

MANY HAD QUIETLY WEIGHED THEIR CHANCES AGAINST HER POLITICAL DOMINANCE

By Mary Karugaba

The withdrawal of Bukedea Woman lawmaker Anita Among from the Speakership race has elicited mixed reactions from her colleagues, who described the development as an opportunity to reform Parliament.

Members of Parliament that *New Vision* spoke to said before Among's exit, the race appeared to be tightly controlled. For weeks, many aspirants had quietly weighed their chances against Among's political influence within the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM), where she remained one of the most powerful figures.

THE CONFIRMATION

In a tweet via her X account, Among said she would not seek re-election after "wide consultations and deep introspection" aimed at preserving unity within the NRM.

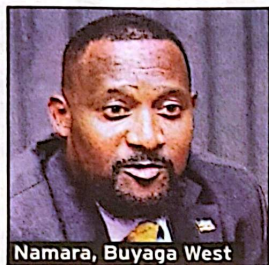
"I wish to categorically and unequivocally state that I will not be offering myself for the Speakership race of the 12th Parliament," Among stated.

Among, who rose from Deputy Speaker to Speaker in 2022 following the death of Jacob Oulanyah, said she remained grateful to President Yoweri Museveni, the NRM and Members of Parliament for entrusting her with leadership.

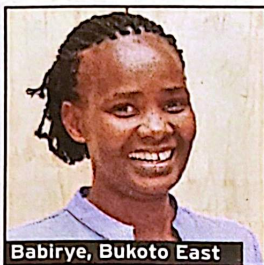
"I am greatly indebted to President Yoweri Museveni, my party, the NRM, and members of the 11th Parliament for giving me the opportunity to serve as deputy Speaker and Speaker," she said.

She also thanked her family, political allies and supporters for standing with her during her tenure at the helm of

AMONG'S SPEAKERSHIP EXIT: MPS SCRAMBLE FOR DEPUTY POSITION



Namara, Buyaga West



Babirye, Bukoto East



Kafuuzi, deputy AG



Kyomukama, Ibanda



Katusiime, Sheema



Kuteesa, Mwenge South

Parliament, one of the country's most influential institutions.

In her statement, however, Among signalled willingness to co-operate with state agencies investigating the allegations against her.

"In the meantime, I pledge to continue co-operating with all ongoing investigations as initiated by the relevant organs of the State to get to the root of all the allegations raised," she said.

EYES ON THE THRONE

Among's exit has, however, caused excitement among the people competing for the seat.

Among the first to celebrate the development was Aringa South lawmaker Alioni Adria, who said Among's withdrawal would make the speakership contest "smooth and easy."

"It is good that Anita Among is not in the race now. The journey is going to be smooth and easy without corruption," Adria told journalists at

Parliament shortly after the announcement.

Masindi Woman MP Florence Asiimwe Akiiki, another speakership hopeful, used the moment to renew attacks on Among's leadership style, arguing that Parliament now had an opportunity to reclaim institutional independence.

"She killed the business committee," Asiimwe said, during a joint press conference in Kampala.

Mbale City Woman MP Lydia Wanyoto, also framed the development as a moment for

BETWEEN THE LINES

Among's withdrawal follows investigations into allegations of corruption, abuse of office and accumulation of unexplained wealthy by security agencies.

Parliament to rebuild public trust.

However, attention is now turning to outgoing defence and veteran affairs minister

Jacob Oboth-Oboth who has since been endorsed by the Patrotic League of Uganda chairman Gen. Kainerugaba Muhoozi. Oboth is yet to be endorsed by the NRM Party.

Outgoing justice minister Norbert Mao, who earlier declared to unseat Among, urged MPs to use the moment to assert their independence and freely choose leaders capable of restoring confidence in Parliament.

"The President can guide, but ultimately parliamentarians should not act as if they lack agency," Mao said.

THE NEXT BEST SEAT

Following the exit of Among from the race, several NRM legislators declared interest in competing for the position of her deputy, Thomas Tayebwa.

Among those who have publicly expressed interest are Buyaga West MP Dennis Namara, Sheema Woman MP Katusiime Adrine Mwebesa, Mwenge South MP Mary

Kamuli Kuteesa, outgoing deputy Attorney General Jackson Kafuuzi, Jovine Kyomukama Kalisa and Bukoto East MP Sarah Babirye.

"Corruption is now the most important pillar of the President and even Gen Muhoozi Kainerugaba. His major weapon now and the Government is zero tolerance to corruption and I am coming as a crusader to fight corruption," Namara declared.

Babirye in a message on social media platform X said after deep reflection, engagement, and guided by the spirit of *For God and My Country*, she had decided to express her interest in serving as deputy Speaker of Parliament, 2026-2031.

Kuteesa said her background in law, governance and anti-corruption enforcement uniquely positioned her for the role.

Mwebesa pitched herself as a reform-minded technocrat seeking to modernise Parliament through technology systems.

In her manifesto, she says her work across 11 countries on governance, ICT and accountability systems under World Bank-funded programmes gives her the expertise to transform parliamentary operations.

Among Mwebesa's proposals is the rollout of "E-Parliament 2.0", a digital system intended to provide real-time tracking of parliamentary votes, committee reports and budget performance dashboards accessible to the public

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Tayebwa spoke out on contacting