

## MPs urged to legislate on cyber security

By Vision Reporter

Africa must develop a comprehensive approach to protect its businesses and personal data in light of increasing cyber crimes worldwide.

"According to a worldwide study, cyber crime costs almost \$500b (about sh1,800 trillion), with hundreds of millions of cyber attacks taking place in Africa every year," Abdou Rahman Mboob, a New Partnership for Africa's Development ICT expert, said, adding that banks and institutions had been targeted by hackers with increasing frequency.

Mboob made the remarks while making a joint presentation to the Committee on Trade, Customs and Immigration and the Committee on Transport on Wednesday, in Midrand, South Africa. He cited the Africa Cyber Security Report of 2017 whose findings indicated that more than 90% of African businesses were operating below the cyber security poverty line, a point below which a business cannot effectively protect itself.

The chairperson of the Committee on Trade, immigration and Customs,

Henry Venani (Namibia), said the issue of cyber security was fundamental with regard to intra-Africa trade and that with cyber attacks on businesses worldwide, Africa had not been spared.

Felix Okot Ogong (Uganda), a member of the Committee, suggested that there should be an African body that looks at cyber security and data protection at a continental level.

Last year, Makerere University computer systems were hacked into and names of 50 students deleted from last year's graduation list. In 2015, nine former MTN staff were convicted of stealing sh3b from the mobile money platform while several MPs and individuals in Uganda have lost millions of shillings to hackers who duplicate SIM cards and gain access to their personal data. The convention proposed an African response through establishing structures to implement cyber security defences and mitigate related threats. Parliament in 2011 enacted the Computer Misuse Act with the aim of preventing unlawful access, abuse or misuse of computers. It provides for penalties and measures that law enforcement authorities can use to fight cyber crimes.

# Arua polls threaten to tear Opposition apart

By Andrew Ssenyonga

A fresh row among Opposition political parties is brewing ahead of the Arua Municipality byelection to replace the slain legislator, Ibrahim Abiriga.

The dispute pits a section of Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) MPs and Democratic Party (DP) members against their official party positions.

FDC MPs, led by the party's deputy spokesperson, Paul Mwiru and some DP members, led by the organising secretary, Suleiman Kidandala, yesterday unveiled former Terego County MP Kassiano Wadri as their candidate for the race.

DP's acting secretary general Gerald Siranda said their candidate was Kennedy Madira and any party member who support another candidate, would face disciplinary action.

"What Kidandala and the group are doing is contrary to the party position because the National Executive Committee decided to front Madira as the party's candidate," Siranda said.

The FDC spokesperson, Ibrahim Ssemujju, said: "Our flagbearer is Bruce Musema and we are not aware of any other such developments."

Contrary to what the official party positions are, Mwiru told a news conference in Kampala that: "My re-election is testimony of a group working together to defeat the regime



Paul Mwiru

machinery. Therefore, we have decided to support Wadri because cohesion, regardless of your party affiliation, is what the country needs."

Mwiru, who claimed that Wadri had the support of over 20 FDC MPs, was flanked by DP's Veronica Nanyondo (Bukomansimbi Woman MP), People's Development Party boss Abed Bwanika, JEEMA's spokesperson Abdul Noor Ssentongo, SDP's Michael Mabikke and former presidential candidate Walter Lubega.

Kidandala said they had done widespread consultations and noted that opinion polls had favoured Wadri compared to his rivals.

Both Mwiru and Kidandala claimed that they were engaging their party leaders to withdraw their official

*"We decided to support Wadri because cohesion, regardless of party affiliation, is what the country needs."*

candidates in support of Wadri.

The contest to replace Abiriga has attracted over 20 candidates, including NRM's Nusura Tiperu, former transport state minister Simon Ejua, Arua-based businessman John Lematia, Jackson Atima and NRM youth leader Godfrey Abiga, among others.

Last month, the FDC was condemned by other Opposition political parties over its failure to withdraw its candidate Eunice Namatende in favour of JEEMA's Asuman Basalirwa who eventually won the election.

Sections of FDC members that are said to be loyal to Kizza Besigye accused former party president Mugisha Muntu and his supporters of clandestinely backing Basalirwa against Namatende.



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

## MINISTRY OF HEALTH

### UGANDA LEADS IN MAKING PROGRESS TOWARDS ELIMINATION OF RIVER BLINDNESS/ONCHOCERCIASIS IN AFRICA

**Ministry of Health declares elimination of river blindness in Budongo focus (Bullisa, Hoima and Masindi districts) and Bwindi focus (Kanungu, Kisoro and Rubanda districts).**

Uganda has successfully freed 1,469,147 people from river blindness (onchocerciasis), based on the current World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines, bringing the country closer to achieving its goal of eliminating river blindness nationwide by the year 2020. River blindness has been known as a health problem affecting a significant population of Uganda since early 1950s. It was until 2007, when the government of Uganda declared a national wide elimination policy.

River blindness is a vector borne disease that is transmitted by the black flies which breed in fast flowing rivers. It causes serious eye and skin diseases that may result in blindness. The disease is endemic in 41 districts in Uganda with about 6.7 million people at risk, excluding districts in the Victoria Nile focus that was eliminated in the early 1970s. The strategy for elimination of river blindness from Uganda is mass drug administration with ivermectin and vector control.

The eleventh session of Uganda Onchocerciasis Elimination Expert Advisory Committee (UOEEAC) of the Ministry of Health that met from 7th to 9th August 2018 concluded that two more river blindness foci of Budongo (Bullisa, Hoima and Masindi districts) and Bwindi (Kanungu, Kisoro and Rubanda districts) with a combined population of 311,844 have met the WHO criteria for stopping mass treatment and other interventions. These two have now joined; Obongi (Moyo District); Maracha-Terego (Arua District); Nyamugasani (part of Kasese); Wadala (Pakwach District) and West Nile (Koboko and Yumbe districts) foci that are undergoing post-treatment surveillance.

One river blindness focus, Nyagak-Bondo (Arua, Nebbi

and Zombo districts), remains classified as transmission suspected interrupted due to potential cross border transmission.

River blindness was eliminated in one focus (Victoria, including Jinja, Mukono, Kamuli, Mayuge and Kayunga districts) in the 1960s. Since the beginning of the elimination program in 2007, six additional foci have been added to Victoria focus: Mpamba-Nkusi (Kagadi district); Mt. Elgon (Bududa, Manafwa, Namisindwa, Mbale and Sironko districts); Itwara (Kabarele and Kyenjjo districts); Kashoya-Kitomi (Kamwenge, Ibanda, Buhweju and Rubirizi districts); Imaramagambo (Bushenyi and Mitooma districts), and Wambabya-Rwamarongo (Hoima and Kikuube districts). It is estimated that this has added a total of 1,469,147 people that are no longer at any risk of onchocerciasis to the 2,314,700 living in the Victoria focus, where onchocerciasis had been eliminated prior to the start of the program. In total, river blindness in seven out of 17 foci has been eliminated and 3,783,847 Ugandans living in these districts are no longer at risk of acquiring the river blindness disease. In addition to the seven foci where elimination has been confirmed, 8 other foci: Wadala, Maracha-Terego, Obongi, Nyamugasani, Budongo, Bwindi, West Nile and Nyagak-Bondo are believed to have been protected from onchocerciasis and are awaiting final confirmation.

Transmission of river blindness continues in two of Uganda's original 17 foci: the large Madi-Mid North focus (Pader, Lamwo, Kitgum, Gulu, Omoro, Amuru, Nwoya, Dyam, Lira, Adjumani, and Moyo districts), with a population of 1,437,565; and the smaller Lhubirha focus in Kasese district, with a population of 135,046. The Madi-Mid North focus shares a border with the Republic of South Sudan (RSS). The Lhubirha focus is on the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) border.

The governments of Uganda, in cooperation with neighboring countries, DRC and RSS continue to promote cross border activities. In fact, the governments of DRC and RSS have

agreed to work to develop a flexible approach towards River Blindness elimination that includes vector control.

Uganda continues to register success in the fight against River Blindness, through the effort of the Ministry of Health's River Blindness Elimination Program, with the support of partners including; The Carter Center, Sightsavers, UKAID, USAID's ENVISION Project led by RTI International, the Lions Clubs International Foundation and the Lions of Uganda, Merck, the Mectizan Donation Program,

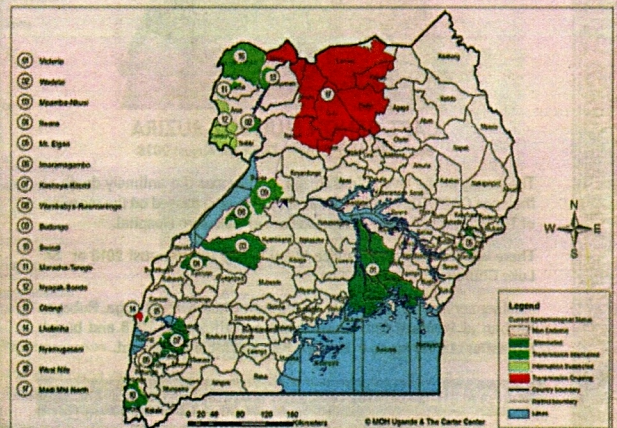
BASF, and the Governments of Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of South Sudan, and World Health Organization.

Uganda's accomplishment is evidence that total elimination of River Blindness is possible in Africa.

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY

*Jane Ruth Aceng*

Hon. Dr. Jane Ruth Aceng  
Minister of Health



Uganda: Location and status of Onchocerciasis foci