



## CCEDU STATEMENT ON THE BUTAMBALA MP BY-ELECTION – 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2012

*For Immediate Release*

### Executive Summary

No.	Candidate	Party	Votes
1.	Muwanga Kivumbi Muhammad	DP	14,764
2.	Kikulukunyu Faisal Ssali	NRM	12,792
3.	Tomusange Ibrahim Batemyeto	UFA	150
4.	Ssentongo Sharif Nambale	Independent	124
5.	Walungama Farouk	Independent	60

The Citizens' Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (CCEDU) would like to congratulate Mr. Muwanga Kivumbi Muhammad of the Democratic Party (DP) on winning the Butambala MP by-election held on September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

CCEDU also wishes to commend the rest of the candidates for their spirited performance, the Electoral Commission (EC) for successfully conducting the election and most of all the voters of Butambala for their vigilance and exemplary behavior during the entire process.

**CCEDU however wishes to express concern on the increasing deployment of un-uniformed and unidentified security personnel at polling stations as witnessed across most polling stations in Butambala. Although these civilian dressed operatives did not seem to directly interfere with the voting process, they at most polling stations took on the role of questioning the credentials of election observers and/or party agents. In other polling stations, the unidentified security personnel went as far as guiding the voting queues. Despite their presence in the polling stations, the EC too could not clearly identify these persons. Such deployment of unidentified detectives is likely to draw anxiety from voters in subsequent elections. CCEDU therefore calls upon the EC and the Uganda Police Force to adhere to the electoral laws of Uganda while managing election security.**

Below is the statement filed by the CCEDU observer mission in Butambala Constituency.

### **CCEDU Observer deployment**

The Citizens' Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (CCEDU) deployed 20 election observers to monitor the Butambala MP by-election. Butambala Constituency has a total 86 polling stations. CCEDU strategically sampled polling stations in all the six sub-counties of Butambala including: Gombe, Kibibi, Budde, Ngando, Kalamba and Bulu.

### **Cause of by-election**

The seat fell vacant after court nullified the election of NRM's Faisal Kikulukunyu over bribery and other election irregularities. The contestants in this race include NRM's Kikulukunyu Faisal Ssali, DP's Muwanga Kivumbi Muhammad, UFA's Tomusange Ibrahim, as well as independent candidates, Ssentongo Sharif Nambale and Walungama Farouk.

### **Opening time of polling stations**

CCEDU observers witnessed the opening of most polling stations and generally reported that voting started slightly after 7:30am contrary to 7:00am as required by the electoral laws of Uganda. The minor late start was orchestrated by the delay in the sorting and dispatching of voting material by the Electoral Commission.

### **Political party agents**

While both the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and the Democratic Party (DP) deployed agents at all the polling stations visited, deployment by the Uganda Federal Alliance (UFA) and the Independent candidates was relatively low and sparse.

### **Electoral Commission**

- **Logistics**

CCEDU noted the overall improved logistical organization on the side of the Electoral Commission (EC). Apart from deploying relatively well trained officials to manage the polling exercise, the EC introduced and popularized complaints' reporting toll free line and center at its Gombe office. Despite the setting up of the reporting center, no major complaints were registered by the EC.

### **Voting process**

- **Student voters at Ngando Sub-county polling station**

At Ngando sub-county headquarters polling station, the DP party agent raised the curiosity of locals when he observed that most of the voters on the register were from Budinse Memorial School and Ngando Community School and appeared to be underage. The voters register however revealed that all the student voters were 18 years and above. The same polling station registered a

conspicuously high number of voters who could not find their names on the register even though they claimed to have voted from the same place in the 2011 general elections.

- **Voters chauffeured to vote**

In Kibibi sub-county, vigilant locals attacked a driver of a Toyota Mark II vehicle who claimed to be ‘a good Samaritan’ chauffeuring voters from polling station to polling station. Locals at Katende A-M, N-Z and Bamulanze polling stations suspected that the voters in the said vehicle were attempting to vote multiple times. The mob directed the driver and the occupants of the vehicle to immediately leave the polling area.

- **‘Buying or facilitating voters?’**

In Gombe Town Council, the area LC1, Mr. Sulaiman Byekwaso was identified allegedly distributing UGX 1,000 notes to locals who were on their way to vote at the Gombe Play Ground A-Z and Gombe Play Ground N-Z polling stations. The incident drew a lot of rage from vigilant citizens who while attempting to beat up Mr. Byekwaso ended up scuffling with over 20 anti-riot police officers. Although no tear gas canisters or bullets were fired, the brawl brought voting and business in the area to a standstill. The locals contend that Mr. Byekwaso was bribing voters on behalf of the NRM candidate, Mr. Kikulukunyu Faisal Ssali.

### **Maintaining electoral security**

- **Security deployment**

Uniformed security deployment remained heavy around polling stations. At Kayenje town in Gombe ward for instance there is a contingent of over twenty (20) armed police officers deployed hardly 20 meters from the Polling Station. CCEDU is concerned about the potentials of such irrational deployment in the electoral process.

- **Shops and businesses closed**

Majority of the shops in Gombe town council remained closed for fear of potential violence. Hundreds of police officers patrolled both on foot and on police patrol trucks especially in the Gombe town area.

### **Election Observation**

Whereas the EC Election Observers’ guidelines provide for the observers’ free access to polling stations, the “Diary Checklist” that the EC gave to each of the polling constables prohibits observers from accessing the polling ring. The polling constables at Kayenje town and Bwetamiza polling stations questioned the CCEDU Election Observers in an attempt to deny them entry into the polling ring. The observers were later accepted to enter the polling ring after the interventions of the presiding officials at both polling stations. The polling constable at Bwetamiza admitted that she had received ‘orders from above’ to deny observers entry into the polling ring.

## **CCEDU Election Observer Mission – Butambala By-Election**

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