

INTER-AGENCY SECURITY UNDER GEN. MUHOOZI

BY SIMON MASABA

In the complex, multi-dimensional security environment that Uganda navigates in the twenty-first century, no single institution – however professional and well-resourced – can address all threats alone.

Organised criminal syndicates operate across jurisdictions, exploiting gaps between agencies. Drug traffickers use sophisticated networks that span international borders. Armed gangs recruit widely and arm themselves through illegal channels that require intelligence from multiple sources to identify and disrupt. Cattle rustlers operate in remote areas where the police-to-population ratio remains challenging. Against these complex threats, Uganda has deployed its most powerful security asset: unity of command and inter-agency co-ordination, built under the leadership of Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba.

Gen Muhoozi Kainerugaba serves as the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) of the Uganda People's Defence Forces. He plays a pivotal co-ordinating role across Uganda's entire security architecture – bringing together the Uganda Police Force, the Uganda People's Defence Forces, Uganda Prisons Service, Internal Security Organisation, External Security Organisation, and other specialised agencies in a unified operational framework.

The 2025 Annual Crime Report acknowledges, directly and with gratitude, that the Force's successes were achieved through this strong inter-agency mechanism under General Muhoozi's able leadership.

UPDF-UPF PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

The partnership between the Uganda Police Force and the Uganda People's Defence Forces is one of the most operationally-significant bilateral relationships in Uganda's security ecosystem. In 2025 and into 2026, this partnership produced concrete, measurable results.

Joint operations targeting armed criminal gangs, cattle rustlers, drug traffickers, and organised criminal networks yielded thousands of arrests, the recovery of illegal firearms and the disruption of criminal infrastructure that had operated for years.

Since February 2026, police working alongside UPDF and other sister security agencies arrested at least 15,000 suspects in one of the most wide-ranging anti-crime campaigns in recent memory. These operations spanned all 32 police regions and targeted street criminality, boda-boda



The success of our operations was largely attributable to effective inter-agency collaboration and coordinated efforts with the ODPP, FIA, ISO, UPDF, the Judiciary and other stakeholders.

banditry, armed robbery gangs, narcotics traffickers, cattle rustlers and organised criminal networks. Of the 15,000-plus suspects arrested, 3,160 were released on caution – 2,186 with fingerprints captured – and 974 released on police bond, with the remainder facing prosecution.

The operations underscore what security professionals have long argued: that joint operations, with the planning and tactical capacity of the UPDF complementing the investigative and community intelligence of the UPF, produce outcomes that neither agency could achieve independently. The UPDF brings firepower, mobility and the authority to operate in environments that push the boundaries of police capacity; the UPF brings community knowledge, investigative expertise and the legal framework for prosecution. Together, they are formidable.

THE PRISONS PARTNERSHIP: CLOSING THE RECIDIVISM LOOP

One of the most important – and often under-recognised – dimensions of Uganda's interagency security architecture is the partnership between police and the Uganda Prisons Service. Uganda's prisons are built to hold 23,000 inmates but are currently holding over 70,000 – more than three times their designed capacity. With 14,916 staff managing 269 facilities across 19 administrative regions, the Prisons Service faces immense pressure. The risk that this overcrowding creates for recidivism – the return of released



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to criminal activity – is one of the most significant security challenges facing the country.

The Savannah Region Crime Review Meeting of April 2026 adopted a systematic strategy for the follow-up and rehabilitation of released prisoners, recognising that the cycle of re-offending is one of the key drivers of persistent crime in certain areas.

Security officials committed to monitoring former offenders after release, linking them to rehabilitation programmes, and maintaining inter-agency intelligence sharing to prevent them from being reabsorbed into criminal networks. This proactive approach

evolution in Uganda's crime prevention strategy.

As Uganda enters the period of consolidation following the 2026 General Election, General Muhoozi's co-ordinating role will be more important than ever. New security challenges – including the growing sophistication of cybercrime, the persistent threat of cross-border criminal networks, and the challenges posed by rapid urbanisation – will require the kind of co-ordinated, multi-agency response that has defined Uganda's security success in recent years.

The architecture is in place; the