

Contention. More than 10,000 families have reportedly been evicted from more than 30 square miles of land and their property destroyed since 2015 to date.

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Activists petition committee over Mubende land evictions

MUBENDE. Rights activists have petitioned the commission of inquiry into land matters to intervene into land grabbing and violations committed during evictions in Mubende District.

It is alleged that more than 10,000 families have been evicted from more than 30 square miles of land and their property destroyed since 2015 to date.

In the complaint, two organisations: Witnessradio and Human Rights Enforcement Foundation (HUREF) accuse high profile government officials and security agencies of conniving to protect individuals and or companies who forcibly grab land and evict people from their land without the due process of the law.

They contend that land grabbing and eviction is becoming a complex matter to local communities in larger Mubende area.

The seven-member commission chaired by Justice Catherine Bamugemereire is inquiring into the law, processes and procedures in land acquisition, land administration, and management.

The commission is currently on a 'technical break' after it suspended its operations because of lack of funds after only nine weeks



Probe. Commission of land inquiry chairperson Catherine Bamugemereire, (right) and commissioner Mary Oduka Ochan in Kampala recently. PHOTO BY STEPHEN WANDERA

of work.

Last week, Justice Bamugemereire asked the public to continue bringing complaints during the technical break because the offices remained open.

The commission is seeking to identify, investigate and inquire into the effectiveness of dispute resolution mechanisms available to persons involved in land disputes.

The complaints include a case of

Chinese company, Formosa Tree Planting Company which since 2015 has allegedly forcefully acquired more than 10 square miles of land hosting more than 10 villages in Maddudu and Butoloogo sub-counties; the eviction of 200 families from Bunakabwa village, Buwekula Sub-county by businessman Wilfred Bugingo from two square miles; and the Nalutuntu Sub-county case where Abid Alam/Mityana Farm Enterprises and Basil Batarangaya allegedly evicted more than 2,000 families from 12 square miles.

"We will listen to all the complainants to verify the information to make recommendation to government to take action against the culprits."

JUSTICE CATHERINE BAMUGEMEREIRE

Other cases include the eviction of 1,250 families from 480 hectares of land in the villages of Kisagala, Kisagazi and Kawolo in Butoloogo Sub-county by landlord Samwiri Nanyenya Bivanju and another eviction by Mityana Farm Enterprises of 350 families on five square miles in five villages.

The accused companies and government officials in the district are yet to file their defence before the commission.