

Second National Symposium on Money in Electoral Politics 2019

THEME: Commercialized Electoral Processes as a
Barrier to Democratic Dispensation in Africa



Second National Symposium on Money in Electoral Politics - April 2019



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1. INTRODUCTION

The Second National Symposium on Money in Electoral Politics was a high-level twin conference held on April 11, 2019 at Speke Resort Munyonyo, with an extension at Metropole Hotel, Kampala, Uganda. The event attracted a combined population of over 1,000 participants of which 600 were at Speke Resort. Metropole Hotel was specifically for youth that came from various universities and other tertiary institutions.

Renowned Pan African orator and Kenyan jurist Professor Patrick Loch Otieno (PLO) Lumumba was the keynote speaker. Prof. Lumumba spoke about the subject of Commercialized Electoral Processes as a Barrier to Democratic Dispensation in Africa. PLO Lumumba's presentation was discussed by Ugandan don and fellow Pan Africanist, Professor Kihura Nkuba. A panel of discussants These were followed by a panel of discussants which comprised of: Dr. Odoi Tanga (Mr) – Chairperson of the Electoral Commission of the NRM Party; Hon. Tony Ayoo (Mr) – Member of Parliament Kwanja County; Ms Jennifer Angeyo Somali – Head of Legal Department of the Electoral Commission; and Hon. Winnie Kiiza (Ms) – former Leader of Opposition in the 10th Parliament of Uganda.

In organizing the symposium and ensuring that it lived up to the high-level profile, ACFIM was joined by ActionAid International Uganda (AAIU) and The Alternative - a platform for youth activists in Uganda. ACFIM was supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) while AAIU was supported by the European Union.

1.1 Goal and Objectives of the National Symposium

1.1.1 Goal of the National Symposium

To examine the influence of money in building democracy and challenge key actors to address the vice of commercialized politics with a view of stimulating debate on the problem and follow up research on the subject matter. The symposium also sought to galvanize advocacy towards legislating on election campaign financing and Uganda's ratification of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

1.1.2 Objectives

- a. To interrogate commercialization of electoral politics and its effects on the quality of governance and future democracy in Uganda
- b. To devise recommendations for curbing the toxic influence of unrestrained money on electoral processes ahead of election year 2021

1.1.3 Format of the Symposium

The symposium was moderated by Patrick Kamara. A political talk show host and moderator on Nation Television (NTV). The symposium was structured as follows; a) Opening remarks from the host organizations; ACFIM, AAU, the Alternative b) Key Note Address from PLO Lumumba c) Discussion of Key Note Address by Prof. Kihura Nkumba c) 2 Panel discussions d) Plenary Discussions e) Open House responses.

1.2 Participants

The symposium was attended by 574¹ participants drawn across sectorial professions in Uganda. Analysis indicates that males constituted 78.05 percent (448) of the total number of participants while females 21.95 percent (126). This statistic indicates that prohibitions still exist towards female participation in the political spectrum. It could arise due to attitude, perception



A section of Development Partners Attended the Symposium

and crowding out females from politics due to commercialization among others. Exclusion of women in such spaces also limits their full throttle awareness on the nature of politics so as to identify strategies for entry and participation. Analysis also indicated that the majority of the participants were youths between the ages group 18-30 constituting 69.86 percent (401), while those between 31-59 were 30.14 percent (173). Those above 60 years were only 1.04 percent (6). The statistics show a high level interest of the youths in political processes political organization. Most of the youths that attended were of law schools, colleges and departments of major Universities in Uganda. There several advocates, human rights, democracy and governance organization. Majority of the political parties were represented notable ones were Democratic Party (Party President-Nobert Mao), NRM (Dr. Odoi Tanga), Alliance for National Transformation (ATN) (Rtd. General Mugisha Muntu), Leader of Opposition (LoP) Aol Betty Achan)) in Parliament of Uganda, Uganda People's Congress (UPC). The youths are therefore major drivers of political change if the engaged in good socio- UPC) and the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC).

¹ List of Attendance of the 2nd National Symposium (2019), Speke Resort Munyonyo, Kampala

Professors and Dons from Universities also attended. National institutions were also represented, notable being National Independent Electoral Commission that directly engages in electoral management and electoral civic education. Development partners and representatives from foreign commissions were also represented. Notable among them were; National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Republic Institute (IRI), Danish Embassy, Germany Embassy, South African High Commission (SAHC), Kenya High Commission (KHC) and Nigeria High Commission (NHC) and European Union (EU). The symposium was followed on-line across Africa in Kenya, Nigeria, Americas, Europe and South Africa.

2.0 AFRICAN ELECTORAL CONTEXT

Competitive elections based on multiparty political dispensation have become institutionalized in many African countries. A review of the election calendar for the next two years reveals that a total of 30 African countries will hold elections in the next two years namely 15 countries in 2019 and the same number of countries in 2020. The downside is that electoral politics is increasingly being perceived as a business, and because of this, political parties and candidates have been observed to stake huge sums of money to get elected.

Financing election campaigns has become so expensive that candidates become vulnerable to private sector interests that fund parties and candidates during election campaigns for quid-pro-quo reasons. Sometimes electoral processes are misguided by ethnic sentiments and cease to be issue-based. As a consequence, electoral/political accountability is undermined with elected leaders practically more answerable to campaign financiers than to the electorate.

In some African states, ruling governments have amended National constitutions either to sustain themselves in power or create environments that sustain political authority against the will of the electorate. Vote buying has become a common occurrence in pre and during electoral periods. The winner of an elective position will most likely be that political party or candidate that has a “deeper pocket”. Money has eroded Africa’s political and democratic processes.

Whereas, constitutions of some African countries deliberately fixed maximum term limits to two, sitting presidents and parliaments have often amended them to lengthen their political stay. This has happened in Uganda, Gambia, Burundi and Algeria among others. The insatiable desire by most African presidents to overstay in power is changing and is undermining the continent’s democratization process. The too much money flowing in African elections and it is mindboggling where it comes from. In most instances, the countries experience a dip in gross domestic product every time an election is concluded.

Apparently, electoral politics is increasingly perceived as a business bonanza by political participants. There is a sense in which citizens perceive of election campaigns as a window of opportunity to extract as much money as possible from political parties/candidates, and by so doing they have become complicit in entrenching the vice of commercialized electoral processes.

2.1 Commercialization of Politics in the Context of Uganda

Elections and electoral processes in Uganda are commercialized and masculinized hence making it difficult for women to access these spaces. As the cost of contesting in elections has gone up, it has become difficult for women to compete with men on same positions because women often lack access to campaign finance sources.

Whereas Uganda is practicing multiparty democracy, the decisions of the electorate on who to vote for, are informed largely, by the candidate's individual merit where candidates are mostly elected on the basis of how much they have individually spent on the electorate in terms of social projects, donations and cash giveaways in addition to the legitimate electoral expenses of transport, publicity, production of campaign paraphernalia, and allowances for campaign agents and polling agents among others.

The commercialization of electoral processes has gender perspectives in the sense that when it comes to donations to voters, the handouts to women take the forms of underwear, gomesi, soap, salt and sugar among other things that would have been otherwise provided by husbands. Yet the men receive cash, booze and other masculine things. Candidates target women groups and youth groups with money, and other items because these make up the biggest voting numbers.

A cross section of young women and man that participated in the National Symposium



As a consequence, Uganda's democratic process is affected by the vice of commercialized electoral politics where candidates use money to induce voter decisions and voters taking money to vote in the direction indicated to them by the provider of the money.

Financing election campaigns has proved to be costly during the previous three electoral cycles, draining candidates' savings and forcing some of them to sell off their personal

assets and further borrow from financial institutions and/or money lenders. Thus, at the beginning of every new term in office, Members of Parliament award themselves increase in emoluments and on this issue, there is often no partisanship.

Some political parties and candidates share a perception that the ordinary Ugandan voter does not respond to political ideas, but rather to money. But experience has taught the electorate that the men and women who get elected into political office are more interested in self-enrichment rather than representing the views and aspirations of the electorate. After elections, the electorate expect to receive money and/or donations at every encounter with a political leader, hence forcing political leaders to stay away from the electorate. Money shapes the relationship between candidates and electorate, and between political leaders and their constituents. The ceaseless demands for money have severed the relationship between elected leaders and the electorate, hence the foundational democratic principal of accountability is subverted.

When it comes to the electoral legal framework, there are provisions against campaign finance corruption namely voter bribery and misuse of state/public resources on campaigns as prescribed in the Presidential Elections Act and Parliamentary Elections Act, but the sanctions are lopsided on criminal elements which from the police is reluctant to pursue, yet the civil elements which are more realistic and practical are not provided for.

The Political Parties and Organizations Act regulates public financing to political parties and reporting on routine political party financing but these provisions have not been enforced by the electoral management body nor have they been complied to by political parties and organizations. ACFIM recognizes that implementation of policies and laws in Uganda is generally weak, and that government has to be nudged to enforce laws. Experience has proved that a combination of constructive engagements with government agencies and citizen led pressure can lead to some form of government response.

Relatedly, there is absolutely no provisions that regulate election campaign financing. With no legal provisions for mandatory campaign finance disclosure and reporting, political candidates treat election campaigns like personal business ventures, and the manner of financing the campaigns is shrouded in opacity. ACFIM experience reveals a downside where proceeds from corruption and trafficking in illegal goods, often find their way into financing election campaigns.

In the aftermath of 2011 general elections, Uganda experienced an economic shock as inflation hit double digits leading to protests dubbed “walk to work”. ACFIM’s report on Financing Elections Campaigns for Presidential and Member of Parliament Races (2016) points out the effects unregulated campaign spending by political candidates had on the economy. ACFIM will document the impact of un regulated election campaign financing

on the economy in order to advocate for campaign finance reforms within the broader context of fiscal economic reforms.

The problem of commercialised electoral politics within the above context is attributed to (a) low levels of civic awareness about the significance of elections and power of the ballot, (b) a poor and economically vulnerable population that is easily manipulated by political candidates especially the women who are often lured with small gift items like sugar, soap and salt (c) lack of institutional and legal framework to regulate campaign financing (d) entrenched vote selling attitudes of the electorate (e) weak and fragile political parties (f) The lucrative nature of politics making it a profitable enterprise to invest in. These factors combined to provide a fertile ground for commercialization of elective politics to blossom and thrive.

3.0 OPENING REMARKS

Opening remarks were made by the heads of the three civil society organisations that jointly organized the symposium namely: ACFIM Executive Director - Henry Muguzi (Mr), ActionAid International Country Director – Xavier Ejoyi (Mr), and The Alternative Executive Director – Norman Tumuhimbise (Mr).

3.1 ACFIM Executive Director

ACFIM Executive Director, Henry Muguzi (Mr) welcomed participants and noted that it was a momentous occasion to have them gathered in such a big number to talk about the subject of money in politics which has been one of the most under-looked in Uganda and Africa in general.



He noted that whereas democratic elections have become popular on the African continent, all that effort would be on little consequence of Africans do not get to have a serious conversation on the role of money in elections. He observed that with corruption becoming pandemic in Uganda as it is in many other African countries, it is important to consider measures that would promote opened, transparency and accountability in financing politics because opacity in political financing is a condition that allows political corruption to blossom and thrive.

ACFIM Executive Director, Henry Muguzi

“When political corruption rears its ugly head on national economies, it is the poor and men and women at the grassroot level that bear the brunt because for them they do not have options”, he said.

He made reference to public pronouncements by President Yoweri Museveni where he has consistently decried monetization of politics in Uganda. He made further reference to the Electoral Commission whose 2016 report to Parliament also underlines commercialization of politics as a vice that challenges the ability of the electoral management body to organize free and fair elections.

He welcomed the Guest Speaker, Prof. PLO Lumumba who made the short trip from Nairobi to Entebbe that very morning. He called on participants do deliberate diligently.

3.2 National Coordinator - The Alternative

National coordinator of The Alternative Movement, Norman Tumuhimbise highlighted the poor social service delivery systems, lack of employment among the youth and



inadequate youth participation in politics. He blames this on bad political leadership. Argues the youths to actively engage in politics since they have numerical advantage.

“Why the young generation, you may ask? Begins with a question! Because the youths have been abandoned and relegated to the political circumference by the old geezers that came over three decades ago and are holding onto power with an iron grip, unwilling to relinquish it and give others a chance”, asked Tumuhimbise.

The Alternative Coordinator, Norman Tumuhimbise

“That would not be such a big problem if they were doing well”, he added. He argued that “the economy is in tatters, the unemployment rate is shooting through the roof; crime has become red hot, the multiparty dispensation but the other parties are not allowed to organize but instead are made to agonize because of the police and military brutality visited upon them”.

He reminded participants that Uganda has the world’s youngest population with over 78% below the age of 30 years. These shape the political spectrum of Uganda. He referred to the activities people power movement that bear resonance with the youths, that seem to be shaking the current regime. Indicated that the youth are rising up because they feel they have been abandoned. He quoted Martin Luther King Jr who once said, “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.” He focused his speech

to highlighting the ills of society! He used two children as symbols of how society has been unfair to the young people today and the years to come.

He decried the decadent health care system where 16 mothers die every day in childbirth while 76 newborns in every 1000 do not live to see their first birthday. He emphasized the tragedy of the highest proportion that we are a society of too many have-nots and so few haves. The haves have more than they need, which in most cases has been acquired through corruption and theft of public resources. We are a society where graduates are busy walking dogs of the haves on streets to burn the fats the dogs have accumulated from overfeeding while many natives are starving and are only left to lick their thumbs!

“A society where the sick people are left to die to avoid hospital bills and cost of transporting bodies. A society where children of the rich are flown abroad for treatment while the poor are left to die. A Society where unemployed youths are lynched for snatching a phone of U\$ 10. A life lost for such a low price”, he mused.

3.2 Country Director – ActionAid International Uganda



ActionAid International Uganda (AAIU) Country Director, Xavier Ejoyi (Mr), also welcomed participants to the national symposium and emphasized that it is the determination of his organization to ensure that Ugandans are sensitized on matters that concern their own affairs.

He welcomed Kenyan law don, PLO Lumumba to Uganda because Ugandans are always eager to partake of his wisdom. He pledged the continued dedication of ActionAid International to working with likeminded organizations and individuals on issues of governance and social justice.

Ejoyi added his voice on the dominant narrative of commercialized politics and how it is negatively influencing the democratization process in Uganda.

AAIU Country Director, Xavier Ejoyi

He argued that it is through discussions such as this one that answers to the many unanswered questions about Uganda's democratization process will be found. He wished participants a lively and constructive discussion as they had gathered in such big numbers.

4.0 PRESENTATIONS

4.1 The Key Note Address by Prof. PLO Lumumba



LPO Lumumba is a Kenyan who served as the Director of the Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission from September 2010 to August 2011. Since 2014, Lumumba has been the Director of The Kenya School of Law. An eloquent lawyer, Lumumba earned his LL.B and LL.M degrees at the University of Nairobi. Lumumba holds a PhD in Laws of the Sea from the University of Ghent in Belgium. He is a staunch Pan-Africanist and has delivered several powerful speeches alluding to or about African solutions to African problems.

Prof. PLO Lumumba

The keynote address was made by Pan Africanist, law don and former Director of the Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission, Professor Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba. The selection of Prof. PLO Lumumba as the keynote speaker was premised on two grounds. First, his direct participation in Kenya's as Member of Parliament candidate, on his electoral vast knowledge of the comparative democratic agenda of the western democracy and African democracy. Prof. Lumumba lived firsthand the experience of a commercialized political environment, utilized all the available campaign options but lost to the opponent who had more money than political ideas. He has also presented papers on political economy, democracy and rule of law across the globe.

He began his speech by giving a historic trend of commercialized electoral politics in Africa tracing its roots right from 1989 after collapse of Soviet Union, he said that Africans were told to have constitutions which are democratic; noting that one of the pillars of democracy is that we must have multi-party politics which is the touch stone and litmus test of what a democracy.

Prof Lumumba argued that commercialization of politics in Uganda gained dominance after the return to multiparty political dispensation in 2005 after a national referendum. He argued that the return to multi-party politics increased political competition turning politics into a do-or-die affair. "This is when money entered into the political arena, we begun eliminating ideas from politics", he said.

"I hear President Museveni arguing ever eloquently that Uganda given her history can only survive under the basis of no-party system. But I hear the Western Powers equally argue a little more forcefully, that we do not agree with you, and your safety not only requires but also demands that you must introduce multi-party politics. So Yoweri Kaguta Museveni concedes, and he is not the only one who is conceding, everywhere we are conceding, ultimately all the countries now have plural party politics", said Prof. Lumumba.

"A typical African leader impoverishes the people so that he/she can become attractive to them. That when he arrives, they say, "behold. The mobile Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) has arrived", he added.

It is an uphill task to convince the African electorate that ideas count for something in politics. African politicians believe that the electorate do not think. Elections in Africa are never won or lost. They are either stolen or rigged.



State House must never be converted into a den of thieves. He called for the injection of hygiene in African Politics. "We should make competition in the political arena as a competition of ideas rather than money". He advised that Africans should begin to elect individuals who have ideas because politics is a game of ideas.

When the electoral process becomes an expensive process, that is where African democracy begins to lose direction. He further said, "one of the greatest qualifications in African politics is the size of your pocket".

Lumumba narrated to the audience how in 1995, the then Tanzania Former Head of State Mwalimu Kambarange Nyerere was invited by his party - Chama Chama Mapinduzi, to speak about who was to be the leader to succeed his successor Ali Hassan Mwinyi. He said that Nyerere took his audience down the memory lane, and reminded them that "when they led the nation from colonialization, the prime motivator was to liberate their people; they were servant leaders. We met in Arusha and came up with Arusha declaration, and in the Arusha declaration we said in order to be a leader there must be some ideals that govern you, and there must be some taboo which you must never embrace in order to be a true leader. Nyerere said that in those days when you join politics

and you had a lot of money, the people would ask where have you gotten the money from, he reminded his audience that in those days when you appeared to have more money than you could legitimately explain, the electorate would say you are a thief and they would not elect you"-Lumumba narrated Former Tanzania President Julius Mwalimu Kambage Nyerere 1995 speech.

Lumumba further told the audience, that Nyerere later regretted that things had changed and the major qualification joining elective politics was now based on how much money you had, and the more money you had the more attractive you were to the electorate. He did affirm that in fact, young people are now in the business of betting whether one English team will beat the other which he discourage, saying that is not where the jackpot lies, the jackpot lies on being elected as Member of Parliament or Councilor.

Lumumba then expressed that *the cancer of politics of money and money bags reared its ugly head after the advent of multi-party politics, and that it's now comfortably seating in the bedrooms and sitting rooms of our Political Parties*. How can we liberate ourselves from it and what is it, Lumumba asked? He used one of the Neo-Marxist slogans to explain the problem, stating that *"the safety of the bourgeoisie demands that the proletariat be kept in the most profound ignorance"*. He further simplified it in English to mean that *"the safety of the leader demands that people be kept in poverty"*, and that is what happens in Africa.



In his comparison of African politics with other parts of the world, he said in Europe and America during the elections, politicians go round kissing babies appearing to be nice, but in Africa politicians go around distributing rice and maize appearing to be nice. In other words, the typical African Politician impoverishes the people so that they appear to be attractive to them. And in order to be attractive you must appear to have money, and this is why those in the political arena in many African countries have an insatiable appetite for things. We now see that primitive accumulation of things is the rule in many African countries.



Participants including commissioners from the Electoral Commission, representatives of development partners, political leaders and the academia, take notes as Prof. PLO Lumumba delivers his keynote address

PLO Lumumba shared with the audience that a friend of his once corrected him when he said that in Africa there is corruption, he said no, in Africa there is no corruption, corruption presupposes there is some element of intelligence in theft. What we see in Africa is looting and theft in an industrial scale. And what am seeing is not new to us, I never knew myself, that there is any magic in the ballot box, that today upon being elected as councilor or MP suddenly my life changes dramatically.

In many African countries, when you are elected as councilor or MP that is your passport to Eldorado the land of God. And the reason why that appetite is even so sharpened, the MPs here will tell you that when they want to retrieve to their rural homes, they cannot just work into their rural homes, they will be dozens of people waiting for them, and when their cars are seen, they say behold the mobile Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) has arrived.

The Keynote speaker expressed that today there is a symbiotic relation between the electorate and leaders, it appears that the electorate have allowed the “so-called” leaders because some are misleaders to remain in their position of power and acquire as much as they can on the understanding that periodically their loot will be shared with them. “It is some kind of *Robinhoodism* of a latter-day kind. And this *Robinhoodism* kind of politics is a little bit different from his understanding because Robin Hood robbed the rich in order to share with the poor” he mused. But our later days African Robin Hoods are in the

business of robbing from the poor in order to give appetite to the very poor and this is what we are talking about when we talk about commercialisation of politics.

To build on his point, Lumumba told the audience that If you ask a typical politician how much does it cost you to be elected into parliament, they will tell you it's in the millions and the millions they spend is perhaps 10 times more than they will ever earn through there legitimate salary. And I ask myself, if your salary in five years is going to be UGX 1 billion, why should you spend UGX 5 billion to get into that office? He asked. "There must be something that we do not see but the politicians see, and I know what it is, it is that getting into office of MP or indeed any other political office in Africa is a guarantee that things will", he remarked.

"In many African countries, the politician is the *Tenderpreneur*, gate keeper, one who receives guest, tax collector informally aside from Uganda Revenue Authority, and in this regard therefore, we must commercialize politics. We may blame the politicians but also the electorate needs to be blamed, because they have insatiable appetite for things that they have not worked for", he remarked.

To reaffirm his point PLO Lumumba said that many times when a politician addresses the electorate, eloquently speaking that when am elected, I will ensue that we have good health services, good schools, create opportunities for invention and innovation and create opportunities for young men and women. They will wait for you to finish and will tell you that we hear you; we know you are going to do all those beautiful things but in the intervening period we must eat. "No matter how beautiful your ideas are, if you don't carry money on the days of campaign, your ideas like an elephant before them will never fly", the Kenyan law don said.

He then brought to the attention of the audience that we are gathered here to remind ourselves that when politics is commercialized, it harms the people, it undermines democracy, when competition is not about ideas but who has the deepest pocket then the country cannot grow. He submitted that we are in a bad space in many African countries as regards to the quality of politics that we operate. PLO Lumumba informed the audience that in many African countries, politics is about life and death, and competition is cutthroat.

In the recent past in many African countries, do you ever hear that a loser picks the phone and calls that brother/sister we had a good competition, people spoke. So in Africa elections are either stolen or rigged, and why? The reason is simple because it's not a competition of ideas but a competition for occupying a lucrative casino, so the political office is lucrative casino where gambling is perpetuated on daily basis and everyone wants to be in control over that casino.

PLO Lumumba quoted the late Tanzania president Julius Nyerere who once said, “state house is holy house and we must never convert it into a den of thieves”. Going forward we must not build government where we have thieves. They keynote speaker until we eliminate commercialized politics we are going nowhere.

In his conclusive remarks, he suggested that there are ways of ensuring that we eliminate commercialization of politics from the political arena. He however warned that as laws are made, the politicians have perfected the art of ensuring that they break them without being caught though that is the case we cannot rule out that we a step in a right direction. The further called for rigorous civic education to convince voters that when it comes to politics it is ideas that matter, not money.



The Director of Operations at the Electoral Commission Mr. Leonard Mulekwa (front-row 1st right), Country Director Netherlands Institute for MultiParty Democracy Mr. Frank Rusa (front-row 2nd right) and the Head of the Legal Department at the Electoral Commission Ms Jennifer Angeyo Somali (front-row 4th right) we among the many high ranking government officials that participated in the symposium.

4.2 Discussion of PLO's Paper by Prof. Kihura Rwacumika Nkuba

Professor Kihura Rwacumika Nkuba is a lecturer of classical African history, a businessman and financial engineer. He is the founder of Action on Earth, an organization that brings black people together to discuss African history. He is a Pan African scholar who has become an icon for African renaissance



Prof. Kihura Nkuba

According to Prof. Kihura Nkuba, politics and money are two mutually reinforcing. Politics is the control of power while economics is the control of money. His line of thought is that money is a critical requirement for politics to thrive. Politics and money form a political economy.

He introduced the concept of seigniorage² which he used to explain the ugly side commercialized politics as it manifests in so called developed democracies. A portion of this money is used to finance political processes. Power is for keeping and money is used to keep power. NRM uses money to keep power.

He predicates his discussion on the argument that power is for keeping, and that no sitting government would want to give it away without a fight. He castigated former Ugandan Presidents the late Dr. Apollo Milton Obote and Idi Amin who did not know how to keep power, and applauded President Yoweri Museveni for knowing how to keep power.

Challenged politicians on why they think politics is the only thing they can do, that they can stake everything on it. "Do you have to be an MP? Is politics the only thing you can

² Seigniorage may be counted as revenue for a government when the money it creates is worth more than it costs to produce. This revenue is often used by governments to finance portions of their expenditures without having to collect taxes.

do? Rather than staking all the money you have into politics, why don't you go to universities, set up think tanks or go to Kikuubo and do business?"

He reiterated that Uganda's frame of politics is not for ideas. He challenged participants to tell him how many ideas they see in Uganda's Parliament. He shared his experiences on campaign trail in Mbale and Soroti where as soon as the candidate starts speaking, the people (electorate) queue up waiting to receive money and/or gifts. "if you do not have money to give them, they may burn the place down", said Prof. Kihura Nkuba as he explained the gravity of the problem of commercialized politics.

"Do you genuinely think that you are going to reverse that trend (commercialized politics)?" He argued that the people (electorate) that demand money from political parties and candidates on campaign trail will have democratically chosen that they should receive it. "Are they not voting with their demand? Why don't you want to give it to them?" he asked.



He threw a spanner into the works when he advised that political candidates who do not want to give money to the electorate should choose another profession. "Leave politics for those that have money. Go out there and work, look for money, and when you find it come back to the electorate". That is the bitter reality of Uganda's politics. He further argued that Ugandans have an illusion that government is going to sort out our country. "You think that politicians are the ones that have solution. You are deluded." He spoke.

In his pragmatic analysis, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) that has been in power in Uganda since 1986 will not give the electorate anything because its main focus is keeping power and one cannot blame it. "Do you think NRM is crazy to want to relinquish by a mere paper called a ballot?" He argued that because the acquisition of political power in 1986 was not achieved through elections but through the gun, the NRM government cannot be removed through elections.

He concluded that Uganda seems to have chosen her own brand of democracy based on voting wealth rather than voting for ideas, and that there is nothing wrong with that. “If you went to marry someone’s daughter and the asked you to pay for bride price of 100 cows, do you complain?”



In the end, Prof. Kihura Nkuba agreed with fellow Pan African scholar, Prof. PLO Lumumba that Africa must have its brand of democracy – a brand that suits her multiethnic political context, and development needs. Foreign democracy is not applicable in Africa.

4.3 Panel Discussions

A discussion panel was constituted where the two academic giants Prof. PLO Lumumba and Prof. Kihura Nkuba was joined by former Leader of Opposition in Uganda’s Parliament Hon. Winnie Kiiza, Head of Legal Department at the Electoral Commission Ms Jennifer Angeyo Somali, member of Parliament representing Kwania County Hon. Tonny Ayoo who also deputises the chair of the campaign finance reform group, and Dr. Odoi Tanga, a former Makerere University don and Chairperson Electoral Commission of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) party. It was moderated by the vice chairperson of the legal and committee of the National Consultative Forum (NCF) Mr. Michael Osinde.

Michael Osinde





The fully constituted panel: L-R: Prof. Kihura Nkuba, Hon. Winnie Kiiza, Ms Jennifer Angeyo, Hon. Tony Ayoo, Prof. PLO Lumumba, and Dr. Tanga Odoi.

4.3.1 Jennifer Somali Angeyo – Head of Legal Department, Electoral Commission



Ms Jennifer Angeyo Somali represented the Election Commission, and shared her views on the draft private member's bill due to be tabled in Parliament. She stressed that the spirit of the bill is good but pointed out certain provisions of it the needed to be reconsidered to suit the Uganda's electoral context.

Ms Jennifer Angeyo

The EC is a strong advocate of regulating money in elections. Money is likely to affect the outcome of electoral process. In some cases, excess money breeds violence. There is need for stakeholder engagement notable electorate, leaders and government to mechanisms for controlling money in elections.

She however, mentioned that money is likely to remain a challenge even in the existence of a law. Would refreshments to voters be considered as bribe? The proposed election campaign bill does not given limits of what to be spent, including the allowable items to

be spent on. She suggests a comprehensive elections management bill taking care of all election processes, as opposed to a standalone campaign finance bill/law. She cites section 6F that discourage transportation of voters and section 14 that restricts bribery of voters. How will these provisions be enforced? How will be done to those who fail to make returns? How will on-line transactions be monitored? She questioned existing capacity to monitor, document and report expenditure.

“Whereas EC who support the bill, it still requires thorough review to plug some existing gaps”, she remarked. She said that the EC has tried to educate the electorate against the use of money in politics but the population has treated “*bribery as a norm*”. Bribery is given attractive names like tithe, community service or facilitation. When do you distinguish between bribery and facilitation?



Panoramic view of the panel, L-R: Prof. Kihura Nkuba (extreme left), Hon. Winnie Kiiza, Ms. Jennifer Angeyo, Hon. Tony Ayoo, Prof. PLO Lumumba, and Dr. Odoi Tanga (1st right)

4.3.2 Dr. Odoi Tanga, Chairperson Electoral Commission of the National Resistance movement (NRM) Party.



Dr. Odoi Tanga started by setting the record straight that the National Resistance Movement (NRM) party believes in an open society where the son of a herdsman can become president. The son of a herdsman he was referring to is President Yoweri Museveni.

Dr. Odoi Tanga

He argued that Uganda and other African countries need democracy where everyone respects the other. “The Ugandan we need is a country for all of us, let us discourage money and let’s have good leaders” According to Dr. Tanga, returning to multi-party politics meant entering the money circle. Plural politics dictates where and how money is used. “Multi-party politics and money go hand-in-hand”. The excess of it is what should be curtailed”, he said.

Dr. Tanga further argued that money facilitates party processes but also helps in administration party affairs. He agreed with the proposal that money must be controlled through instituting a law and voters must be sensitized not to demand money rather ensure that politicians have ideas that can be transformed into development. He thinks money does not determine electoral outcomes because even those that spend lose elections. The ruling party should not be blamed for using money in politics, saying campaign financing is used by individuals and parties to compete.

He advises politicians that “If you don’t have money, don’t join politics; don’t start a political party that will compete with those that have money,” Dr. Odoi Tanga supports the declaration of funds to politics as well as the source of the money to ensure electoral funds accountability



4.3.3 Hon. Winnie Kiiza, District Woman Member of Parliament, Kasese



Hon. Winnie Kiiza

Hon Winnie Kiiza is a member of the opposition Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) party and also former Leader of Opposition in the 10th Parliament. She represents the women of Kasese district. She underscored the importance of openness and transparency in managing money in politics and electoral process.

She urged the Electoral Commission to seriously consider administrative reforms such as publicizing campaign expenditures of political parties, the sources of campaign money and the audited books of accounts. This, she argues, would ensure transparency and accountability for political participants.

Hon. Kiiza further argues that commercialized electoral processes discriminate youths and women who cannot raise the funds needed to get nominated, later on financing the campaigns. Youths and women are not adequately economically empowered. Traditionally, women are discriminated from inheriting land and accumulating wealth. Conversely the young people are increasingly unemployed, poor and restless. They do not have access to the sources of funds needed to finance an election. “Little wonder therefore that electoral spaces in Uganda and Africa in general are masculinized”, she remarked.

“As we draw closer to elections, the number of requests for supplementary budgets increase. We need to get to the bottom of these requests and establish whether the budgets are used for the purpose for which they are requested or they are diverted to finance election campaigns” she observed.

The former Leader of Opposition (Kiiza) advocates the removal of politicians from political positions once the courts of law find them guilty of vote buying and their election nullified.

There is need investigate presidential pledges and donations since they are hard to differentiate from intentions. She highlighted one of the recommendations of the Supreme Court in the Presidential Election petition filed by Amama Mbabazi against Yoweri Museveni and the Electoral Commission in 2016 which directed that the electoral laws be amended to ban the giving of donations during campaigns by the president who is also a candidate.



4.3.4 Hon. Tony Ayoo, Member of Parliament – Kwanja Country



Hon. Tony Ayoo

Hon Tony Ayoo is a member of the NRM party, represents Kwanja County in the 10th Parliament and is also the deputy chairperson of the informal campaign finance reform group in Parliament. This is the group that is led by Hon. Alex Ruhunda (Fort Portal Municipality). The group has been working on a private member's bill on campaign financing. The draft is already in place and it is this very draft that the Head of legal Department of the Electoral Commission, Ms Jennifer Angeyo made comments about.

Hon. Ayoo revealed that he is a direct victim of a commercialized electoral process where he spends more than half the tenure in Parliament trying to recover from the bruises of excessive spending on elections, yet the financial needs from the constituency to do cease. He argued that the procrastination exhibited by government by not considering legislating on election campaign financing was the main driver for the private member's bill.

"Elections have become a commodity of willing buyer and willing seller. I have witnessed this when my political competitors bought out voters and it was by the grace of God that I went on to win the election" he mused.

Hon. Ayoo argued that the major objectives of political candidates, is not service delivery but rather feathering their nests. Service delivery is getting lost. He calls and support electoral reforms that control usage of money during electoral processes.

4.3.5 Plenary Discussions

The discussion was opened to the house where all participants that would be purposively and/or randomly selected expressed their thoughts and opinion on commercial electoral processes and democracy. Leaders of political parties were particularly accorded top priority among them Hon Nobert Mao – President General of the Democratic Party (DP) and Gen. Mugisha Muntu – President of the newly formed Alliance for National Transformation (ANT) party.

4.3.5.1 Democratic Party President General – Hon. Nobert Mao

Money distorts electoral results. You can cast a vote thinking that you are an agenda unaware that someone with “*deep pockets*” will influence the outcome. At the end the agenda is ignored. There is need to empower the citizens to demand what they want by



voting for the right candidates despite receiving money from their rivals. Democracy is utilitarian and is meant to serve the people. Politicians also ought to know that there is a life after elections and there require to use their conscience. Electorate is aware the politicians thrive their business on the basis of lies. They will therefore opt for immediate gratification

though seeking for money, gift and donations than wait for political promises.

4.3.5.2 Alliance for National Transformation President – Gen. Mugisha Muntu



Gen. Mugisha Muntu decried the moral degeneration and the rot with which elections are managed including behavior of politicians at all levels. There is need to have values and morals in political processes. The willing seller, willing buyer theory is hurting democratic growth. He also decried selective usage of the existing electoral laws to favor one group against the other. He urged the voters to replicate the vigilance exercised in the parliamentary by-elections in Bugiri, Arua and Jinja municipalities and vote for values despite the money poured in the areas by the ruling NRM. “The commercialization of elections is a clear reflection of how far we have lost our values. We need to shift from talking too much and move into the villages to initiate the change we need to see” He suggested that the elite to sensitize the voters on managing their conscience during the electoral processes.

4.3.5.3 Hon. Aol Betty Achan - Leader of Opposition in the 10th Parliament of Uganda



Hon. Aol Betty Achan

The problem of commercialization of politics is not only wide but deep into schools and universities. Elections in these places indicate a bigger problem because they nurture future leaders. A primary school child bribes for prefectorial position. Managers of electoral processes are corrupt and they declare wrong results after being paid off. Called for support towards electoral finance law but also sensitize the electorate on the dangers of commercialization of politics and how these affects service delivery in communities. Those who are found guilty of voter bribery must not be allowed to participate in the next election.

5.0 PETITIONING THE SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAW

As part of the proceedings, ACFIM collected 421 signatures from participants in support of the petition to the Speaker of Parliament over the need to prioritize the campaign finance legislation. At the symposium, a symbolic petition was signed by leaders of political parties, civil society, academia, youth leaders and opinion leaders. The Executive Director, ACFIM promised to have the petition delivered to the speaker on Parliament at the earliest convenient time.

The lead petitioners were the three partnering organizations that jointly organized the symposium namely; ACFIM Uganda, ActionAid International Uganda, and the Alternative.



Former Leader of Opposition Hon Winnie Kiiza signs on the symbolic petition as the rest of the participants look on.



Hon Tony Ayoo signs on the symbolic petition as ActionAid International Country Director, Xavier Ejoyi (right) looks on in amusement.

The petition was intended to reinforce ongoing efforts around the private member's bill on election campaign financing that was championed by Hon. Alex Ruhunda (Fort Portal Municipality). The bill would need support not only on the floor of Parliament but also support from the political parties, the media and general citizenry.

6.0 MEDIA COVERAGE

6.1 Electronic and Print Coverage

The national symposium was broadcast live on NBS TV and on social media. Local and international media houses covered the symposium. All Uganda's major media houses in the electronic and print media converged at the National Symposium Venue at Speke Report. Uganda television houses include; NBS, NTV, Bukedde, BBS, BABA, Urban, Top, Record and Dream among others. The national symposium was the major headline for most of the major television station and the stories trended for 24 hours. Major Print media houses include; the Daily Monitor, New Vision, The Observer, The Red Pepper. On-line media houses include; Chimp Reports. Daily Monitor gave the symposium two major stories. In addition, Prof. PLO Lumumba was hosted on the popular political talk show – Frontline on NBS Television for two hours (22.00hrs – 00.00hrs) on the night of April 11, 2019.

During proceeding on the NBS frontline show³, Prof. Lumumba asserted that illicit money in Uganda's political processes is a danger to Uganda's democracy. He advocated for a law that eliminates illicit money from politics. MPs must declare the source of money, the amount of money and expenditure items. This would however require adequate capacity of the state to verify, which is apparently non-existent. Mao advocates the enactment of the law. Politicians whose lose cases on evident of voter bribery should be barred from contesting in the next electoral process. He appealed to the youth to send an unequivocal message to the political class that they don't "play ball" (improve the quality of youths), they then forget being violated into political offices. Lastly the youths must also take political offices in an organized way. "The youth are at the very Centre of the discourse on democracy and governance" he said.

6.2 Social Media

The 2nd National Symposium generated wide coverage on social media platforms; Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Overtime, there has been a gradual shift in preference for communication channels especially due to the growth of innovations in Information and Communication Technology. Majority of people especially the youth, use social media. Social media has the power to influence and sustain the conversations on issues that affect society just like it did on CEPs. With a coverage for 9 days, ACFIM managed to reach 4,175,222 people. Social media proved to be an effective and efficient advocacy tool to influence perception and influence debate on commercial electoral processes. A

³ <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/FMfcgxwCgzGdNKXRcmgZBXgTssRxJbCS?projector=1>

mapping of the level of outreach indicated that social media messages on platforms were not only in Uganda, but other African countries and America. Through social media, ACFIM and partners managed to sustain the conversation from the discussions during the National Symposium. Furthermore, many participants were mobilized through social media to attend the event, this is an effective way of information and message dissemination.

Table 1: Reach of Hashtags used

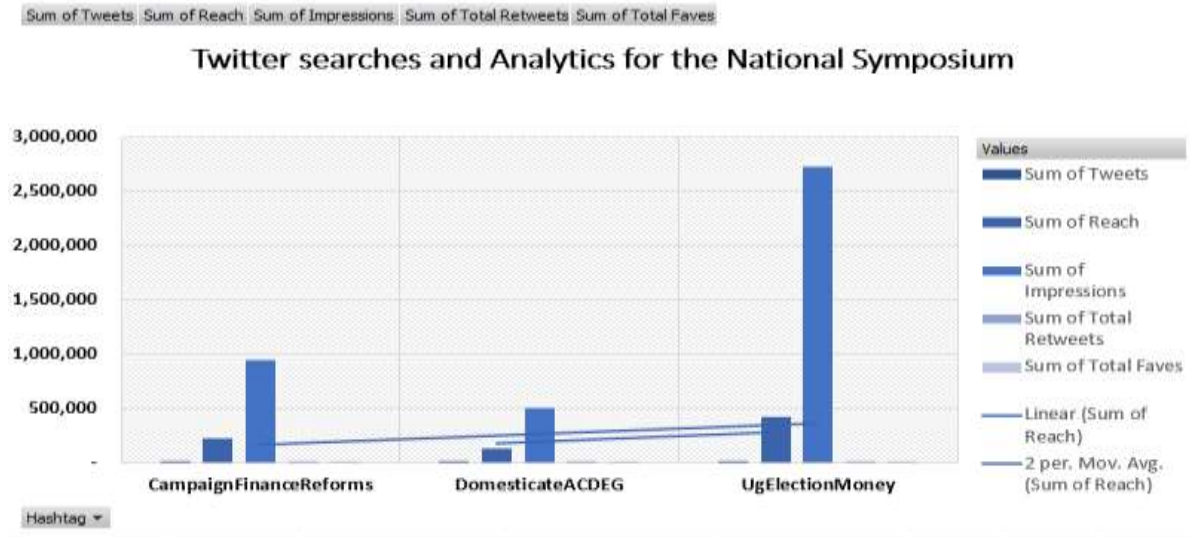
Hashtags	Sum of Tweets	Sum of Reach	Sum of Impressions	Sum of Total Retweets	Sum of Total Faves
#CampaignFinanceReforms	413	224,009	942,297	379	531
#DomesticateACDEG	278	138,087	501,264	222	416
#UgElectionMoney	1,454	426,149	2,731,661	2,400	3,604
Grand Total	2,145	788,245	4,175,222	3,001	4,551

Source: Social Media Analysis Report on Symposium (April, 2019)

Table 2: Facebook Searches and Analytics for the National Symposium

Row Labels	Sum of People reached	Sum of Engagements	Sum of Shares
Text	3220	364	9
Videos	767	81	5
Grand Total	3987	445	14

Source: Social Media Analysis Report on Symposium (April, 2019)



7.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Conclusion

Elections are highly perceived as business in many African countries. Unregulated flow on money in political processes including in elections, poses a threat to is threatening Uganda's sovereignty as on Uganda as nation. There are concerns within the political class, civil society, religious leaders and the academia about the trajectory of Uganda's political culture where participating and engaging electoral processes is principally for financial gain. President Yoweri Museveni has on many occasions decried monetization of politics and called for its eradication to give democracy a chance to flourish in Uganda. The Electoral Commission is calling for concerted effort to stamp out the vice of commercialized politics. Alliance for Finance Monitoring is calling for enactment of campaign finance law. Some political parties are already taking remedial action to address the vice.



Representatives of embassies and high commissions that participated in the second National Symposium on Money in Electoral politics. These included Embassy of Denmark, Embassy of Sweden, Embassy of the United States of America, Embassy of Norway, the European Union Delegation, the Democratic Governance Facility and the British High Commission among others.

7.2 Recommendations

- a. Parliament to support campaign finance reforms
Parliament was requested to accord priority to developing a standard campaign finance law that provides among others for mandatory disclosure of campaign finance sources, reporting on campaign spending, and a spending cap on how much a candidate can spend on a particular electoral position.
- b. Sensitization of the community to know the value of the vote (stakeholders)
It was deemed essential for government, civil society and other key stakeholders in African democracy to invest in rigorous civil awareness and education with a view of convincing the electorate that it is political ideas that should inform voting decisions, not money.
- c. Call for competition of ideas/competence
Participants drew consensus on the type of democracy Africa going forward. Democracy that must be buttressed by politics of ideas as opposed to money.