The Act strengthens rights for vulner- Mr Owere, who is also the chief labour Ms Esther Davi...

Museveni disowns Sovereignty Bill

President Museveni said a Bill that scares away foreign direct investment (FDI) and blocks financial inflows is not what he tabled in Cabinet.

BY BUSEIN SAMILU

Following a robust opposition against the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026, on account of several of its perceived negative impact on the economy and other financial aspects, President Museveni yesterday disowned the Bill and instructed the government Chief Whip to redraft it.

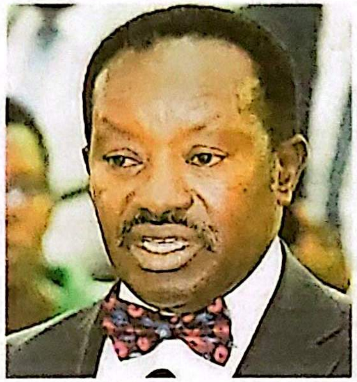
A few hours after Mr Museveni distanced himself from the Bill, Mr Wilson Kajwengye, the chairperson of the joint committee on Defence and Internal Affairs, and Legal and Parliamentary Affairs that scrutinised the Bill, told *Daily Monitor* they had, at the tail end of their consultation, presented to the President grave concerns raised by the majority of submissions.

"We presented to him the concerns of the stakeholders, and he agreed with us on most of the clauses. We welcome the President's views and shall amend the contentious clauses and present our report before Parliament on Tuesday next week," Mr Kajwengye said.

President Museveni, in a letter he posted on his official microblogging platform X, wondered how the Bill, which his Cabinet initiated to safeguard the country's autonomy, ended up scaring away foreign direct investment (FDI) and blocking financial inflows.

"Of recent, I have noticed a lot of *orwaari* (noise, *kelele*), regarding the Sovereignty Bill. Which Sovereignty Bill is the *rwaari* about? The one I initiated in the Cabinet or another one? The Bill will stop FDIs (Foreign Direct Investments), support for religious bodies from abroad, Remittances from Ugandans working abroad, etc., etc. Really!!

President Yoweri Museveni



Mr Wilson Kajwengye, chairperson of the joint committee of Defence and Internal Affairs, and Legal and Parliamentary Affairs

Crack in that Bill.
The NRM and Ugandans have made choices on politics, social issues, diplomatic issues, and economic issues over the last 40 years. None of them says: Do not send to Uganda or take out of Uganda money you have earned legally anywhere in the world; do not send church donations to or from Uganda; do not receive or send out remittances from Ugandans working abroad. We run a free economy. Forex is bought and sold in privately run forex bureaus,"
- President Museveni

That is not the Bill I initiated," Mr Museveni wrote.

He added, "The Bill I initiated was about what we fought for and what the whole of Africa fought for ever since 1900 when the whole of Africa, except for Ethiopia, had been shamefully colonised after 400 years of slave trade because of our egocentric kings who were spending more energy causing wars among us than uniting us to defend ourselves."

In the proposed Bill, the government seeks to regulate foreign influence through regulating foreign funding, defining foreigners, and their Ugandan agents, and tagging hefty punishments to would-be offenders of the proposed law.

The draft law lists five categories as foreigners, and include a non-Ugandan citizen, a Ugandan citizen residing outside Uganda, and a foreign government, consulate, high commission, embassy, or other diplomatic mission.

The Bill further defines a foreigner as a corporation, company, non-governmental organisation, or other legal entity, and an international or multinational organisation.

Clause 2 of the Bill further defines an agent of a foreigner as a person who acts as an agent, representative, employee, or servant of a foreigner, and these, according to Clause 14, are supposed to be registered by the minister of Internal Affairs.

Should they fail to register, the agents of foreigners will face 10 years in prison and a Shs1 billion fine, or both punishments. The issuance of the certificate of registration will be done at the discretion of the minister after the application has gone through a thorough process.

For instance, an individual found guilty of engaging in any activity, soliciting, receiving, or obtaining any assistance from a foreigner to sponsor or organise a meeting or any function to promote foreign policy in Uganda that has not been adopted by Cabinet will face 20 years in prison and be fined Shs2 billion.

The legal entities that do the same shall be fined two hundred thousand currency points (Shs4 billion).

Robust opposition

Except for incumbent Mawokota South MP Yusuf Nsibambi, who supported the Bill, all the other stakeholders who appeared before the joint parliamentary committee opposed it and asked the government to withdraw it.

One of the most strident opposition came from the Governor of the Bank of Uganda, Mr Michael Atingi-Ego, who warned that the proposed legislation, if passed as is, would retard the economic growth.

President Museveni yesterday wondered how the Bill, which, according to the Parliament's Order Paper seen by this publication, will be read for the second and third time on Tuesday next week, ended up with clauses that sabotage income flows.

"To all and sundry, please do not interfere by word, action, or money in that effort. Policy and ideological decisions can make or break countries. Uganda had become a failed state because of the politics of identity (tribe, religion, gender- chauvinism) as opposed to the politics of interests (e.g., markets for products of the wealth-creators)," he said.

He further said, "This is the strength of the Ugandan economy. The freedom of the private sector compensates for the obstructions of the corrupt or non-patriotic public servants and political opportunists passing for politicians... the NRM cannot countenance interference with the freedom of movement of capital and money into or out of Uganda because that is our insurance against the corrupt public servants and politicians and our main instrument for growth and social-economic transformation. Uganda has thrived despite those traitors because of that policy."

Shs2b
The fine to be levied on a person found guilty of engaging in any activity, soliciting, receiving, or obtaining any assistance from a foreigner.

The government Chief Whip, Hamson Obua, and the chairpersons of the relevant parliamentary committees have been directed to make the Bill concentrate on the sovereignty of policy-decision-making and not to meander in the areas of the freedom of private enterprise transfers, private money transfers, or church donations.

Mr Kajwengye, who is also the Nyabushozi County MP, told this publication that the contentious clauses will be removed as instructed by the President.

"The powers whether or not to withdraw the Bill lies in the hands of the government, but for us, our job is to present the report before the floor on Tuesday," he said.

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