



Kagame (left) during the Global Business Forum on Africa, in Dubai on Wednesday

Museveni, Kagame hold talks in Dubai

By David Lumu

President Yoweri Museveni and his counterpart of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, have held bilateral talks in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where they attended the 4th Annual Global Business Forum on Africa (AGBF).

According to the minister of state for foreign affairs, Okello Oryem, the two leaders discussed mechanisms through which they can work together on developmental and regional issues for the betterment of their citizens and the greater East African Community and Africa generally.

Speaking to *New Vision* yesterday, Oryem also described the ties between the two countries – Uganda and Rwanda – as “cordial” and “solid”.

Oryem, in a telephone interview, said: “Our relationship with Rwanda is solid. President Museveni and President Kagame have met here in UAE, held talks, and they have said the relations between the two countries are cordial,” Oryem, who is also in the UAE, said.

He added that government officials in the ministries of foreign affairs of the two governments are in close contact and that there is no frosty diplomatic relations as it has been portrayed in certain media circles.

“Since Museveni and Kagame officially restored ties in 2011, mechanisms of resolving differences amicably were established and the relationship between the two countries remains cordial.” Oryem, minister of state for foreign affairs

Commenting on the recent arrests of various suspects who include Rwandans, by the Chiefdom of Military Intelligence (CMI), Oryem said: “These arrests are just a cleanup of the house to ensure that there is law and order and observance of the law. It is, therefore, fake news to allege, like many saboteurs are saying, that there is tension between Rwanda and Uganda. Our relations are always cordial and warm.”

In a recent security operation, CMI arrested Police officers among nine persons over allegations of kidnap. The suspects were charged before the General Court Martial.

Prosecution led by Maj. Raphael Mugisha alleged that the nine accused persons in 2013 unlawfully kidnapped Jackson

Kalembera alias Ndinga and Lt Joel Mutabazi and delivered them to Rwanda without their consent. Mutabazi was a former bodyguard of Rwandan President, Paul Kagame.

The officers arrested are commandant of Police Professional Standards Unit, senior commissioner of Police Joel Aguma, senior superintendent of Police Nixon Agasirwe, former commander of Police special operations Sgt Abel Tumukunde under the Flying Squad, assistant superintendent of Police Magada, under Crime Intelligence and Faisal Katende under the Flying Squad.

Following the arrests, political analysts and regional security pundits have opined that the

move shows certain hallmarks of broken ties between Kampala and Kigali, with some media reports indicating that some Ugandans in Kigali have started to face job-related consequences.

However, Oryem said yesterday that since Museveni and Kagame officially restored ties in 2011, mechanisms of resolving differences amicably were established and the relationship between the two countries remains cordial.

“Whenever there is any hiccup, those mechanisms are used to ensure that we correct the situation,” Oryem said.

In 2011, after a long lull of cold shoulder between the two presidents, Museveni visited Rwanda on a four-day official visit.

The two leaders at the time discussed a wide-range of issues, and Museveni spent two days at Kagame’s country home in Muhazi, a move that many regional observers said signaled that the future relations between the two countries will be shaped by friendly ties and not tension.

“Since that visit to Kagame’s country home and Kagame’s subsequent visit to Uganda, our relations with Rwanda are solid. Therefore, those using social media and other platforms to create a situation of tension and doom are mistaken,” Oryem said.