

HOW MUSEVENI'S LEADERSHIP TRANSFORMED UGANDA POLICE

PERSONAL PRESIDENT, PERSONAL POLICE

BY SIMON MASABA

When historians write about the transformation of the Uganda Police Force in the twenty-first century, one name will feature prominently above all others: His Excellency President Gen. (Rtd) Yoweri Kaguta Museveni Tibuhabwe. Under his watch, Uganda's police force has evolved from a largely reactive, under-resourced institution into a modern, intelligence-led, community-centred service that is delivering measurable results in crime reduction.

The 2025 Annual Crime Report, which records a 10.2% drop in reported crime, is the most recent chapter in a story of transformation that bears the President's fingerprints at every turn.

The Uganda Police Force's leadership has repeatedly and publicly acknowledged the role of the President in shaping policing strategy. Inspector General of Police Byakagaba Abas has described Museveni as the single most important factor in the Force's transformation, citing the President's personal engagement with issues of officer welfare, policing infrastructure, and anti-crime strategy. This acknowledgment is not mere protocol; it reflects a genuine operational reality in which presidential directives have consistently catalysed institutional change. No wonder, the UPF fraternity voting pattern in the 2026 general election reflected that fact.

The Sub-County Policing Model – arguably the most significant structural reform in the Force's recent history – was introduced on the President's specific directive. Museveni has long championed the idea that security must be delivered at the community level, not just from divisional or district headquarters. His directive to deploy police personnel directly within sub-counties has transformed the relationship between citizens and



President Museveni inspects a guard of honour at the Uganda Police Force headquarters in Naguru, Kampala in 2025. Under his leadership, the force has been able to combat crime

the state, making police visible, accessible and trusted presence in communities that previously had little direct contact with law enforcement.

The anti-crime infrastructure strategy – another presidential priority – has driven the expansion of police stations, posts, and the deployment of specialised units and force enablers such as CCTV and K9 across the country. Uganda now has 1,736 Police Stations and 632 police posts distributed across all regions. Each new station represents not just a physical structure but a commitment: the commitment of the state to extend its protective reach to every corner of the nation. Under Museveni's direction, no community should feel beyond the reach of the law.

ELECTORAL SECURITY ACHIEVEMENT

The 2026 General Election, in which President Museveni secured another resounding mandate from Ugandans, were conducted in an environment of remarkable peace and security. The Uganda Police Force, in close collaboration with the Uganda People's Defence

Forces and other sister security agencies, ensured that the electoral process was protected from disruption, intimidation and violence. The successful conduct of the election is a direct endorsement of the security framework that Museveni has built over decades – a framework grounded in professionalism, coordination and restraint.

The Uganda Police Force congratulates His Excellency on his electoral victory with the full knowledge that it is also a mandate for continued policing reforms. The people of Uganda have spoken, and their message is clear: they want the safety and stability that has been built under Museveni's leadership.

The police force is committed to delivering on that mandate, using every tool at its disposal – from community policing to forensic science to digital surveillance – to maintain and extend the gains of 2025.

At a groundbreaking ceremony for the Force's housing project at Naguru, IGP Byakagaba recalled his first official meeting with the President. The President expressed deep personal distress at the living conditions of police

What distinguishes Museveni's engagement with the Uganda Police Force is its personal character. The President does not engage with the Force merely through policy documents and budgetary allocations; he engages personally – visiting barracks, meeting officers, discussing welfare challenges, and providing direct guidance on strategic priorities.

This personal engagement creates a culture of accountability and motivation that permeates the entire institution.

Officers across the Force know that the President cares about their welfare, their working conditions and their performance. This knowledge is itself a motivational force. When a junior officer in a remote sub-county knows that the Commander-in-Chief has

personally invested in improving police housing, in equipping patrol vehicles, and in ensuring that the Force has what it needs to keep communities safe, that officer is motivated to give their best.

The connection between presidential vision and operational excellence is not abstract; it is concrete, personal and daily.

As Uganda celebrates the reduction in crime and looks forward to the continuity of Museveni's leadership following the 2026 re-election, the Uganda Police Force reaffirms its commitment to the vision that the President has championed: a safe, secure and prosperous Uganda where every citizen can live, work and raise their family without fear. That vision is being realised, case by case, community by community, year by year.

officers. He told Byakagaba: "It makes me very unhappy to see my people [meaning the Police officers and their families] living under those bad conditions. That conversation sparked a chain of events that led to one of the most ambitious housing programmes in the Force's history.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT: THE PHYSICAL ARCHITECTURE OF SAFETY

President Museveni's personal interest in police infrastructure has translated into a programme of construction, equipment acquisition, and technological deployment that is reshaping the Force's capacity. The acquisition of additional transport and specialised equipment has grown the Uganda Police Force fleet, significantly. Today, the Force operates an extensive fleet including general-purpose vehicles, specialised vehicles, construction equipment, motorcycles, marine vessels, helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft. Each of these assets represents the President's commitment to providing the Force with the tools it needs to do its job.

The National Safe City Closed Circuit Television project – a major infrastructure investment championed under the President's anti-crime strategy – has been particularly transformative. Phase One covered the Kampala Metropolitan area, and Phase Two covered 33 municipalities, five major highways, and urban centres. The CCTV network has dramatically improved crime detection and investigation, with footage analysis supporting hundreds of investigations annually. Criminals who once operated in the shadows now face the constant scrutiny of digital eyes.

Museveni's directive to establish the Police Senior Command and Staff College at Bwebajja has elevated the professional standards of Uganda's senior police leadership. The College provides strategic leadership and command training to the senior officers who shape policing across the country. Its establishment reflects the President's philosophy that effective policing begins with effective leadership – and that leadership must be trained, professionalised and continuously developed.