

AFRICAN STATES' RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC AND GLOBAL PRESSURES: INSTITUTIONAL AND IDEOLOGICAL DILEMMAS IN UGANDA

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ABSTRACT

Since independence, most African states have been characterized by conflict and political mal-administration, which have curtailed efforts at state building, democratization and development on the continent in general, and in Uganda in particular. This paper makes an empirical comparison to illustrate how the dominant political parties in Uganda have used political power in order to regulate and control political life and political activity through censorship laws, the gagging of political parties and incarceration of their advocates, restraint on alternative debate and thinking, as well as private patronage and state power. The paper then documents the crucial dimensions of state building in the circumstances of a pre- and post-fragile state. It also analyses the institutional and ideological challenges in Uganda's body politik, and sheds some light on why, for instance, the international community has remained supportive of the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) despite its shortcomings.