... We note with concern that journalists covering the demonstrations and the riots that broke out have been beaten along with participants, and that two journalists were arrested and call on the Ugandan authorities to create an environment where journalists can carry out, without hindrance, their work of informing about political developments in the country."*⁴⁰

The Ugandan government strongly criticised the EU parliament's statement, describing it as "undue foreign interference" in its internal affairs and an approval of disorderly conduct by the opposition in Uganda.⁴¹ The government also accused unnamed lobbyists in **Washington DC (US)** and **London (UK)**, who are opposed to the government's stance on sexual orientation of being behind the EU resolution and arguments that opposition lawmakers raised in parliament against the arrest and torture of other legislators:

"Uganda takes objection to the tacit approval of undisciplined behaviour by EU and some of its institutions of some of the politicians in the country... We also object to the condescending tone contained in the language of this resolution. The matters referred to in this resolution such as the threat to the security of the President while in Arua on August 15, the 33 people arrested in connection with this incident including the MPs and the regrettable loss of life of some of the people, are all under investigation by credible

³⁵ Source, analyst, London

³⁶ Source, analyst, London

³⁷ Source, analyst, London

³⁸ Daily Monitor, 16 Sept 2018.

³⁹ Daily Monitor, 16 Sept 2018.

⁴⁰ Excerpts from the EU resolution, quoted in Daily Monitor, 16 Sept 2018.

⁴¹ Chimp Reports, 16 Sept 2018.

and competent arms of the state and overseen by an independent judicial system in Uganda.”⁴²

The government also criticised the use of threats of cutting budgetary support by the EU as a manipulative strategy:

“To formally and unashamedly warn the Ugandan people and their government that budget support funds given to the country for development should be used as leverage to monitor whether ‘opposition MPs are being hindered’, is to clearly reduce the relationship with Uganda, that [include critical areas such as] security, trade and cultural exchange to simply [be defined, and based on] money.”⁴³

The EU is one of Uganda’s leading trade and human development partners, and this accounts for its interest in Uganda’s domestic affairs.⁴⁴ It is also the second leading destination for Uganda’s exports, which totaled \$508m in the 2016/17 financial year.⁴⁵ It also provides budgetary support to the Ugandan government.⁴⁶ It announced a \$39.7m humanitarian aid programme for Uganda and Kenya in June, of which \$28m would go towards Uganda’s refugee protection initiatives.⁴⁷ The **European Development Fund**, which administers the EU’s humanitarian aid to Uganda, will provide \$675m in the 2014-2020 funding period.⁴⁸ Although the EU is unlikely to withdraw aid from Uganda, it may reduce the amount of funding, or institute several sanctions to express its displeasure with the government’s human rights abuses.⁴⁹

Government signs joint oil exploration deal with CNOOC

The state-owned **Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC)** signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the **China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC)** on 5 September to jointly explore and develop new oil fields in the **Albertine Graben** region.⁵⁰ The deal will substantially contribute to the expansion of Uganda’s oil industry, and demonstrates deepening relations between the **Chinese** and Ugandan governments.⁵¹ UNOC chief executive officer **Josephine Wapakhabulo** signed the deal in **Beijing** (China) with CNOOC president **Fang Zhi** during the **China-Africa Forum on Cooperation** on 3-4 September.⁵² The strategic partnership with CNOOC will enable UNOC to begin exploration in any identified potential oilfields speedily and build capacity in both exploration and production.⁵³ CNOOC already operates oil wells in Uganda and jointly operates oilfields with **France-based Total E&P** and **UK-based Tullow Oil Plc.**⁵⁴

The agreement comes as the energy and mineral development ministry prepares to open

⁴² Excerpts from the government of Uganda’s statement in response to the EU resolution, quoted in Chimp Reports, 16 Sept 2018.

⁴³ Excerpts from the government of Uganda’s statement in response to the EU resolution, quoted in Chimp Reports, 16 Sept 2018.

⁴⁴ Chimp Reports, 16 Sept 2018.

⁴⁵ Chimp Reports, 16 Sept 2018.

⁴⁶ Chimp Reports, 16 Sept 2018.

⁴⁷ ReliefWeb, 21 Jun 2018.

⁴⁸ European Union website, 15 Sept 2018.

⁴⁹ Source, analyst, London

⁵⁰ Daily Monitor, 6 Sept 2018.

⁵¹ Daily Monitor, 6 Sept 2018.

⁵² Daily Monitor, 6 Sept 2018.

⁵³ Daily Monitor, 6 Sept 2018.

⁵⁴ Reuters, 6 Sept 2018.

licensing rounds for three exploration blocks, **Taitai** and **Karuka** in **Buliisa** district, **Mvule** in **Yumbe/Moyo** districts, and **Ngaji** in **Kanungu** and **Rukungiri** districts, reportedly in December.⁵⁵ Uganda has an estimated 6.5 billion barrels of oil reserves, which were confirmed in 2006.⁵⁶ The energy and mineral production ministry expects to begin production and export of crude oil from its oil wells currently under development in 2021.⁵⁷ Uganda will export its oil, which is waxy, though a heated pipeline from the oilfields in **Hoima**, to **Tanzania's** port of **Tanga**.⁵⁸

UNOC is statutorily mandated to manage the Ugandan government's commercial interests in the oil sector.⁵⁹ It oversees the government's 15% shareholding in the nine production licences that CNOOC, Total, and Tullow currently hold.⁶⁰ It also investigates and proposes new upstream, midstream and downstream prospects within Uganda and elsewhere in the world.⁶¹ However, the three private oil companies are responsible for the capital expenditure for developing the oil fields, at approximately \$6.7 billion.⁶² The companies also hold UNOC's stake, which it will transfer to the state-owned company once production begins.⁶³

Uganda reportedly holds more oil potential than the gazetted 6.5 billion barrels thanks to several unexplored areas in the Albertine Graben and in the country's central region.⁶⁴ This agreement will increased UNOC's capacity to develop new oilfields independently of oil majors, on whom it has depended for capital and technical expertise in the medium to long term.⁶⁵

⁵⁵ Daily Monitor, 6 Sept 2018.

⁵⁶ Reuters, 6 Sept 2018.

⁵⁷ Reuters, 6 Sept 2018.

⁵⁸ Reuters, 6 Sept 2018.

⁵⁹ Daily Monitor, 6 Sept 2018.

⁶⁰ Daily Monitor, 6 Sept 2018.

⁶¹ Daily Monitor, 6 Sept 2018.

⁶² Daily Monitor, 6 Sept 2018.

⁶³ Daily Monitor, 6 Sept 2018.

⁶⁴ Source, analyst, London.

⁶⁵ Source, analyst, London.

Planner

19 Sept 2018. **Kampala (Uganda)** Uganda International Oil and Gas Summit;
 21 Sept 2018. **Kampala (Uganda)** Digital and Financial Expo;
 27 Sept 2018. **Kampala (Uganda)** Uganda Food Expo;
 5 Oct 2018 **Kampala (Uganda) Bank of Uganda** Monetary Policy Committee meeting
 5 Oct 2018. **Kampala (Uganda)** Uganda International Trade Fair;
 14 Dec 2018 **Kampala (Uganda) Bank of Uganda** Monetary Policy Committee meeting
 2023. **(Uganda)** Uganda general election;

Chronology

17 Sept 2018. **Kampala (Uganda)** *Reuters*. Government spokesman **Ofwono Opondo** issues a statement criticising the **European Union (EU)** for meddling in its internal affairs;
 17 Sept 2018. **Kampala (Uganda)** *Reuters*. **Uganda**-based investment bank, **Renaissance Capital**, announces that **India**-based pharmaceutical company **Cipla Quality Chemicals Ltd's** initial public offering (IPO) in Kampala raised \$43.8m;
 16 Sept 2018. **Kampala (Uganda)** *ChimpReports*. President **Yoweri Museveni** accuses an unnamed country, reportedly **Rwanda**, of fuelling insecurity in Uganda;
 16 Sept 2018. **Kampala (Uganda)** *ChimpReports*. **Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU)** director for exploration, **Dozith Abeinomugisha**, says Uganda-based companies earned \$873m from the petroleum sector in the last nine years;
 14 Sept 2018 **Brussels (Belgium)** *Africa News*. The **European Union (EU)** parliament passes a resolution on Uganda's human rights situation, warning the government to cease harassing opposition legislators and journalists;
 10 Sept 2018. **Kampala (Uganda)** *The Standard*. Police announce that unidentified assassins fatally shot former assistant superintendent of police **Muhammad Kirumira** on 8 September;
 10 Sept 2018. **Kampala (Uganda)** *ChimpReports*. Government spokesperson **Ofwono Opondo** announces that the government has deported **Canadian** national, **Anne Whitehead** and **United States** national **Jackie Wolfson** for working with independent legislator **Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu**, aka **Bobi Wine**, and his **People Power** movement;
 9 Sept 2018. **Kampala (Uganda)** *Africa News*. The government withdraws a constitutional amendment seeking to enable it to acquire land compulsorily for public infrastructure projects;
 1 Sept 2018 Entebbe **(Uganda)** *Reuters*. **Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu**, aka **Bobi Wine**, leaves **Uganda** for **Washington DC** to receive medical treatment;
 27 Aug 2018. **Gulu (Uganda)** *CNN*. The **Gulu High Court** frees independent legislator **Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu** on bail after the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) arrested him on 15 August;

About Africa Risk Consulting:

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