

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING**Uganda Monthly Briefing January 2022****Uganda Summary 10 January 2022**

The government is proposing a change in the constitution to abolish election of Uganda's president through universal adult suffrage, a move that many in opposition say aims to favour President Yoweri Museveni's (1986-present) son, Lt. Gen. Muhoozi Kaneirugaba, in the 2026 presidential elections. Uganda is fully reopening its economy despite government confirmation that a third wave of Covid-19 infections has hit the country. Kenya has agreed to lift barriers that hindered the sale of poultry products from Uganda, a move that will also see Uganda delay its proposed retaliation ban on Kenya's agricultural produce.

Critics pan plans to abolish election of president through universal adult suffrage

The government is proposing a change in the constitution to abolish election of **Uganda's** president through universal adult suffrage in favour of a parliamentary system where the party with the largest number of members of parliament forms the government.¹ Many in opposition see the move as a strategy to favour President **Yoweri Kaguta Museveni's** (1986-present) son, Lt. Gen. **Muhoozi Kaneirugaba**, in the 2026 presidential elections.² Museveni will be 83 by the time the next elections are held in 2026. Insiders in his ruling **National Resistance Movement** party believe he is grooming his son to succeed him in 2026.³

Local media reported on 6 January that deputy attorney general **Jackson Kafuuzi** is spearheading the potential constitutional amendment under the **Constitutional Review Commission**. Kampala-based radio station **Central Broadcasting Service (CBS)** quoted Kafuuzi saying that the government is mobilising money to fund the commission's nationwide tours:

*"Last time we amended the age limit, then the other time they removed term limits, all these followed the process of consultation and majority choice. There is nothing wrong with it if that is what the majority wants."*⁴

A group of ruling NRM party candidates who lost in last year's parliamentary elections have backed the proposal to have parliament elect the country's president.⁵ Describing themselves as **Transformer Cadres Association Uganda**, the group is quoted by the local media saying they have prepared several proposals that they want to present to Museveni, the NRM's national chairman, for consideration. The group claims such a move would help to reduce the cost of holding elections every five years.⁶ Group chairperson **Felix Adupa** told local media in Kampala:

*"We have a proposal to amend electoral laws and other legislation to pave way for a hybrid parliamentary system where the head of government who also doubles as the head of state is elected by parliament and local government councils."*⁷

The proposal has attracted criticism from members of the public and supporters of opposition parties, who view it as an attempt by the NRM to make it easy for Kaneirugaba to replace his

¹ Uganda analyst, 7 Jan 2022

² Uganda analyst, 7 Jan 2022

³ Uganda analyst, 7 Jan 2022

⁴ CBS radio station, 6 Jan 2022

⁵ Nile Post, 6 Jan 2022

⁶ Nile Post, 6 Jan 2022

⁷ Nile Post, 6 Jan 2022

father after the expiry of his current term in 2026. Museveni's main challenger in the January 2021 elections, **National Unity Platform (NUP)** leader **Robert Kyagulanyi** (also known as **Bobi Wine**) says Museveni fears Kainerugaba might be defeated if voting is through universal adult suffrage:

*"Museveni having been roundly defeated in the last election, now wants to take away the right of the people of Uganda to elect their president. Of course, he plans to do this in order to impose his son on us, well knowing that he can't even get 5 percent of a popular vote."*⁸

The leader of opposition in Parliament, **Mathias Mpuuga**, told **Africa Risk Consulting (ARC)** that the proposal to switch from a presidential to parliamentary system of governance can only be feasible if the government commits to first addressing the "evils" that have beset the electoral process in Uganda.⁹ Mpuuga says government should first focus on reviewing the composition of the electoral commission leadership, restructuring constituencies and blocking the involvement of military in the elections.¹⁰

Kampala-based political analyst **Salamanda Tebajanga** told ARC that changing the political system according to the constitution requires a referendum for people to decide the kind of political system under which they wish to be governed.¹¹ Tebajanga says President Museveni is capitalising on the loopholes that exist in the constitution to create amendments that can entrench his rule. Tebajanga notes the scheme to amend the constitution is likely to succeed in parliament, where the ruling NRM occupies 218 of the 529 members of parliament, with the possible support of 51 NRM-leaning independents.¹²

Economy reopens despite third wave of Covid-19

Uganda is fully reopening its economy despite government reports that the third wave of Covid-19 infections has hit the country.¹³ President Museveni announced on 31 December that the economy would reopen in a staggered fashion from 1 January. Passenger service vehicles are allowed to operate at full capacity, as long as travellers and operators 18 years of age and older are fully vaccinated.¹⁴ The ban on entertainment events and bars, closed since March 2020, is also lifted.¹⁵ Museveni noted:

"Performing arts, cinemas, sports events, bars and events will be open two weeks after the reopening of schools on January 10, 2022, with Standard Operating Procedures as directed by the Ministry of Health."

Operators of many bars and entertainment centres around Kampala have been renovating their businesses ahead of reopening, expected on 31 January.¹⁶ However, health officials have expressed concern that a third wave of Covid-19 has hit the country hard.¹⁷ In Covid-19 tests performed on 7 January, 984 people tested positive. Cumulative positive tests for Covid-19 in Uganda's population of 47 million now total 153,762, with 3,339 Covid-19-related deaths.¹⁸ The health ministry has administered roughly 12 million doses of Covid vaccines, with 1,408,222 or 3.18% of the population fully vaccinated against Covid-19.¹⁹

⁸ Nile Post, 6 Jan 2021

⁹ Uganda analyst, 7 Jan 2022

¹⁰ Uganda analyst, 7 Jan 2022

¹¹ Uganda analyst, 7 Jan 2022

¹² Uganda analyst, 7 Jan 2022

¹³ Uganda analyst, 8 Jan 2022

¹⁴ East African, 1 Jan 2022

¹⁵ East African, 1 Jan 2022

¹⁶ Uganda analyst, 8 Jan 2022

¹⁷ Ministry of Health, 8 Jan 2022

¹⁸ Ministry of Health, 8 Jan 2022

¹⁹ Johns Hopkins University of Medicine Coronavirus Resource Center, accessed 10 Jan 2022

The **Bank of Uganda (BoU)** (central bank) in its **Monetary Policy Report** released on 20 December notes that further lockdowns and border closures on account of the omicron strain of coronavirus could have a negative impact on growth.²⁰ BoU analysts also express concern that the recovery of the global markets will lead to higher global prices, which could push domestic inflation up, as Uganda imports more than it exports. BoU governor **Emmanuel Tumisiime-Mutebile** noted in the MPC statement that annual headline inflation and core inflation each rose to 2.6% in November, from 1.9% and 2.1% respectively in October.²¹

Developed economies are tightening their monetary policies, which could lead to tightening financial conditions in developing countries such as Uganda.²² The BoU's monetary policy report shows that while international trade is yet to return to pre-Covid-19 levels, there has been recent improvement, particularly in coffee and gold:

*"The outlook on the economy (three months to February 2022) is more optimistic mainly because of the much-anticipated full opening of the economy in January 2022. Prices are expected to remain high in the short term and order volumes are expected to increase."*²³

The BoU notes an improvement in Uganda's balance of payments, which recorded a \$246m surplus mainly due to reduced imports.²⁴ Based on the current assessment of the outlook and balance of risks, the MPC decided to keep the central bank rate at 6.5%.

Kenya agrees to lift ban on Uganda's poultry products

Kenya has agreed to lift barriers that have hindered the sale of poultry products from Uganda. The move that will also see Uganda delay its proposed retaliation ban on imports of Kenya's agricultural produce.²⁵ The sale of poultry products has been the most contentious issue in a longstanding trade spat that also includes a ban on Ugandan dairy products in Kenya since 2019.²⁶ In July 2020 Kenya suspended importation of frozen chicken carcasses and cuts, and chicken table eggs from Uganda for human consumption in order to help local producers recover from trade disruptions in their livestock enterprises caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.²⁷ Kenya also banned beef, milk and maize from Uganda, causing her western neighbour to lose millions of dollars in foreign exchange.²⁸

In a joint communique issued on 21 December, the two neighbouring countries said they would not impose restrictions on poultry as they work out a long-term policy deal to eliminate trade barriers.²⁹ Following a meeting between Kenya's agriculture secretary, **Peter Munya**, and his trade counterpart, **Betty Maina**, with Uganda's agriculture minister, **Frank Tumwebaze**, a joint statement noted the parties had agreed to immediately remove any administrative measures that have inhibited trade in poultry and poultry products.³⁰ The two sides also agreed to remove restrictive levies that violate the **East African Community (EAC) Customs Union Protocol** by July 2022, reiterating a declaration they made in April 2021.³¹

The decision reached on 22 December means Kenya will now allow the sale of Ugandan eggs, chicks and chicken, which it had restricted in February 2021 ostensibly to protect Kenyan farmers and enable them to recover from Covid-19 disruptions. It also means Uganda will stay its decision

²⁰ Bank of Uganda Monetary Policy Report 20 Dec 2021

²¹ Bank of Uganda Monetary Policy Report 20 Dec 2021

²² Bank of Uganda Monetary Policy Report 20 Dec 2021

²³ Bank of Uganda Monetary Policy Report 20 Dec 2021

²⁴ Bank of Uganda Monetary Policy Report 20 Dec 2021

²⁵ Nation Media Group, 22 Dec 2021

²⁶ New Vision, Dec 2021

²⁷ New Vision, 15 Dec 2021

²⁸ New Vision, 15 Dec 2021

²⁹ Nation Media Group, 22 Dec 2021

³⁰ New Vision, 15 Dec 2021

³¹ Africa Business Communities, 27 Dec 2021

to impose retaliatory restrictions on Kenyan agricultural produce until the end of January.³² Uganda's cabinet approved a move in December that would see Uganda retaliate by imposing a ban on several Kenyan agricultural products.³³

While the two governments have signalled an end to the trade disputes, the lack of an explicit agreement on levies and sugar imports means traders are likely to experience bottlenecks at the border, including importation permits.³⁴

Planner

13 Jan 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** World Conference on Soil, Water, Energy and Air (EUWCSWEA);
 24 Jan 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** International Conference on Environment and Life Science (EUCELS);
 Feb 2022 **Kampala (Uganda) Bank of Uganda** (central bank) Monetary Policy Committee meets;
 1 Feb 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** Annual Congress on Soil and Water Conservation (ACSWC);
 13 Feb 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** International Conference on Bioinformatics, Biomedicine, Biotechnology and Computational Biology (EUI3BCB);

Chronology

10 Jan 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *KFM Radio*. The education ministry calls for collaboration from all stakeholders to prevent further outbreaks of **Covid-19** in learning institutions as schools reopen across the country following closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

9 Jan 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Independent*. Works and transport minister General **Edward Katumba Wamala** says his ministry will use the toll collections at the **Entebbe Expressway** to maintain and repay a \$350m loan that Uganda used to construct an expressway to Uganda's international airport;

8 Jan 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *East African*. National carrier **Uganda Airlines** will resume flights to **Dubai** on 8 January after the **United Arab Emirates** lifted a ban on direct passenger services into the country and will fly the route four times a week – on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday;

8 Jan 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *The Independent*. The government has dropped a requirement for truckers to undergo mandatory **Covid-19** testing before entering the country, saving them the USh100,000 (\$30) for Covid-19 testing before crossing into Uganda;

7 Jan 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *KFM*. **United States (US)** ambassador to Uganda **Natalie Brown** calls for the immediate release of novelist **Kakwenza Rukirabashaija** in a message on her **Twitter** handle, saying the US mission is deeply concerned that security authorities have yet to comply with the **Makindye Chief Magistrates Court** order of 4 January to unconditionally release him;

6 Jan 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Daily Monitor*. The **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** announces it will resume flights from Uganda, effective 10 January;

5 Jan 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Aljazeera*. Lawyer representing **Kakwenza Rukirabashaija**, Ugandan satirical novelist and critic of President **Yoweri Museveni** and his son Lt. Gen. **Muhoozi Kaneirugaba** says his client has been tortured in captivity following his arrest on 28 December and has yet to be charged in any court;

3 Jan 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Nile Post*. **PEN International** has protested the arrest of novelist and political activist **Kakwenza Rukirabashaija**, who was apprehended over his alleged abusive social media posts that appeared to lampoon first son and **Land Forces** commander Lt Gen **Muhoozi**

³² Africa Business Communities, 27 Dec 2021

³³ Uganda Radio Network, 15 Jan 2021

³⁴ Africa Business Communities, 27 Dec 2021

Kainerugaba;

2 Jan 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *The Independent*. The **Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF)** and the **Congolese** army report that they launched the second phase of their operations against the **Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)** rebels on 31 December, having concluded the first phase of the operation after the combined troops captured the ADF camp in the thick forests of **Democratic Republic of the Congo**;

1 Jan 2022 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Uganda Bureau of Statistics*. Annual average headline inflation for 2021 was recorded at 2.2% compared to 2.8% recorded during the year ended 2020;

31 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Daily Monitor*. The **Uganda Civil Aviation Authority (UCAA)** has issued a statement confirming the temporary suspension of flights from Uganda to **Dubai (United Arab Emirates)** until further notice after the discovery of rising Covid-19 Omicron variant cases in several **African** countries and the UAE;

30 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Voice of America*. Writers and poets have condemned the arrest on 28 December of award-winning Ugandan author **Kakwenza Rukirabashaija**, who is being held without charge for alleged offensive communication in which he reportedly described President **Yoweri Museveni's** son, General **Muhoozi Kainerugaba**, as "obese" and said "*the Musevenis have imposed enormous suffering on this country*";

29 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Ministry of Health*. Results of **Covid-19** tests done on 28 December confirm 1,809 new cases, bringing cumulative confirmed cases in Uganda to 139,079;

28 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *The Independent*. **Bank of Uganda** (central bank) analysis predicts global economic uncertainties due to Covid-19 will continue into 2022 and this, among other factors, will have negative effects on the Ugandan economy in 2022;

27 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Reuters*. Ugandan police announce they have arrested 29 people suspected to be members of a newly formed rebel group, **Uganda Coalition for Change (UCFC)**, seeking to topple the government, claiming the group has established training camps in central Uganda and were behind attacks on police personnel in December that killed at least four police staff;

25 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *URN*. A **Kampala-based Uganda Radio Network** survey indicates that Kampala's hoteliers registered improved guest booking in the Christmas holidays compared to 2020, the worst year on record for the hospitality sector due to the **Covid-19** pandemic;

24 Dec 2021 **Kinshasa (DRC)** *AFP*. DRC and **Ugandan** troops report that they have taken two major bases held by the **Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)**, a suspected jihadist group being targeted in a joint offensive;

23 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Xinhua*. The 18th extra-ordinary summit of the **East African Community (EAC)** heads of state has directed the EAC Council of Ministers to start and conclude negotiations on the accession treaty with the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** for admission to the bloc, requiring the Council of Ministers to report the outcome of the negotiations to the next summit;

22 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Relief Web*. The **Danish** government has donated a total of 742,000 vaccine doses to Uganda's health ministry to assist the country in its fight against **Covid-19**, with a shipment of 258,000 **Oxford-AstraZeneca** doses delivered on 14 December and an additional shipment of 484,000 **Moderna** doses scheduled for arrival on 30 December;

21 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *URN*. Director of communication and public affairs **Chris Obore** confirms that 50 members of parliament and staff have tested positive for coronavirus after participating in the **East African Community Legislative Assemblies'** sports meeting in **Arusha (Tanzania)** on 20 December;

20 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Bank of Uganda*. The **Bank of Uganda** (central bank) maintains the **Central Bank Rate (CBR)** at 6.5% at its **Monetary Policy Committee** meeting, consistent with

meeting the inflation target of 5% sustainably in the medium term;

19 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Ministry of Health*. Results of **Covid-19** tests performed on 18 December confirm 357 new cases, bringing total confirmed cases in Uganda to 129,676;

18 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Ministry of Health*. The number of confirmed cases of Covid-19 with the omicron variant has increased from 7 to 25, as the number of positive tests among incoming travellers has increased from a daily average of 6 to 90 in the past seven days;

17 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *AFP*. Uganda's and DRC's military's joint offensive against **Allied Democratic Force (ADF)** rebels in the north-eastern region of DRC has entered its third week, with 34 rebels captured to date and four camps neutralised;

16 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *World Bank*. The **World Bank** has approved \$180.3m in additional financing for the **Uganda COVID-19 Response and Emergency Preparedness Project** to expand affordable and equitable access to **Covid-19** vaccines and build a more resilient health system;

15 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Independent*. The education and sports ministry releases a 12-month calendar for the resumption of studies for all schools in Uganda on 10 January, running a full year to 9 December;

14 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *DW*. Opposition leader **Bobi Wine** says security forces surrounded his residence and put him under house arrest before a planned campaign rally;

13 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *All Africa*. The **United States** has issued a level III security alert, its second-highest alert, urging all its nationals to reconsider travel to Uganda over security related threats;

12 Dec 2021 **Kinshasa (DRC)** *Aljazeera*. **DRC** president **Felix Tshisekedi** says the presence of **Ugandan** troops in DRC fighting the **Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)** rebel group is for a limited period;

11 Dec 2021 **Kampala (Uganda)** *Independent*. Striking medical interns who were directed by the Ministry of Health to vacate hospital premises within one week are contemplating legal recourse;

About Africa Risk Consulting:

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Getting in touch

Please contact us by email info@africariskconsulting.com or call + 44 (0) 20 7078 4080

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