'I don't want to be president'

House Speaker Among has become the latest in a long line of presumptive or declared suitors, stretching from Dr Kizza Besigye in 2001, through Amama Mbabazi in 2016.

BY PHILIP WAFULA

While the presidency is a coveted position, its allure has put prospective suitors in sharp focus of succession battles in the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party.

Parliament Speaker Anita Among has become the latest in a long line of presumptive or declared suitors, stretching from Dr Kizza Besigye in 2001, through Amama Mbabazi in 2016.

Ms Among, last month, gave the talk of eyeing the Uganda presidency a wide berth, reinforcing the belief that the top job is ring-fenced and that its limit should not be crossed, even when the Constitution grants every Ugandan above 18 years the right to contest for it.

While speaking at the Patriotic League of Uganda (PLU) headquarters in Kampala, Ms Among rebuked those reportedly spreading the claims that she harbours presidential ambitions for the next race in the 2031 elections.

PLU is a loose political pressure group pushing for the first son and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Gen Muhoozi Kainerugaba to be the "stand-by generator" or next leader of Uganda after his father, President Yoweri Museveni.

Among joins denial team

But Ms Among, perhaps mindful not to cross the undeclared red line, said: "I have heard a section of people out there speaking; I don't want to call it rubbish, but it is rubbish. That Honourable Anita in 2031 wants to stand for the presidency. I want to tell the Ugandans that even where I am now, I have overachieved.

"I didn't expect to be here (Speaker), and I am saying that in 2031, I am retiring from active politics. I am happy that in one way, God made me become a Speaker because I didn't (even) expect to become a Speaker," she said.

Ms Among became Speaker of the 11th Parliament on March 25, 2022, replacing the late Jacob Oulanyah. "I only thought of trying (to become) Deputy Speaker because I wanted to help Honourable Oulanyah to win, and when I tried, I got it, and by bad luck, Honourable Oulanyah passed on, and I ended up being a Speaker," Ms Among explained.

To further downplay her ambition and distance herself from the presidency, Ms Among said she doesn't even know how to cock a gun, a weapon the current President used to ascend to power in 1986, retain it, and suppress many revolts.

"This country still needs people like …. I don't have that patience to be a President; I don't even have the urge, I don't even have the wish, but I am happy that in one way or the other, God gave me [an opportunity] to be a Speaker."

Besides Ms Among's self-denial on eyeing the presidency, there has also been the fear of rivalry and being upstaged by junior or less deserving suitors among the presumptive line-up of successors.

Kutesa dismisses talk

In a similar self-denunciation, in March 2011, then Foreign Affairs minister Sam Kutesa ruled himself out of the potential race to succeed President Museveni, and described any succession-related stories with him in the picture as being 'extremely diversionary'.

WikiLeaks had revealed the alleged jostling over succession in which Mr Kutesa was put in a certain camp with Ms Amelia Kyambadde, the former principal private secretary (PPS) to the President, reportedly trying to sideline the Mbabazi camp.

WikiLeaks is a non-profit organisation that publishes leaked documents, hosting millions of files exposing government and corporate secrets.

Addressing this matter, Mr Kutesa said at the time: "Every time we finish an election, the next five years, people are engaged in succession battles. I think people should concentrate on doing well what they are doing now."

Mr Kutesa said he had heard about the succession debate since 2011 and wondered if the presidency was vacant to elicit such talk.

Pressed on if he would consider running for President, Mr Kutesa was categorical: "No, I wouldn't! I think I have served enough, and I can best serve the country at this level [Foreign minister]."

Mbabazi and jumping the queue

A decade earlier, when Opposition leader Dr Kizza Besigye declared his candidacy for the 2001 presidential election, Mr Amama Mbabazi, then minister in-charge of the Presidency, famously accused him of "jumping the queue" to succeed President Museveni.

As a veteran of the Front for National Salvation (Fronasa) and later working in the external wing of the successor National Resistance Movement (NRM), recruiting and smuggling fighters and equipment, Mr Mbabazi, who was also a former security minister, assumed he was more senior and in pole position to succeed Mr Museveni.

But in May 2014, Mr Mbabazi came face-to-face with the hurdles of the succession game.



President Yoweri Museveni (right) and his then vice Prof Gilbert Bukenya (left). Prof Bukenya often imitated Mr Museveni so much that he would don wide-brimmed hats and gesticulate like the President.



Also denied



Sam Kutesa



Amama Mbabazi

The police in Kampala vowed to arrest suspected pro-Mbabazi NRM youth soliciting signatures to hold a delegates' conference without approval from the NRM party structures.

The police action came days after they arrested three youth who were soliciting signatures from NRM members over an alleged objective to hold a delegates' conference with a proposal to push then prime minister Amama Mbabazi to stand as the NRM presidential flag bearer in 2016.

Mr Mbabazi immediately told a press conference in Kampala that he would not be a candidate in the election where President Museveni would be running.

"I will not stand against President Museveni. This is something I have said before, and I am repeating now for the last time. I will not stand against the President. There are individuals who think I should stand in 2016, which is also because that is democracy, but I ultimately decide what I will do and not those individuals."

Referring to himself as a "disciplined cadre of the Movement", Mr Mbabazi said the ruling party has structures and organs that deal with leadership-related questions, something he is not about to undermine, but work within as it reforces its responsibilities at the time.

"I do what I am deployed to do by my party And this has been the case for the last 40 years," Mr Mbabazi said.

Days later, a section of the NRM youth league held a press conference and castigated the NRM caucus for endorsing a candidate outside the party structures, but said they had nominated Mr Mbabazi to run in the delegates' conference – the proper structure.

But the final blow to knock out this fuzzy ambition of Mbabazi to succeed Mr Museveni within the NRM came during the NRM Caucus retreat at the National Leadership Centre in Kyankwanzi in 2014.

The plot to execute this was left to then-Northern Uganda Youth MP Evelyn Anite, who sank to her knees and begged President Museveni to seek re-election in 2016 as the NRM party's sole candidate.

Mr Mbabazi, with no option left at the retreat, appended his name to endorse the resolution. However, on June 25, 2015, Mr Mbabazi, in a recorded video, bounced back to formally declare his bid for the presidency as an independent candidate, challenging his long-time colleague, President Museveni.

Prof Bukenya's turn

Earlier, in July 2007, the lot fell on then vice president, Prof Gilbert Bukenya, to run away from the talk of eyeing the presidency.

In a statement issued by his office through Ms Lindah Nabusaayi, VP Bukenya denied nursing any plans of assuming the country's top job after reports suggested he was pursuing a presidential bid.

This followed loud allegations that the old, good professor had travelled to Kabale District incognito, fuelling speculation of such an underground bid.

But the reports were quickly rebutted as "outright lies" and "unfounded rumours", and that Prof Bukenya was instead traversing the country to promote Bona Bagaggawale (Prosperity for All), a government poverty alleviation programme.

At the time, a section of Ugandans pointed to Prof Bukenya's avid master parody of President Museveni's mannerisms of ideological speak, pep talks, dressing, swagger, and even gestures.

Before that, in 2005, Prof Bukenya had kicked up a political storm with claims that the government was being controlled by a corrupt mafia clique that was plotting his downfall due to his alleged ever-increasing popularity and his closeness to the powerful Catholic Church.

When he took to traversing the country to popularise the cultivation of upland rice, he was accused of using those tours to hold secret meetings with soldiers and Catholic leaders, an insinuation that he was pursuing presidential ambitions.

As recently as August 2021, Prof Bukenya reignited the "mafia talk", and advised then newly-appointed Prime Minister, Ms Robinah Nabbanja, to "go slow".

What others say

Dr Gerald Kagambirwre Karyeija, a professor of Public Administration and Management at the Uganda Management Institute (UMI), reckoned that expressing interest in the presidency always attracts adverse attention from the State.

"Ms Among is also expressing her loyalty to President Museveni and indicating that, in case Gen Muhoozi becomes a presidential candidate under PLU, she is proactively subordinating herself to him.

Kira Municipality MP, Mr Ibrahim Ssemujju Nganda, puts it more tersely when he said: "The Muhoozi army is determined to destroy anyone with presidential ambition. If you want to be spared, you declare your lack of interest and survive for another day."

He added: "For Speaker Among, you have to go back to the commissioning of her health facility. She named [medical] wards after Museveni's children… and so on. Only Gen Muhoozi is supposed to have and express ambitions. With interest in Speakership, you must show you will not use it as a platform to mobilise for the presidency."

Ms Perry Aritua, the executive director of Women Democracy Network-Uganda Chapter, said the Constitution and the Presidential Elections Act are clear on the terms that one needs to fulfil in order to become president, including those seeking the top job from within a political party.

"I think Ms Among is sort of 'agitated' about the conversation around her ambitions, and this may be because of history. If you read the past in terms of the men who aspired for this position, which courted some subtle intimidation of the previous aspirants, that may inform the statement that the Speaker made.

"Otherwise, within the law, it is within her own right to aspire for this position; the Constitution is clear. I think it is just the past, which is leading to some of the statements that she makes in the media in terms of not aspiring," Ms Aritua said in an interview for this article.

Mr Timothy Chemonges, the executive director at the Centre for Policy Analysis (CEPA), said Ms Among's self-denial sounds more like "a response of convenience meant to avoid unnecessary attention and being targeted in a system where showing presidential ambition can be risky".

Mr Chemonges noted that Ms Among's deflection paints a picture of someone whose rise has been spontaneous and not planned. He says Ms Among's statement can also calm the situation while leaving the door open.

"So, the denial doesn't fully settle the question, but just manages it for now," he said.

Mr Chemonges said even if Ms Among says she never set out to be Speaker, and her current position does not in any way signal any bigger ambition, the role of Speaker comes with national visibility, influence, and the ability to build strong political networks.

"When you look at how that position is exercised, it can naturally project someone beyond just parliamentary leadership. So, even if she says she has no presidential ambitions, it's understandable why many would still read her trajectory as one that could eventually point in that direction."



Speaker of Parliament Anita Among and President Museveni interact during a guided tour of the presidential farm in Kisozi on January 24. PHOTOS/COURTESY/FILE

OPINION

"I think Ms Among is sort of agitated about the conversation around her ambitions, and this may be because of history. If you read the past in terms of the men who aspired for this position, which courted some subtle intimidation of the previous aspirants, that may inform the statement that the Speaker made," **Ms Perry Aritua, the ED of Women Democracy Network-Uganda Chapter**

1986

Mr Museveni has been in power since January 26, 1986, following a successful five-year guerrilla war. He is Uganda's longest serving President.

PAX insurance

PAX INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED

SUMMARISED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Pax Insurance Company Limited as at 31 December,2025 and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Company as at 31 December 2025, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs), the requirements of the Companies' Act of Uganda, 2012 and Insurance Act 2017.

Emphasis of the matter

Proposed sale of shares to Centenary Group Limited

Without qualifying our opinion, we draw attention to the proposed sale of shares by PAX Insurance Company Limited to Centenary Group Limited. The Board of Directors has approved a potential sale of shares, which remains subject to regulatory approval from the Insurance Regulatory Authority in accordance with the requirements of the Insurance Act, 2017 and other applicable regulatory provisions governing insurance companies.

Key audit matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in our professional judgment, were of most significance in our audit of the financial statements of the current year. These matters were addressed in the context of our audit of the financial statements as a whole, and in forming our opinion thereon, and we do not provide a separate opinion on these matters. There were no key audit matters.

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Directors' report, but does not include the financial statements and our auditors' report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Responsibilities of Directors for the Financial Statements

The directors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the requirements of the Companies' Act of Uganda, 2012, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so. Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting processes.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.

We communicated with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit. We also provide the directors with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.

From the matters communicated with the directors, we determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements of the current year and are therefore the key audit matters. We describe these matters in our auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, we determine that a matter should not be communicated in our report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

As required by the Companies Act No.1 of 2012 and Insurance Act 2017, we report to you, based on our audit, that:

(i) we have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purposes of our audit;

(ii) in our opinion proper books of account have been kept by the company, so far as appears from our examination of those books; and

(iii) the Company's statement of financial position and statement of comprehensive income agree with the books of account

The engagement partner on the audit resulting in this independent auditor's report is CPA Julius Tumuhimbise - P0209

Julius Tumuhimbise
Engagement Partner
TUJ & Associates
Certified public Accountants
Kampala
REF: JT/144/03/2026

Statement of financial position as at 31 December 2025

	31 December 2025	31 December 2024
		Ugx '000
CAPITAL EMPLOYED		
Share capital	11,557,809	11,066,309
Asset revaluation surplus	710,276	743,602
Contingency reserve	-	1,513,900
Retained Earnings	4,192,514	2,327,581
Shareholders' funds	16,460,599	15,651,392
Non-current liabilities		
Borrowings; non current portion	1,342,503	1,636,721
Deferred tax	51,528	192,804
	1,394,031	1,829,525
	17,854,630	17,480,917
REPRESENTED BY		
Non-current Assets		
Property, Plant and equipment	1,257,852	8,980,961
Right of use asset	-	18,757
Intangible assets	292,867	439,299
Investment property	8,552,506	-
Government securities	2,917,784	2,917,784
	13,021,009	12,356,801
Current Assets		
Inventory	46,690	43,302
Other receivables	1,022,441	2,224,489
Cash and cash equivalents	1,939,357	186,029
Insurance Contract assets	767,781	660,700
Reinsurance contract assets	777,037	114,580
Deposit with financial institutions	8,800,000	8,750,000
Deposit with group insurance company	170,489	143,211
Deposit with other institutions	430,142	413,064
Withholding tax recoverable	-	211,958
Tax recoverable	180,608	-
	14,134,545	10,747,713
Current liabilities		
Other payables	4,154,183	937,831
Borrowings: current portion	295,348	296,488
Insurance contract liabilities	3,887,400	2,836,716
Reinsurance contract liabilities	785,039	841,528
Cash over draft	178,964	563,143
Tax payable	-	157,891
	9,300,924	5,633,597
Net current Assets	4,833,621	5,114,116
	17,854,630	17,480,917

Statement of comprehensive income as at 31 December 2025

	2025	2024
	Ugx '000	Ugx '000
Insurance revenue	11,583,366	10,754,920
Insurance service expense	(6,843,842)	(3,955,632)
Net reinsurance contracts expenses	297,473	(1,047,269)
Net insurance service results	**5,036,997**	**5,752,119**
Investment income	1,396,950	1,291,776
Rental income	717,104	407,625
Other income	156,227	94,108
Net investment income	**2,270,281**	**1,793,509**
Employee cost	(2,255,792)	(1,694,727)
Administrative expenses	(3,174,735)	(2,997,499)
Operating expenses	(677,963)	(602,171)
Finance costs	(275,859)	(117,690)
Total Management expenses	**(6,384,349)**	**(5,612,087)**
Profit before tax	922,929	1,933,536
Tax charge	(125,847)	(475,051)
Rental tax	(107,566)	(61,143)
Profit for the year	689,516	1,397,342
Total Comprehensive profit for the year	**689,516**	**1,397,342**

KEY RATIOS	2025	2024
Business growth	15%	21.8%
Market share	1.4%	1.4%
Capital Adequacy ratio	219%	225%

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the board of Directors on 26th of March 2026 and were signed on its behalf by:

CPA Dr. Saturninus Kasozi Mulindwa
Chairperson Board of Directors

Mr. John Ssempera
Chief Executive Officer

OTHER DIRECTORS
Mr Paul Koorinaiko
Mr. Charles Laiku
Mr. Charles Owor Okoth
Fr. Alfred Asiku Tulu
Fr. Eustachius Lwemalika
Rt. Rev. Bishop Vincent Kirabo Amooti
Sr. Bernadette Nalaleero
Rt. Rev. Bishop Sabino Ochan Odoki

COMPANY SECRETARY
S&L Advocates
KAMPALA UGANDA

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Regulated by the Regulatory