

BY KARIM MUYOBO

RCC rescinds Katanga land directive

PAST COURT RULINGS

At the centre of the dispute is Pastor Daniel Walugembe, who claims substantial kibanja interests in the area. It is said he purchased these interests from family members previously recognised as bona fide occupants. Court records indicate that in 2015, then High Court judge Alfonse Owiny-Dollo ruled that Makerere University holds the registered title to the land, but also recognised certain occupants and their licensees as bona fide Katanga valley residents. In a subsequent 2019 ruling, High Court judge Alexandria Rugadya Nkonge dismissed a case filed by more than 100 people challenging him.

court orders on this land and the risk of contempt of court, I hereby rescind my earlier directives," Mr Kagenyi said.

He added that operations at the contested washing bay, which had been earmarked for takeover by the developer, would continue uninterrupted, and urged residents to remain calm.

"I appeal to all parties to stay peaceful and live harmoniously. No one will be evicted. Everyone should safeguard their interests without engaging in conflict," he said.

Ongoing wrangles

Despite the reversal, Mr Kagenyi indicated that efforts to resolve the long-standing dispute are ongoing. He said he had written to President Museveni proposing that the government acquires the land through the land fund, construct low-cost housing, or enter into agreements with occupants.

"We are awaiting guidance from the

President on the way forward," he said.

Local leaders welcomed the RCC's decision but called for a lasting solution to the dispute, which has persisted for years.

Mr Thomas Bagonza, chairperson of Kimwanyi Zone in Katanga, said while the withdrawal of the directive had eased tensions, underlying ownership conflicts remain unresolved.

"We need a permanent remedy. The matter has taken too long, yet all parties know their interests. There should be a way for people to coexist peacefully," he said.

At the centre of the dispute is Pastor Daniel Walugembe, who claims substantial kibanja interests in the area. According to Mr Bagonza, Walugembe purchased these interests from family members previously recognised as bona fide occupants.

Court records indicate that in 2015, then High Court judge Alfonse Owiny-Dollo ruled that Makerere University holds the registered title to the land, but also recognised certain occupants and their licensees as bona fide residents of Katanga valley.

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Unfazed

Speaking separately, Pastor Walugembe said he has no dispute with other residents as long as his rights are respected.

"I was surprised by the earlier directive for my arrest, yet court orders had already cleared my position. It is good that the situation has now been clarified," he said.

The Katanga land dispute remains one of Kampala's most protracted urban land conflicts, involving competing claims between registered landowners, kibanja holders, and occupants, with repeated calls for government intervention.