



FDC presidential candidate Kizza Besigye's convoy drives past supporters in Katwe, Kampala, yesterday. PHOTO BY ABUBAKER LUBOWA

Besigye to modernise Kampala

Team work. FDC presidential candidate asks city dwellers to reelect embattled Lord Mayor Lukwago.

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KAMPALA. Forum for Democratic Change presidential candidate Kizza Besigye yesterday promised to improve Kampala City and ensure that no one is thrown out of the city if he is elected a week from today.

Campaigning alongside Mr Erias Lukwago, the Kampala Lord Mayor who was controversially impeached in 2013 for what he calls fighting for the less privileged, Dr Besigye continually hammered his message of inclusive development. "We want to build a new and modern Kampala," Dr Besigye said at Katwe, adding: "A Kampala in which no one is driven out of the city and everyone is prosperous."

The duo held demonstrations in Kampala prior to Mr Lukwago's removal from office, protesting against the activities of Kampala Capital City Author-

ity executive director Jennifer Musisi, which involved removing vendors from the streets. Mr Lukwago claimed Ms Musisi was usurping the powers and duties of the Lord Mayor, among other things.

They argued that the government needed to provide alternatives to the vendors before driving them off the streets. Ms Musisi and the government said they had identified sufficient space in the available markets to accommodate the street vendors, although the vendors claimed that the spaces were not enough and many of them were not accessible.

To fulfil the task of what Dr Besigye called modernising Kampala, he urged the people to re-elect Mr Lukwago as Lord Mayor in addition to voting for him as president. Dr Besigye spoke for less than 10 minutes at most of the gatherings through Makindye and Rubaga divisions, and hardly went into

the details of how he intends to modernise the city.

He, however, said Mr Lukwago had already spelt out how Kampala will be modernised. In every big town Dr Besigye has campaigned, he has pledged that the FDC government will build "modern (and) well-planned cities."

Unwanted duo

The partnership between Dr Besigye and Mr Lukwago was cited as one of the reasons the Lord Mayor was forced out of office at the end of 2013, remaining Lord Mayor in name until now despite a court order for his re-instatement being in place. "President Museveni kept me out of office for two years," Mr Lukwago said at Kisugu, "Please vote Dr Besigye so that I can also keep in office."

The campaign itself was more of a procession than a series of rallies, with Dr Besigye's motorcade snaking through the suburbs as he flashed the "victory" symbol to people who lined the streets through his

winding trail.

To save time, he at times tried to use back roads to get to the next rally venue, but it would not be long until he found himself entangled in human and vehicle traffic again.

He warned of "tough times" ahead, urging his supporters to resist intimidation and bribery, which he claimed was intensifying as the vote draws closer.

Kampala is an important battleground district, accounting for more than one million registered voters, which is about 15 per cent of all the votes available in the country.

The candidates will, in addition to seeking to win the city, want to motivate more dwellers to turn out and vote.

THE NUMBERS

15%

The percentage of the total number of voters registered in Kampala.