

Aids body not to be dissolved - ministry

Reason. Dr Asuman Lukwago, the ministry of Health permanent secretary, says there are discussions to bring both Parliament and the commission to an agreement.

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KAMPALA. The Ministry of Health has distanced itself from plans to take over the Uganda Aids commission (UAC) as recommended by the Parliamentary Budget committee.

This follows recommendations by the Parliamentary Budget report of December 2015 indicating that maintaining the Aids commission under the President's Office is tantamount to duplication of government programmes arguing that it carries out activities similar to those of the Uganda Aids Commission under the Ministry of Health.

However, the proposal has since created a rift between the Aids commission on the one side and the Ministry of Health and Parliament on the other hand.

Background

The Uganda Aids Commission was established in 1992 by an Act of Par-



Dr Christine Ondoa

liament under the supervision of the Office of the President.

But Dr Asuman Lukwago, the Ministry's permanent secretary, when contacted yesterday said the committee's proposal was influenced by the power struggles within the Aids commission and that the ministry did not agree with the proposed amendments.

"There cannot be such a move to have the commission under ministry of Health. The commission uses a technical approach on mobilisation which can't be handled by our ministry," Dr Lukwago explained say-



Dr Asuman Lukwago

ing the committee's argument was based on the fact that the commission is structured under the President's Office yet its budget is under the health ministry.

He, however, said that there are discussions going on to bring both Parliament and the commission to an agreement.

Speaking about the matter, Prof Vinand Nantulya, the chairman UAC said: "If we go by the idea, it is going to affect the national response to HIV/Aids because you will have reverted the fight against epidemic, and mobilisation," he said, explain-

ing that it is wrong to say that the commission performs the same function as the national Aids Control Programme.

Other HIV/Aids victims and activists have also criticised Parliament for not contacting them before making such critical recommendations until they learnt about it two weeks ago when one of the MPs copied them in the resolutions of the budget committee.

Recommendation

"It is a recommended best practice to have the oversight role quite distinct and separated from the implementation management roles of implementing sectors for better accountability and transparency. This explains why the Uganda model has been successfully replicated globally." Ms Stella Kentutsi, the executive director national Forum of People Living with HIV/Aids Networks in Uganda (NAFOPHANU), said at a press conference yesterday.

Ms Lilian Mworeko, the regional coordinator, international community of women living with HIV, East Africa said: "Thirty four years into the HIV/Aids epidemic, Parliament should not commit a costly mistake and take us backward."