BY ANTHONY WESAKA & JULIET KIGONGO



MrJoel Makai (left), who manages an estate in Kyanja, Kampala City, says Mr Okello rented a house at the estate. PHOTO/ABUBAKER LUBOWA

Knives were recovered from Okello's house – estate manager

Presiding Judge Alice Komuhangi Khaukha: This should be PW10 (prosecution witness 10)?

Jonathan Muwaganya, Chief State Attorney: Yes, my lord.

Judge: Good afternoon, sir. What is your name?

Witness: Joel Makai.

Judge: How old are you?

Makai: Thirty one.

Judge: What religion do you profess?

Makai: Protestant.

Judge: You are going to pick the Bible and swear to speak the truth. Makai takes the oath

Muwaganya: You said you are 31 years old?

Makai: Yes.

Muwaganya: Where do you stay

Makai: Kisaasi.

Muwaganya: What do you do for a living?

Makai: I manage estates.

Muwaganya: You manage which estate, Mr Makai?

Makai: I manage houses under the name of Sanwiza Estate.

Muwaganya: Spell that.

Makai: Sanwiza Estates Limited.

Muwaganya: For how long have you been managing this estate?

Makai: Seven years.

Muwaganya: Do you know the accused? (pointing towards Christopher Okello Onyum)?

Makai: Yes, I know him.

Muwaganya: Who is he?

Makai: He is Mr Christopher Okello Onyum.

Muwaganya: How did you come to know him?

Makai: He is my tenant in Kyanja.

Muwaganya: How did you come to know him?

Makai: He came with a house broker in March this year. He was looking around for a house to rent. Luckily, he found one in the estate I manage and then asked about the rent. We told him that the house went for Shs400,000, and we started with four months' upfront. He said it was okay. When he agreed, we gave him our tenancy agreement. After going through it, he asked us how he was going to pay.

Muwaganya: Go slow.

Makai: I told him that we don't receive cash, but since he had come with a house broker, I told him to pay Shs100,000 so that we could pay the house broker for his commission, and the balance of Shs1.5m would be paid directly into the bank account.

Muwaganya: How much was he supposed to pay?

Makai: He was supposed to pay Shs1.6m, with Shs100,000 to be paid in cash, meaning Shs1.5m was to be paid into the bank account.

Judge: Go slow, please.

Muwaganya: What happened?

Makai: He requested a bank account number.

Muwaganya: Did you give him the account number?

Makai: Yes.

Muwaganya: What followed?

Makai: He went and paid.

Muwaganya: How much?

Makai: Shs1.5m

Muwaganya: What followed?

Makai: He came back with a bank slip. He gave me Shs100,000 to be paid to the broker.

Muwaganya: What followed?

Makai: I asked him to sign the tenancy agreement.

Muwaganya: What followed?

Makai: I asked for his identification documents.

Muwaganya: Did he give you any?

Makai: He gave me an American passport and a driver's licence, also from America.

Muwaganya: What followed?

Makai: I gave him the keys to the house to start sleeping in it.

Muwaganya: Did he enter the house?

Makai: Before entering, shortly after giving him the keys, I promised to take him to the area LC1 for introduction. He said there was no problem and left to start using his house.

Muwaganya: Thereafter, what followed?

Makai: After some time, I went to his house, and I asked him if I could take him to LC, as I had told him. He asked me whether the LC's home was far. I told him it wasn't far. He accepted, and he locked his house, and off we went to meet the LC chairperson.

Muwaganya: How did you go there?

Makai: We used a motorcycle.

Muwaganya: Who rode it?

Makai: Myself.

Muwaganya: While going there, did anything transpire in the process of taking him there?

Makai: Yes.

Muwaganya: What did he say?

Makai: He asked me if he wanted to direct someone to his new place and how he would direct him. I told him that we are going to Kyanja Ring Road. I also asked him where he had been staying before, and he told me in Ggaba, but he added that most of the time, he had been staying in America. That was all while on our way to the LC1.

Muwaganya: Did you get to the LC?

Muwaganya: Who did you meet?

Makai: The chairman.

Muwaganya: What happened to the chairman?

Makai: We introduced ourselves to him. The good thing is that the chairman knew the houses that Okello had rented. I told him that I was the caretaker, and I told him I had brought him for an introduction. The chairman asked him his name, and then he gave me a document to show that I had introduced Okello to the area authorities.

Muwaganya: What followed?

Makai: We came back together, and I dropped him at his house. He asked me whether I needed some fuel. I told him not to worry because I had some fuel. He then went into his house, and I also proceeded to go and do my work.

Muwaganya: Anything else you want to tell the court?

Makai: After like two days, he called me, asking for a copy of the tenancy agreement. I told him I would be taking it to him. He said there was no problem, though he said most of the time, he is never around during the day, before requesting that in case I brought it and he wasn't there, I should leave it behind with the *askari*.

Muwaganya: Had you taken it to him?

Makai: No.

Muwaganya: What happened?

Makai: It's the owner of the house who signs on it; that's when we could give him a copy.

Muwaganya: When the accused was signing the tenancy agreement, were you there?

Makai: Yes.

Muwaganya: Where did it go?

Makai: I retained it.

Muwaganya: What followed?

Makai: The landlord signed the tenancy agreement.

Muwaganya: Who else signed on it?

Makai: No one else apart from the landlord and Mr Okello.

Muwaganya: What followed?

Makai: I was supposed to make a photocopy and give it to Mr Okello.

Muwaganya: Do you have the tenancy agreement that you signed with Mr Okello?

Makai: Yes, I do.

Muwaganya: How about the LC letter that the chairman gave you, introducing him?

Makai: I also have it... I just didn't find time to deliver it to him.

Muwaganya: What else happened?

Makai: After some time, I received a phone call from the area defence secretary telling me how Okello had committed crimes in Ggaba.

Muwaganya: Did he specify which offence he had allegedly committed?

Makai: He told me he had killed some children in a certain school in Ggaba.

Muwaganya: What else?

Makai: He said they needed me and a copy of the keys to Okello's house.

Muwaganya: Did you go there?

Makai: Yes.

Muwaganya: What did you find?

Makai: Police with Okello in handcuffs.

Muwaganya: Why didn't they use Okello's key to open the house?

Makai: They told me he had thrown his copy away.

Muwaganya: What happened?

Makai: I asked them why they wanted to open his house. They told me they wanted to search it. The fact that Mr Okello was himself present, and there were police officers together with the defence [secretary], I opened the house, and they started searching it. They recovered some items. They recorded them, packed them, took them, closed the house, and went away with those items and Okello too.

Muwaganya: Were you required for anything after the search?

Makai: They asked me to sign the search certificate that indicated the item recovered from his house.

Muwaganya: Do you remember some of the things that they recovered and took?

Makai: I remember some. There were two laptops, a flash disc, a file with papers, and knives.

Muwaganya: How many knives?

Makai: I don't remember the actual number, and also two phones.

Muwaganya: Do you remember any documentation being recovered?

Makai: Two American passports. That is what I remember.

Muwaganya: If I showed you the search certificate, would you recognise it

Makai: The heading.

Muwaganya: Other than the headline, what else would make you recognise it?

Makai: There is my signature too.

Muwaganya: When is it dated?

Makai: On April 3rd

Muwaganya: Could you confirm which number you signed on the search certificate?

Makai: As the 9th witness.

Muwaganya: I apply to tender in the search certificate as an exhibit

Judge: As an exhibit for identification?

Muwaganya: Sorry, my lord, for identification.

Judge: A search certificate is admitted for identification.

Shs1.6m
RENT OKELLO PAID FOR KYANJA HOUSE

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CamScanner