

HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACE
CENTRE (HURIEPEC),
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY



SOCIETY FOR JUSTICE
AND NATIONAL UNITY
(SoJNU)



Symposium on 'Militarizing Public Service in Uganda: A Solution to the Governance Crisis?' Held on Tuesday, April 17, 2018, 2:00-5:30pm at the School of Law, Makerere University

Report of the Proceedings

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Acronyms

AIGP	Assistant Inspector of Police
BMU	Beach Management Unit
CDF	Commander of Defence Forces
HURIPEC	Human Rights and Peace Centre
IGP	Inspector General of Police
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MP	Member of Parliament
NAADS	National Agriculture Advisory Services
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NRA	National Resistance Army
NRM	National Resistance Movement
OWC	Operation Wealth Creation
SOJNU	Society for Justice and National Unity
TPDF	Tanzania People's Defence Forces
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Forces
UPF	Uganda Police Force

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On Tuesday, April 17, 2017, the Human rights and Peace of the School of Law, Makerere University, together with the Society for Justice and national Unity, organized a symposium to discuss whether the increasing trend of militarizing the Public Service in Uganda is the proper solution to what appears to be a governance crisis in the country. The overall objective of the Symposium was to provide a platform where the different stakeholders would discuss this trend while at the same time highlighting its impact upon the country's governance and development (or the lack thereof). The specific objectives of the symposium were to:

- a) *provide a forum for an honest discussion of the pros and cons of militarization in Uganda;*
- b) *give an updated information on the status quo with regard to current experiences of militarization in Uganda;*
- c) *facilitate a medium through which responsible actors and institutions explain and justify the current goings-on; and*
- d) *generate new ideas and action points on how to address the question of Uganda's militarization.*

This was grounded on some of the recent developments in the country which seemed to suggest that the country is adopting an approach towards militarization of its key public institutions/sectors such as: National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) in 2014; enforcement of fishing standards on Uganda's major Lakes; Uganda Police Force (UPF) among others. Underlying these developments is an argument from some section of the government to the effect that the military needed to be engaged in order to fast track the country's ambitious development goals on which civilian authority had failed to deliver.

A broad range of stakeholders who included members of the academia, practitioners in the social sciences, policy makers, politicians, NGOs, professional bodies, students and interested members of the public participated in the symposium. The day's discussion was commenced by Dr. Busingye Kabumba through a key note presentation in which he noted that although militarism is forms a central part of the DNA comprising the State of Uganda in the way it was established by the colonial masters. In the case of the current times, he noted that militarisation under the NRM regime is symbolic the NRM's conception of itself as a long-term establishment in Uganda's governance thus making the possibility of peaceful transfer of political power very negligible.

Dr. Busingye's insights provoked a heated *albeit* critical debate in a rapt audience whose reactions immediately followed an equally intriguing discussion by a highly representative panel comprised of: the Director of Uganda's Media Centre, Mr. Ofwondo Opondo who also doubles as the government spokesperson; the Deputy Chief Political Commissar of the UPDF, Col. Bahoku Barigye; the Dean of the School of Women and Gender Studies, Dr. Sarah Ssali; as well as Dr. Bwire Lumumba, an academic from Makerere University's Department of Political Science.

This report gives the highlights of the day's proceedings.

1. WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

1.1. Dr. Zahara Nampewo, Director, HURIPEC



Dr. Zahara Nampewo making the opening remarks

In her opening remarks, Dr. Zahara appreciated the participants for making off the time to the symposium especially considering that there was an ongoing student protest around the University. She mentioned the Symposium was co-organised with SoJNU whom she thanked for agreeing to co-host what she referred to as a timely discussion where militarizing the public sector in Uganda is increasingly becoming the norm.

According to Dr. Zahara, the timing of the symposium was intentional as it came at a time when there are many incidents of using the military in formerly civilian sectors if the government. In this regard, she cited the UPDF's takeover of the management of the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADs). On issuing a directive for this shift, the President of Uganda cited mismanagement by the civilians. A second instead she cited was the suspension (again by the president) of Beach Management Units (BMUs) which were incorporated under the Local Government Act whose activities were later taken over by the UPDF's Fisheries Monitoring and Enforcement Unit with a flagship slogan dubbed '*paka last.*' This development, she noted, signified the UPDF's take over a mandate of the country's Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF).

The Uganda Police Force (UPF) is yet another public institution Dr. Zahara highlighted as one of those following a steady and rapid trend towards militarization. She noted that this is marked by the appointment of military personnel to top positions in the police forces. As an example, she cited the appointment of Major General Katumba Wamala as Inspector General of Police (IGP) in 2001, and the subsequent takeover from him by Major General Kale Kayihura in 2005. That this is in addition to involving the army in key roles of the police such as the 2017 arrest of suspects following the brutal murder of former Police Spokesperson, AIGP Andrew Felix Kaweesi as well as the recent arrest, by the

army, of several senior police officers and their prosecution under martial law. Also notable was a 2017 incident at Parliament when MPs opposed to a Constitutional amendment on age-limit were forced out of parliament by the army.

Relatedly, she cited a number of development initiatives such as the Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) which is being manned by army officers, as well as a recent public revelation by the State Minister for Investment, Honorable Evelyn Anite, that her Ministry was in the final staged of setting up a Hotline to address the queries and concerns of the Investors and that this would be manned by the military.

She cautioned the members that as the military steadily spreads its responsibilities beyond its constitutional legal mandate, the execution of these responsibilities is not subordinate to civilian authority. Rather, she noted, “the force is answerable to another higher military power.”

Dr. Zahara further observed that the ongoing developments in Uganda’s governance raise a number of questions which need to be addressed. Firstly, why are civil service functions failing, and thereby justifying their takeover by the military? Secondly, does this point to a point governance system generally in Uganda? In any case, she wondered, is the military the best placed institution to bridge this gap? If it is, what makes it so? What has the military got that long established civilian institutions do not?

The need to find answers to some of these questions, Dr. Zahara noted, informed the convening of the Symposium. She specially thanked the key note presenter, Dr. Busingye Kabumba, and the Panelists for accepting to lead the discussion which, she hoped, would not only be vibrant, but also provide some plausible steps in building Uganda’s governance while at the same time building and reclaiming sustainable institutions for sustainable peace and development.

1.2. Remarks from Prof. John-Jean Barya, Interim Chair, Society for Justice and National Unity (SoJNU)



Prof. Barya making remarks on behalf of SoJNU

On his part, Prof. Barya, the interim Chair of SoJNU, extended apologies of two key participants invited to the Symposium but were unable to attend or even send in their representatives. These were: the Vice Chancellor of Makerere University, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe who was invited as the Chief Guest but had an abrupt travel out of the country. Unfortunately, his representative, the DVC Finance and Administration, who was also held up by a meeting with the university student leadership following a series of protests during the same week. The second apology was from the Assistant Inspector of Police (AIGP), Brig. Sabiiti Muzeeyi.

He noted that the SoJNU, which is independent, national think tank started by a group of like-minded and public-interested Ugandans, the majority of whom, but not all of whom, are senior scholars of Makerere University. In terms of its objectives, he noted that the Society seeks to forge a dynamic forum for critical and rigorous intellectual interventions which contributes to shaping public discourse and aids the making of a more desirable Uganda. He noted that considering the many problems that Uganda is faced with, it is necessary for such public engagement which advocates for public good in society, advocates and demands for social justice, and participates in progressive politics necessary for social stability and diverse, yet peaceful, coexistence. These ends are reflected in SoJNU's specific objectives which include bringing together intellectuals and scholars, organizing civil society and other Ugandans interested in social justice and national unity, equity and all round development; as well as promoting active citizenship. These objectives are achieved through a number of activities including: symposia and seminars across the country on key national issues, engaging in intellectual discourse with the government and other political organisations. Also in the pipeline are community outreach and public interest social research. He notified that the participants that SoJNU is open to membership from all those subscribing to its objectives and philosophy.

Commenting on SoJNU's role in the symposium, Prof. Barya noted that SoJNU has an MOU with HURIPEC to achieve related goals such as attaining democratic governance and peace in Uganda where there is rule of law and justice for all. He therefore invited the participants to honestly discuss the issue with a view to causing the desired change.

2. KEY NOTE PRESENTATION

- 2.1. **Dr. Busingye Kabumba**, *Lecturer, School of Law, Makerere University and Author of Militarism and the Dilemma of Post-colonial Statehood: The case of Museveni's Uganda.*



Dr. Kabumba presenting his paper as the panelists prepare for their responses

Dr. Kabumba's presentation began with a definition of the term militarism, which he said has been variously defined. For example, Vagts describes the concept as one that "...presents a vast array of customs, interests, prestige, actions and thought associated with armies and wars and yet transcending true military purposes" and "it may permeate all society and become dominant overall industry and arts."¹

Based on this definition, Dr. Kabumba observed that Uganda is increasingly prioritizing the military as the best way to resolve most of the challenges the country is faced with. He noted, however, that this is not a unique development in Uganda's political life. Rather, militarism has been a key component part of the DNA comprising the State of Uganda. Right from its formation as a colonial state, Uganda has always been administered on the principle of governance by the strongest. This attitude cuts across the post-independence period where there has never been a peaceful transfer of power from one regime to another but through military coups i.e.; 1966, 1971, 1979, 1986 which were sanitized/ratified by way of legal notices.

Citing Ondonga Ori Amaza (1995) Dr. Kabumba observed that the 1986 coup, which brought the current NRM government into power, did nothing to revolutionize Uganda's

¹ A Vagts (1959) *A History of militarism: romance and realities of a profession*, 13. Cited in Kabumba *et al* (2017), at 3.

governance. Instead of undertaking a comprehensive dismantling and reconstituting the pre-existing state structure² it found in place in order to create a new beginning, the NRM government only replaced the old army; as if . As such, the real object of the revolution was not achieved; what obtains being described as mere 'continuation of war by other means.' In the view of Dr. Kabumba, even most of the post 1986 seemingly democratic processes such as the promulgation of the 1995 Constitution were merely intended to give the NRM government a democratic face. This was achieved "through the careful orchestration of a Constitution making process that was publicly participatory but in reality extremely controlled" by the NRM.

Dr. Busingye further noted that the 1995 Constitution of Uganda represents the more sophisticated model of militarism under the NRM era. For example, its armed force, the National Resistance Army (NRA) was clothed with a pro-civilian face by rebranding it the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) which is meant to serve all Ugandans without distinction. According to Dr. Kabumba, this is a mere illusion, especially when put in context with other carefully crafted provisions in the same constitution which have unveiled the long term project that is the NRM regime. A case in point are Articles 102 (b) and article 105 (2) of the Constitution providing for guarantees of transition of power. On its part, Article 102 (b) imposed an age limit on persons qualified to stand for election as President of the Republic of Uganda that is above 35 and below 75 years of age. The other provision, Article 105 (2), catered to a maximum number of term limits beyond which one was not qualified to stand for re-election as President.

Dr. Busingye noted that these guarantees seem not to have been intended to be respected by the NRM government which, quite carefully, did not include them as part of the entrenched provisions of the constitution. Instead, he observed, the two articles were left open to amendment, not even by referendum, but by a mere two thirds majority of Parliament which is dominated by the NRM. Accordingly, the Constitution has since been amended to remove the presidential term limits (Article 105(2)) and the age limit (Article 102(b)) in 2005 and 2017 respectively in spite of countrywide public sentiments against that course of action.

Through such processes, Dr. Kabumba noted that the NRM government has managed to be extremely authoritarian and militaristic while at the same time having all the

² Dr. Kabumba listed the major components of state structure to include: the army, police, intelligence service, prison services, bureaucracy and the judiciary.

appearances and trappings of a democracy. Accordingly, he noted, the increasing militarisation of the public sector has to be analyzed through the above context.

Dr. Kabumba categorized Uganda's militarisation of the public sector into two forms. The first form is seen in the undermining of the traditional civil service in favor of looser and more hybrid patronage-based systems. Examples of this include: co-opting of would be critical political figures (mainly defeated/retired contestants/officials at the level of LCV chairpersons, MPs, as well as war veterans) in the name of appointment as Presidential advisors who are paid using public funds. According to Dr, Kabumba, such officers are well paid in order to ensure their loyalty.

The second form of militarisation of the public service in Uganda, according to Dr. Busingye, manifests in the continued amplification of the army's ability to resolve most of the society's challenges by depicting it as a superior form of organization, better equipped than civilian structures to deliver public goods and services. He cited examples in this regard to include: appointment of high ranking military officers to lead the Uganda Police Force (i.e.; Maj. Generals Katumba Wamala and Kale Kayihura as Inspector General of Police in 2001 and 2005 respectively and most recently, in 2018 the appointment of Brig. Sabiiti Muzeeyi as Deputy Inspector General of Police), appointment of serving top army Generals Aronda Nyakairima and Katumaba Wamala as Ministers for internal Affairs and Works in 2013 and 2017 respectively, as well the military's continuing involvement in other areas such as health, agriculture, infrastructure, organization of beauty pageants, etc.

Dr. Kabumba warned that such developments indicate a continuing determination on the part of the NRM politico-military establishment, to maintain control of the political direction of the State. Relatedly, he expressed suspicion about the ethnicization of Uganda's governance demonstrated by the many persons from the western part of the country who continue to dominate, especially, the higher ranks of the military which development, he warned, cannot help build the morale of the army let alone the much needed cohesion within its ranks.

Based on the above, Dr. Kabumba' ultimate conclusion was that there is uncertainty regarding the prospects for a peaceful transition in Uganda as it appears that the NRM conceives itself as a long-term project/establishment in Uganda's governance. Gradually, the pax-Musevenica generation of civilians who have grown up under such circumstances have been socialised with the militarism mentality.

Despite these loop holes, Dr. Kabumba insisted that the Military remains a strong element of any democracy upon which a peaceful and prosperous state is based. AS such, he

recommended that there is need for a genuine national conversation as to how best to tame the military in a way that guarantees a peaceful future for the generations to come.

2.2. Panel discussion

2.2.1 Col. Bahoku Barigye, Deputy Chief Political Commissar of the Uganda Peoples's Defence Forces (UPDF)

During the panel discussion, a number of incites were generated. The first panelist, Col. Bahoku Barigye argued that thinking that we can do away with the military in the public space is to choose to deny reality and live in utopia.



Col. Barigye making a strong case for militarisation

According to Col. Barigye, UPDF's involvement in public affairs is part and parcel of its Constitutional mandate which, as stipulated under Article 209, include:

- (a) to preserve and defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Uganda;*
- (b) to cooperate with the civilian authority in emergency situations and in cases of natural disasters;*
- (c) to foster harmony and understanding between the defence forces and civilians; and*
- (d) to engage in productive activities for the development of Uganda.*

That the above objectives are reflective of the very nature of the NRA, later transformed into the UPDF, as a revolutionary army, which is a brain child of the people's struggle for self-determination and transformation of their country from being a third to a first world. To achieve its functions, Col. Barigye noted, the UPDF is required to jealously remain vigilant and to be a vanguard of the state and the people. According to him, the military remains a most important part of the state especially in as far as protecting the national and defence economy is concerned.

On what was said to be increasing militarisation of the public service in Uganda, Col Barigye argued that the debate was redundant, and misleading to say the least. He based his argument on the fact that the UPDF is currently involved in activities of only about four government ministerial and other departments (MDAs) out of a total of about 126 comprising the entire government. To him, this is a very insignificant percentage (about 0.003%) of intervention to cause any worry. Secondly, he argued, the intervention is hinged on a need to bridge fatal gaps identified in the ways in which these MDAs were being run. He cited, as a case in point, the way the fisheries department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) had failed to put a stop on illegal and irresponsible fishing on Uganda waters. When the UPDF intervened, normalcy has returned and fish population is drastically increasing. In his view, this has only been made possible because of the military's discipline, dedication and endurance under difficult lake environment.

In the case of the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADs), Col Barigye noted that the UPDF did not take over NAADs. Instead, it is merely a technical partner with a limited role of distributing seeds to Ugandan farmers, which role had failed under the initial structures where under seeds would disappear along the way. He also cited the National Identification (Printing and Issuance) Project which, although a mandate of the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA), was implemented by the UPDF in record time operating with a record low level of resources compared to the initial quotation submitted to government.

In conclusion, Col. Barigye challenged anyone to point out the law being broken by UPDF in engaging in any of the sectors mentioned. He thus called upon the public to embrace the role the UPDF is playing in the betterment of the country.

2.2.2 Ofwono Opondo, Government Spokesperson & Director, Uganda Media Centre



Mr. Ofwono Opondo buttressing the justifications for militarisation of the public service

Just like Col. Barigye, Mr. Ofwono orotund voiced all manner of defences for the militarisation of Uganda's public sector. At the apex of his submissions was the argument that military men are citizens, therefore individuals with a natural right to participate in the affairs of their country, Uganda.

Following the above preamble was an assertion, by Mr. Ofwono, that actually, the civilian authority in Uganda is still very much in control and responsible for the country's major sectors including: the legislature, judicial arbitration, as well as resource allocation.

According to him, this is so much so that Unlike the 1990s where security was regarded most paramount because of the circumstances obtaining at the time, this is no longer the case. That this is especially visible in the fact that for the last 5 -10 years, as security ranks number 4 in terms of priority areas during budget allocations. In the case of the military in civilian spaces, Mr. Ofwono noted that this has only been in cases where the civilian authority has failed. According to him, the military cannot remain seated as inefficiency is going on.

Mr. Ofwono then challenged the symposium organisers to explain why, if militarisation is bad as has been painted, Ugandans have continued to overwhelmingly vote the NRM government, and President Museveni in particular, back into office every after five years. He further suggested that if Ugandans are not satisfied with the service delivery under the current regime—some of which is achieved through the machinery of the military—, we should be able to see that dissatisfaction reflected in the forthcoming election.

Given the above, Mr. Ofwono's conclusion was that the day's discussion was simply indicative of the attempt by what he described as 'liberal intellectuals' to paint a negative picture of the NRM government's efficient machinery—doing so through an exploit of the free and open public space created by the same NRM they criticize.

2.2.3 **Dr. Sarah Ssali**, *Dean, School of Women and Gender Studies, Makerere University*



Dr. Ssali highlighting a number of critical points for the participants to reflect on

On her part, Dr. Ssali's discussion of Dr. Kabumba's paper took a deserving academic angle—raising more critical/reflection points than answers. In her view, Dr. Busingye's paper is one that is well intended in as much as it seeks to lead Ugandans to an acceptable balance militarism and civilian authority. She thus noted that in lieu of the goings on in the country, the paper's questioning of the possibility of a peaceful transition in Uganda is a very valid one. In this regard, whether wondered whether, given the circumstances, the ever increasing presence of the military does not threaten the transition. Secondly, she asked what the role of the citizens in reversing the situation should be.

According to Dr. Ssali, where there internal contradictions within the society itself are the order of the day, for example: phenomena such as low voter turn up, civilian brutal responses to crime and discontent (as seen in mob-justice and violent protests), as well as the continued failure of the government to make a clear distinction between the military and civilians (as seen in deployment in civilian professions, of officers with military ranks), then there is a big problem that needs to be given a much deeper reflection.

Taking a look at historical developments, Dr. Ssali noted that the dilemma in which Uganda finds itself today is not ahistorical. Rather, contestations for authority between the military and civilian wings has been a characteristic feature of societies in development; both advanced and colonial societies. To bring the example closer to home, Dr. Ssali reminded participants that most of Africa's, indeed Uganda's traditional chiefs, were well accomplished warriors/soldiers.

As to when then the situation changed, Dr. Ssali shared that at a certain point in time, the people galvanized forces to relegate the military from their affairs; saying that enough is enough. At this point, Dr. Ssali wondered whether the current state of affairs in Uganda suggests that our civilian institutions have yet to competently handle its affairs. Her final submission was a follow up question to this: Why?

2.2.4 Mr. Bwire Lumumba, Department of Political Science, Makerere University



Mr. Lumumba making his contribution to the discussion

Mr. Lumumba structured his response to Dr. Kabumba's paper in three phases that is: a dominant thinking which date through militarisation, the actual militarisation as well as the era of democratization i.e.; from about the early 1990s to date.

Just like Dr. Kabumba, Mr. Lumuba observed that militarism is not a new phenomenon and that there has been a general thinking, among most of the developing countries, that in order to develop, one has to use the military. He further added that Uganda's current leaders are part of the group that believed in this school of thought and have, since independence, have not refreshed their political science. He submitted that such thinkers are convinced that given its nature as a disciplined, coordinated force and one that is obedient to orders, the military is the best institution to deliver on a range of missions, including provision of public services. He cited Amin in Uganda and Mobutu in Congo as examples in this regard. According to him, history has however disproved this thinking as seen in how those governments ended, especially when they could no longer exploit the global ideological differences for their survival.

Commenting on the contemporary times, Mr. Lumumba made no distinction between the preceding militaristic regimes and the NRM government, save for the fact that the latter is more comprised of political capitalists. According to him, the political capitalists must survive on alliances, the most significant of them in Uganda's case being the military. Under this framework, Uganda has seen humongous levels of corruption across the political divide mainly in the form of official sharing. According to Dr. Lumumba, it is therefore in the best interest of this cartel to have an obedient military implementing most of the activities rather than having strong formal civilian institutions. He ended his diagnosis by advocating for strengthening the institutions as a solution to the governance crisis that the military purports to cover wherever it has intervened.

3. PLENARY

The plenary following up the above sessions reflected diverging views on the aspect of militarizing the public sector in Uganda. On the one hand was a proponent of the trend who advanced four grounds in this case. Firstly, was the fact that given their loyalty to their country, when deployed in the public service, military men provide a country with a buffer against foreign infiltration which, he noted, usually thrives on the naivety of ordinary civilian staff. Secondly, that militarism is, in and of itself, is a deliberate endeavor to dismantle the colonial state and mentality which does not seem to appreciate alternative, *albeit* more effective forms of governance. Thirdly, and almost related to the first, is the idea that only the military personnel have greatest ability and interest to

protect the country. Lastly is the fact that given its coercive power, the military is best suited to protect key national sectors such as the treasury.

However, the opponents to the militarisation argued that there is need for a clear cut relationship between the military and the civilians given the difference in the approach of the two, to issues. This group expressed anguish towards the argument by the pro-militarisation group such as Military Personnel and Government Spokesperson at the Symposium, to the effect that the day's discussion was a redundant endeavor which was intended to mislead the public that the military has taken over almost all sectors of the public service in Uganda. This argument was based on what they said was a very negligible number of institutions currently being run by the military. According to the participants, this is misleading because militarism is a political philosophy that has nothing to do with the number of army men visible in the institutions. That as an approach to politics, militarism does not need to have many soldiers in the public space. Rather, militarism can as well, and indeed has always, thrived through non-soldiers. A case in point cited here is the regular practice of the president sanctioning Ugandan Members of Parliament and other key decision makers in Uganda, to Kyankwanzi³ whenever an important decision has to be made. While there, these officials are made to adorn military uniform as a symbol that they have to obey the orders of the commander-in-chief, the President.

It was also noted that since it has been a common practice of the Ugandan military to remind the civilians to leave matters of the military to the military people—including issues such as the classified budget of the military—which indeed is facilitated by the civilians themselves—the military cannot turn around and purport to know best how to handle the affairs of the civilians. The unanimous conclusion in this regard, therefore, was that the military should leave matters of the civilians to the civilians. In any event, it was proposed that the scenarios under which the military can intervene in public affairs should be limited and well defined.

The view against the military intervention in the civilian matters was even more emphasized on the basis of the argument fronted by its proponents—that of failure of civilian authorities/personnel to handle their affairs. In the view of the participants at the Symposium, that argument is self-defeating as it simply tends to prove that the government has failed. That is, since the usurpation of power by an army that initially referred to itself as a people's army, the NRA/NRM government deliberately did not endeavor to resource the traditional formal institutions. Instead, it took on a gradual course to collapse them through underfunding, selective appointment of its ill-equipped

³ This place located in western Uganda, is (supposed to be) Uganda's National Leadership Institute.

cadres to top positions, creation of parallel and better funded *ad hoc* bodies especially under the State house, among others. That all this gradually killed the capacity and morale of the formal institutions thereby killing service delivery. Proponents of this view argued, during the Symposium, that subsequently, this has paved way for the president's ultimate goal of having key institutions run by the military personnel who are directly under his command and as well follow all his orders without question. On the contrary, this would not be very easily achieved through well-developed formal institutions.

It was further noted that one of the key aspects of militarisation in the case of Uganda is the increasing preference of securitization as a vehicle to suspend the normal procedures of state, including observance of the country's human rights obligations such as allowance for free speech and expression, access to information, privacy, liberty etc. Being positioned as the center of the country's stability, security has proved to be a ground for the clamp down on significant critical voices including political and civil society actors whose operations continue to be both covertly and openly suffocated. To the participants, this is an indication that prospects for a peaceful transfer of power from the current regime to the next are very minimal and it appears that the regime has prepared itself for a longer run.

To this was added the very nature of the face represented by the military, that is, coercive force. To this effect, it was noted that the military being engaged in public service and its seeming rate of success in delivering goods is not a sign of efficiency. Rather, it is because of the fear factor among the population who must comply with the military decrees without question, lest they get brutalized as has been the case with the fishers across Ugandan lakes which are now being manned by the fisheries protection unit of the UPDF. Under such circumstances, the participants wondered whether Ugandans welcome, and are appreciative, of the increasing militarisation. Even then, it was felt that intervention by the military is not a sustainable approach to the institutional breakdown in the country and that what needs to be done is a quick building of capacity of those institutions.



Some of the participants who participated in the day's discussion during the plenary.