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# **UGANDA: CONFLICT ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2017**

**Issue Date: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

## **Disclaimer**

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## National Overview

Tension continues to rise in the Rwenzori sub region following the re-arrest of the King (Omusinga) Charles Wesley Mumbere of the Rwenzururu Kingdom (Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu). He had been arrested in December 2016 on charges related to terrorism, aggravated robbery and attempted murder.<sup>1</sup> These charges stemmed from attacks on police officers and police installations in the region in the last couple of months. King Mumbere was re-arrested just hours after Jinja High Court released him on bail. Prior to the re-arrest, one of the bail conditions was that he should not go to his Kingdom. The re-arrest of the King has not gone down well with some sections of his Kingdom. Area Members of the Parliament have condemned the re-arrest saying it was betrayal of the entire kingdom by the President of Uganda, and that the re-arrest was unlawful.<sup>2</sup> However Police say King Mumbere was re-arrested because the latest investigations discovered other charges which he individually committed during the clashes in the region.<sup>3</sup>

The re-arrest of the King has the possibility of worsening the already precarious situation. In the last three years, more than three hundred (300) people have been killed, military installations attacked, houses, property and domestic livestock destroyed and many people injured in a conflict that is multidimensional. The SAFE program has repeatedly written about tension in the region in a number of conflict assessment reports<sup>4</sup>. In the interim, more than one hundred and eighty (180) suspected royal guards have surrendered to security agents in Kasese District.<sup>5</sup> They have since been given police bond. They are being accused of involvement in clashes with government forces that culminated in the attack on the palace by the army in November 2016. Although no conflict incidents were reported to SAFE's conflict monitoring database in the month of January 2017, tension remains very high and the police and army remain heavily deployed in Kasese District and around the Rwenzori sub region.

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<sup>1</sup> USAID SAFE Conflict Assessment Report- December 2016

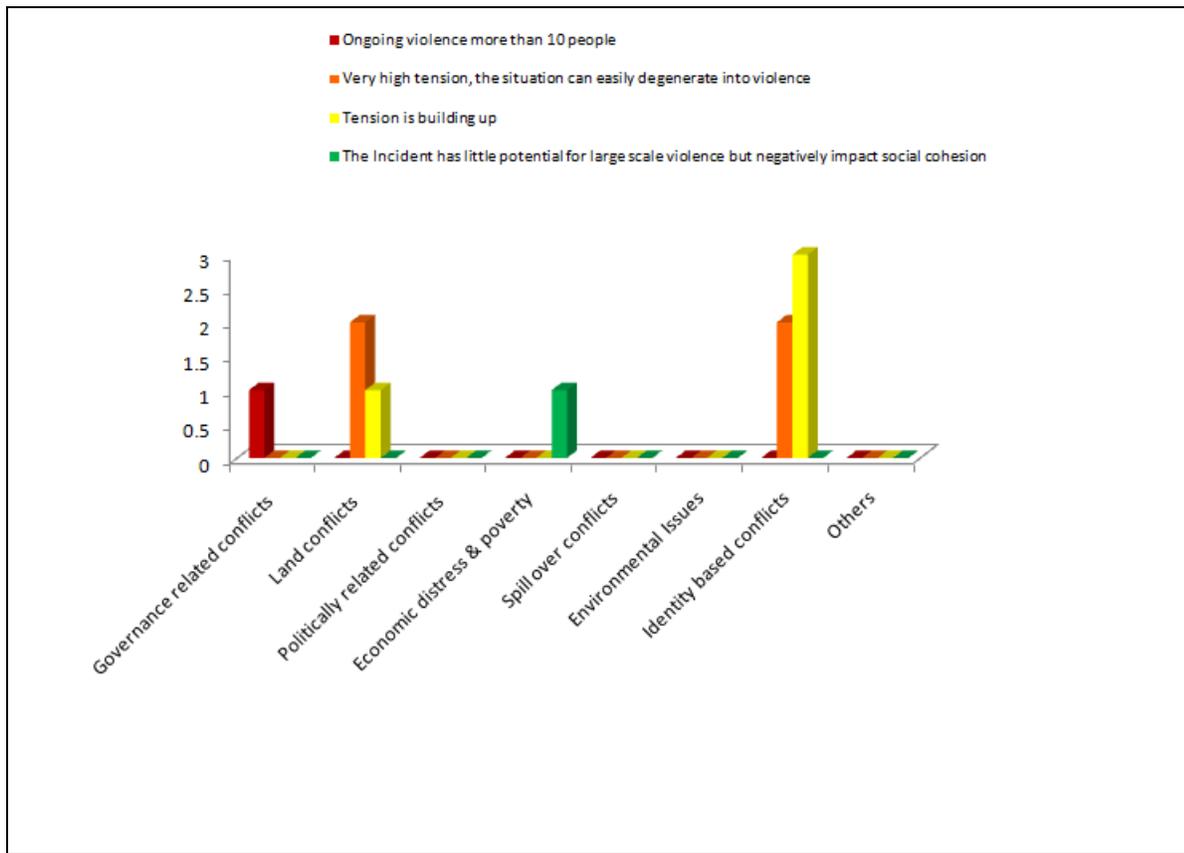
<sup>2</sup> [http://www.newvision.co.ug/new\\_vision/news/1444008/mumbere-granted-bail-fears-arrest](http://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1444008/mumbere-granted-bail-fears-arrest)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> USAID SAFE Conflict Assessment reports (2014-2016)

<sup>5</sup> USAID SAFE Mobile Coordinator –Rwenzori region

**Below: Number of Reported Conflict Incidents, January 2017**



**Source:** SAFE Conflict Monitoring Database: January 2017

**REGIONAL OVERVIEW**

**Northern Region**

Tension is growing in Moyo and Yumbe Districts in the West Nile region of Northern Uganda following a long standing conflict between residents and nomadic pastoralists who have been grazing their cattle in the area, destroying crops and preventing residents from accessing water sources.<sup>6</sup> The pastoralists are also accused of trying to process land titles for the areas they are grazing in without authorisation. This month the residents led by the area Member of Parliament (MP) of Obongi County Kaps Hassan Fungaroo and carrying spears, pangas, sticks, bows and arrows evicted the pastoralists amidst violent scenes. Police has been heavily deployed in the area to calm the situation.

<sup>6</sup> USAID SAFE Conflict Monitor-Yumbe District

Conflicts between cultivators and pastoralists in different parts of Uganda have been recurring for a long time, claiming lives of many innocent people from the two communities and creating major economic impacts to the nation. In the November 2016 conflict assessment, the SAFE program reported on the tension in Gulu district following a decision by the District Local Council (LC5) chairman Martin Ojara to issue a two day ultimatum to pastoralists to vacate Palaro Sub County or risk having their livestock confiscated. This followed a public outcry that the livestock had destroyed acres of farmlands which is the main source of livelihood for the locals; and in the neighbouring Kitgum District, where members of the Kopii clan in Orom Sub County evicted a group of pastoralists who had over two hundred (200) heads of cattle after they destroyed people's food crops. In SAFE's January 2015 conflict assessment, we reported on an incident where seven (7) adults and four (4) children were severely injured during a fight at Alwii Sub-County. The cultivators accused the pastoralists of letting their animals destroy their crops. Similar clashes have occurred in Nebbi and Arua Districts.<sup>7</sup> There is urgent need to mitigate this conflict. Local communities should work together to demarcate grazing areas and water sources for livestock in areas occupied by both farmers and pastoralists.

In Nwoya district, tension continues to simmer following a long standing land dispute at Got Apwoyo Sub County. The land measuring more than twenty (20) square kilometres is being claimed by both the Jonam and Acholi ethnic groups. Each group claims the land belonged to their fore fathers.<sup>8</sup> The dispute has led to many residents being injured and property destroyed and has become a source of insecurity as people continue to live in fear. This month more than 5000 residents turned up for a consultative meeting seeking a solution to the dispute but failed to come up with a lasting solution. The SAFE program has reported on this conflict in previous monthly conflict assessments. In the June 2014 report, we reported how thirty four (34) people were injured during clashes between the two tribes and residents attacked police with sticks and arrows; in the September 2014 report, we reported how the cultural leaders of the Jonam community had issued a thirty (30) day ultimatum to the Government of Uganda (GOU) to dispatch verification teams to handle the conflict. Land disputes in northern Uganda are threatening peace in the region as they

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<sup>7</sup> USAID SAFE Conflict Assessment –January and April 2016, January 2014

<sup>88</sup> USAID SAFE Conflict Monitor-Nwoya District

have become a source of conflict among different communities. The SAFE Program is aware that land is an important economic asset and source of livelihood which is closely linked to community identity, history and culture. Communities therefore can readily mobilize around land issues making land a central object of conflict. SAFE's Northern Uganda based coordinator and conflict monitors in the district will continue to monitor the situation on the ground.

Still in Nwoya district, more than one hundred (100) residents in Koch Goma Sub County have fled their homes following a revenge attack that left more than ninety (90) huts burnt and many people injured.<sup>9</sup> Members of the Kal Acheng clan attacked members of the the Ponok and Amar Adwong clans following the release from police of a suspect from the Ponok clan who had been implicated in the death of five members of the Kal Acheng clan during a house fire. The Kal Acheng clan were angered that the suspect had been released on bail . The Nwoya Woman MP (Lilly Adong) criticised court for the premature granting of bail to the suspect despite warnings by security officials that it could trigger revenge attacks.<sup>10</sup> Although police has managed to contain the situation, tension remains very high as some community members are still in hiding.

Inter-clan fights are common in some parts of Uganda and have on several occasions resulted into destruction of lives and property. In the July 2015 conflict assessment report, the SAFE program reported on a domestic dispute between members of the Ikarebwok clan of Amuria District and the Ecwilo clan of Kaberamaido District that led to the killing of two people, the destruction of household property, and the displacement of over five hundred (500) people. In the August 2016 report, the SAFE program reported an incident in Moyok Sub County in Kween District where a clash between the Kaplelon and Kapkwech clans led to the death of four people and injuring of more than twenty (20) people. Communities should be sensitized on how to manage conflict in a non violent way and there should be measures to ensure active lines of communication between different clans that are having unsolved issues.

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<sup>9</sup> USAID SAFE Conflict Monitor-Nwoya District

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

## Central Region

Relations between the Buganda and the Buruli cultural institutions continue to worsen following a dispute of ownership of land in Nakasongola district that houses one of Buganda's palaces. This month, the Nakasongola palace was torched by unknown people although the Buganda Kingdom claims that Buruli loyalists were responsible for the arson of which the Buruli deny.<sup>11</sup> Attempts by the Buganda Kingdom to have the palace reconstructed have been halted by the GOU to allow it time to ascertain its true ownership and avoid further violence.<sup>12</sup> The SAFE program has repeatedly written about the bitter relation between the two cultural institutions. In the March 2015 conflict assessment, we reported on how the Buruli cultural leader (Isebaruuli Butamanya Mwogeza) was claiming that his chiefdom and people were being marginalised by the GOU, and were being despised by the Buganda kingdom which was encroaching on his territory with impunity. The SAFE program is aware that conflicts related to cultural institutions can become volatile and violent. There have been tensions in various kingdoms and cultural institutions around the country and the SAFE Program has reported about them in its various monthly conflict assessments.<sup>13</sup> Cultural institutions need to maintain a harmonious relationship to prevent tension and violence.

## Eastern Region

In the Busoga sub region, tension is growing following the appointment of the King (Kyabazinga of Busoga) William Gabula Nadiope to the post of Ambassador of Special duties in the Office of the President by the President of Uganda Yoweri Museveni.<sup>14</sup> Some members of the community have challenged the appointment saying it is an insult as the Kyabazinga does not serve anyone apart from his subjects. They further say that the appointment undermines their cultural institution because when the Kyabazinga becomes an ambassador, it automatically means that he will be working and reporting to someone else and that the President should apologize to the Busoga Kingdom for undermining the

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<sup>11</sup>USAID SAFE Conflict Monitor-Lyantonde District.

<sup>12</sup> <http://mobile.monitor.co.ug/News/Gen-Tumukunde-halts--Kabaka-s-palace-reconstruction/2466686-3784022-format-xhtml-m6xajhz/index.html>

<sup>13</sup> USAID SAFE Conflict Assessment reports July-Oct 2014, Jan-July 2015, March-April 2016

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.chimpreports.com/busoga-feud-as-kyabazinga-is-appointed-ambassador/>

integrity of the institution and the King. It is because of this that some of Kyabazinga's subjects are planning to file a petition in the constitutional court challenging the appointment. It should also be noted that in the Uganda constitution article 246 clause 3(e) states that a person shall not (while remaining a traditional leader) participate in partisan politics.<sup>15</sup> If approved by the parliament vetting committee that approves presidential nominees, Kyabazinga Nadiope will become the first sitting monarch in Uganda to hold such a position in what has been interpreted as the violation of Uganda's constitution that bans traditional leaders in partisan politics. The appointment of the Kyabazinga is likely to exacerbate conflict in the kingdom which has a history of conflict within the cultural institution. For six years, the kingdom had no Kyabazinga, as various princes claimed to be the legitimate Kyabazinga. The stalemate ended in September 2014 after the enthronement of Nadiope. The SAFE program's Jinja-based conflict monitors will continue to monitor the situation on the ground.

## **Western Region**

In the fragile Rwenzori region, tensions are growing after a group of Christians (Anglicans) in Bundibugyo district decided to breakaway from the mother diocese of Rwenzori and are now demanding their own diocese to be known as the West Rwenzori diocese.<sup>16</sup> The Christians accuse the mother diocese (that is based in Kabarole district) of oppression, mismanagement of funds and other irregularities. An Archdeacon that had been deployed by the mother diocese was immediately sent away by the Christians. The Anglican churches in Bundibugyo district have also been ordered not to remit any money to the mother diocese as is always the norm. In response the mother diocese has said they would hold talks with Christians in Bundibugyo and amicably come up with an agreeable position.<sup>17</sup>

This is not the first time that there has been tension in dioceses and churches. In the September 2016 conflict assessment, the SAFE program reported on tensions in the West Nile sub region following violent clashes between security forces and a section of residents

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<sup>15</sup> Uganda 1995 Constitution

<sup>16</sup> USAID SAFE Mobile coordinator-Rwenzori region

<sup>17</sup> Daily Monitor-January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017

opposed to the Arua Catholic Bishop, Sabino Ocan Odoki. In the October 2016 conflict assessment we reported on tension in the West Ankole Diocese following the decision by a group of Christians to sue the Archbishop of the Church of Uganda (COU) - His Grace Stanley Ntagali accusing him of allegedly taking over the Episcopal jurisdiction of the diocese to start the process of selecting a new Bishop. The Rwenzori region is undergoing political and ethnic tension and a religious conflict could exacerbate the situation.

In Kabarole District, the long standing conflict in the Toro kingdom between King Oyo and Prince David Kaijanangoma has re-erupted after Prince Kaijanangoma announced that he would be coronated in April 2017.<sup>18</sup> Prince Kaijanangoma previously declared himself the King (Omukama) of Toro, accusing his cousin King Oyo Nyimba of incompetence, abdicating his duties, misuse of land, spending most of his time in Kampala (the capital city), disrespecting cultural norms and failure to prevent his mother –the Queen Mother Best Kemigisha from interfering in Kingdom Affairs. The SAFE program has repeatedly reported on this conflict in several monthly conflict assessment reports.<sup>19</sup> Prince Kaijanangoma has also previously been arrested for inciting violence, holding illegal meetings and trespass while his supporters have also clashed with the police on a number of occasions. This conflict has divided the people of Toro into two camps and is threatening to tear the kingdom apart. Some people are now paying allegiance to the self-proclaimed king. Attempts to reconcile the two groups by the President of Uganda on July 13<sup>th</sup> 2015 by constituting a reconciliation committee comprising of religious leaders to resolve the conflict were not fruitful.<sup>20</sup> With the new coronation date announcement, there is fear that violence might occur. SAFE is aware that conflicts related to cultural institutions can become volatile and violent. SAFE's Rwenzori-based conflict monitors and the Kabarole based Mobile coordinator will continue to monitor the situation on the ground.

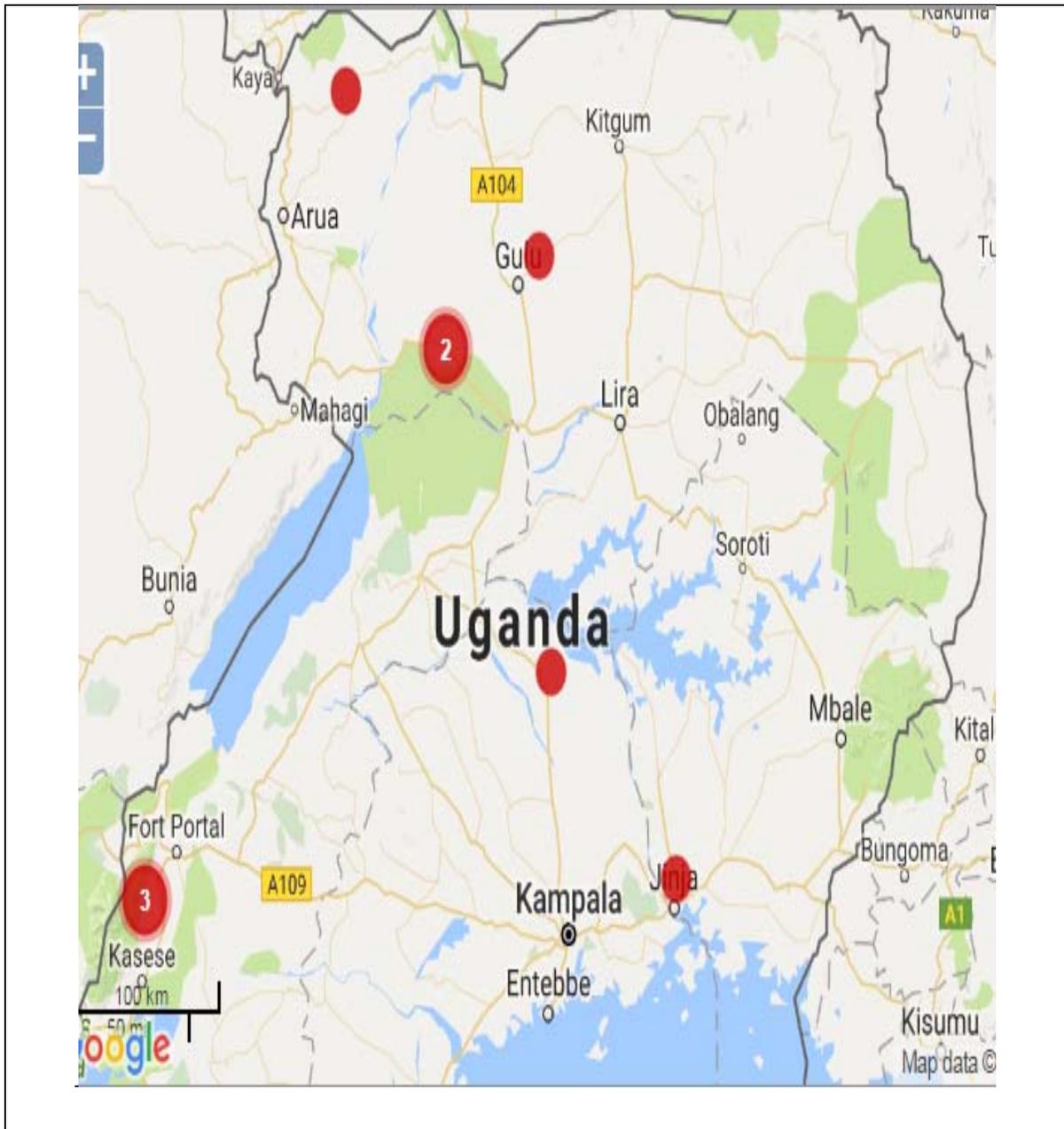
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<sup>18</sup> USAID SAFE Conflict Monitor-Kabarole District

<sup>19</sup> Ibid - March, April, July, August 2015 Conflict Assessment reports

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.theinsider.ug/museveni-in-tooro-to-reconcile-feuding-royals/>

**Map of Uganda Showing The Conflict Hotspots As Highlighted**  
**In This Report**



Source: <https://conflictmappinguganda.crowdmap.com/>

For Methodology used in writing this report and for copies of previous reports, please visit [www.safeprogram.org](http://www.safeprogram.org)