

Okello's family had no mental



Prime suspect in the murder of four toddlers at Ggaba Childhood Development Programme, Christopher Okello Onyum in the dock during the public hearing in Ggaba, Kampala, on Friday. PHOTOS/ABUBAKER LUBOWA

On Friday, Dr Rogers Agenda from IHK, told court that Okello's family never had any history of mental illness. Below is a slightly edited court proceeding.

BY ANTHONY WESAKA & JULIET KIGONGO

Evidence led by Chief State Attorney Jonathan Muwaganya: What are your full names?
Witness: I am Dr Rogers Agenda.
Muwaganya: What is your profession?
Dr Agenda: I am a medical doctor and a psychiatrist.
Muwaganya: How old are you?
Dr Agenda: I am 41 years old.
Muwaganya: Where do you work?
Dr Agenda: I work with C-Care Clinic, International Hospital Kampala (IHK).
Muwaganya: What do you do at C-Care Clinic?
Dr Agenda: I am a psychiatrist.
Muwaganya: For how long have you worked as a psychiatrist?
Dr Agenda: I have worked as a psychiatrist for the past four years.
Muwaganya: How about in C-Care?
Dr Agenda: The same years, my lord.
Muwaganya: Doctor, what are your academic qualifications?
Dr Agenda: I am a medical doctor, my lord. I hold a Master's degree in Medicine, specialising in Psychiatry, a psychiatrist.

degree in Medicine and Surgery, obtained in 2010.
Muwaganya: How long have you practiced medicine?
Dr Agenda: I have practiced medicine for the past 16 years now.
Muwaganya: What are your duties as a psychiatric doctor?
Dr Agenda: My lord, as a psychiatric doctor, I receive clients at my mental clinic at C-Care IHK. I carry out psychiatric assessments on the clients, diagnose mental disorders if any, and provide therapy, write psychiatric reports.
Muwaganya: If any of an individual's issues are work-related, those reports may be required by the court or for compensation purposes.
Dr Agenda: You are in a position to recognise the accused person (points towards Christopher Okello Onyum)?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord, I recognise him.
Muwaganya: How do you know him?
Dr Agenda: He came one time to C-Care IHK as one of my new clients.
Muwaganya: What brought him to C-Care IHK?
Dr Agenda: He came after having been referred by the Ministry of Internal Affairs Immigration Department. They had told him to get a sanity medical report to help him obtain citizenship in Uganda.
Muwaganya: Doctor, is this a general or unique requirement applicable to only the accused?
Dr Agenda: My lord, this is a requirement for everyone seeking citizenship in Uganda by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

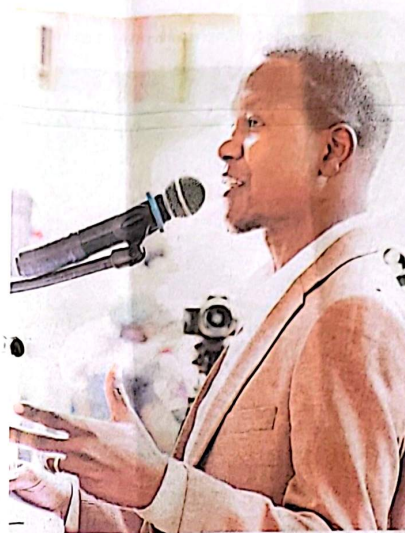
Sanity test.

Mr Christopher Okello Onyum came to see me personally, so I took all the information from him alone. He told me he was a resident of Bunga, single, Christian by religion, and by that time, he had a plan to settle in Uganda and start commercial farming. Based on his request for a sanity report, I carried out a psychiatric interview with him, and after that, I also carried out the reply; were you required to do anything in respect to the report that you had authored?
Dr Agenda: My lord, after verifying that it was my report, I countersigned it.
Muwaganya: Are you in a position to

assessment on the accused person?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
Muwaganya: And after you carried out the assessment, to whom did you give the report?
Dr Agenda: My lord, I gave the report to Mr Okello Onyum Christopher.
Muwaganya: And after that event, did anything else occur in the respect of the work you had done?
Dr Agenda: Recently, C-Care IHK got a police request based on one of their exhibits, and that was a report written by me. So they wanted the hospital administration to verify that it was a report written by me, also to verify that it was their stamp.
Muwaganya: When this happened, the hospital administrators reached out to me to verify if the said report was actually mine.
Muwaganya: What did you verify?
Dr Agenda: My lord, I verified that the report was actually mine, and the hospital administration, through our CEO, wrote back to the police concerning the same.
Muwaganya: Why is it the CEO who replied to the police request?
Dr Agenda: My lord, it is the policy of the hospital that any external request should be handled at the administration level, not at the doctor's level.
Muwaganya: Before your admin sent out the reply, were you required to do anything in respect to the report that you had authored?
Dr Agenda: My lord, after verifying that it was my report, I countersigned it.
Muwaganya: Are you in a position to

sanity report that you counter-signed, and the police request you are referring to?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
Muwaganya: How would you identify the police request, sanity report, and the reply?
Dr Agenda: The police request has their logo on it on the headed paper and was signed by Madam (Deputy Director of CID Beata) Chelimo.
Muwaganya: How about your sanity report?
Dr Agenda: I identify it by my signature, a C-Care IHK stamp, and CK IHK logo.
Muwaganya: And the letter forwarding your sanity report?
Dr Agenda: This letter has a CK IHK logo. It has the signature of our CEO Azhar Sundoo and it has been stamped.
Muwaganya: Do you recognise the documents?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
Muwaganya: What are they?
Dr Agenda: The first one is a reply from C-Care IHK by our CEO Mr Azhar Sundoo. It was a response to the police dated April 10, 2026.
Muwaganya: What was the subject?
Dr Agenda: The subject was a response to the request for information at Ggaba.
Muwaganya: Does it quote the police request?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord, CRB 026/2026 (ref CID / C49/2007 volume 44).
Muwaganya: In short, what was your CEO forwarding?
Dr Agenda: My CEO confirmed that the sanity medical report dated December 30, 2025, in respect to Mr

illness history – doctor



Dr Rogers Agenda, a psychiatrist, told court last week on Friday that he examined Christopher Okello Onyum and he found the suspect to be mentally stable.

questions, Mr Okello told me the following. That he had no history of having excessive sadness, no history of loss of interest in pleasurable activities, no history of excessive fears or excessive worries, no history of excessive happiness or increase in oriented-related activities.
Muwaganya: Why were these questions important?
Dr Agenda: My lord, these questions help us to establish various mental disorders, if any, in any client who comes before us. These questions are key to the various mental disorders. For example, when I ask a client if they have a history of excessive sadness, loss of interest in pleasurable activities, I am trying to determine if they have depression.
Muwaganya: If I ask about excessive fears or worries, I am trying to determine if you have an anxiety disorder. The question asked about excessive happiness or increase in oriented-related activities. I am trying to determine if a client has bipolar affective disorder.
Muwaganya: Other than that, what else did he reveal to you, or did you ask him?
Dr Agenda: He also told me he had no history of hearing voices or seeing things other people could not see. When I asked, my lord, I am trying to enlist if you have allusions. He told me he has no history of using drugs like cannabis, however, he occasionally uses alcohol, which enables me to find out if he uses drugs.
Muwaganya: That helps us to identify if someone has a substance use disorder. He also told me he has no history of having had any traumatic experience in his life. That is a question that can help me enlist if someone has what we call Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
Muwaganya: The client told me this was his first visit to a mental health personnel in his life.
Muwaganya: And how did you reflect that in your report?
Dr Agenda: This is the index or first visit to a mental health personnel, and he had never taken any psychiatric medications.
Muwaganya: What else?
Dr Agenda: The client disclosed that he was a patient of a chronic illness of sickle cell disease and was regularly taking medication for that purpose.
Muwaganya: Anything else?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord, Mr Onyum told me he was a third born of four children, and his parents are alive and they are well. He told me there was no history of any mental illness in their family.
Muwaganya: Apart from what your client disclosed to you in the interview, did you proceed to carry out an independent examination on him?
Dr Agenda: I proceeded to carry out a mental state examination. From this examination, I noted that Mr Okello was a middle-aged man, looked kept, and was well-nourished.
Muwaganya: What do you consider to declare someone well-nourished in medical profession?
Dr Agenda: I looked healthy; he never appeared sick in any way that time I saw him.
Muwaganya: Okay, you say he was well-nourished, proceed.
Dr Agenda: My lord, I noted that he was calm, kept eye contact, and had no odd behaviours of any sort.
Muwaganya: Why was this impor-

tant for you to observe?
Dr Agenda: My lord, odd behaviours help us to know if this person could be acting under the influence of hearing voices in his head or could be seeing things that others are not seeing. I also noted that his speech was coherent, of normal volume, rate, and tone. I noted that his thoughts were logical with no preoccupations, no delusions, and no overvalued ideas.
Muwaganya: He had an euthymic mood, which we basically call a normal mood. This was congruent with what he said, meaning both the mood and affect are in agreement. Affect is your current emotions. Okello had no perceptual disturbances, or cognitive disturbances and also had no cognitive disturbances.
Muwaganya: I am still going to tell you to help the court appreciate what you mean by perceptual disturbances, or cognitive disturbances.
Dr Agenda: Perceptual disturbances align with normal sensations. For example, if you are hearing voices others are not hearing, you are seeing things which others are not seeing.
Muwaganya: On the other hand, with cognitive disturbances, we are looking at your memory, attention, concentration, your general knowledge of what is happening around you, your ability to judge what is around you, your ability to do basic mathematics, if you can tell the time or year we are in and can tell who you are, as a person.
Muwaganya: Now doctor, why is this particular assessment in your mental health examination about this aspect of perceptual or cognitive disturbances important to you as a professional?
Dr Agenda: For the mental health examination, as a professional, I will be able to conclude whether someone has a mental illness or not at the time.
Muwaganya: Yes, proceed with your findings.
Dr Agenda: At that time, Mr Onyum Christopher was sane and mentally fit to live and work in Uganda.
Muwaganya: Did you sign off on the report?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
Muwaganya: Was it stamped?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
Muwaganya: What was the date of signing and stamping?
Dr Agenda: I signed it on that very date, December 30, 2025, and the stamp was of that very date.
Muwaganya: My lord, I pray to the court, together with the forwarding letter and the request letter admitted as exhibits.
Judge: Defence, do you have any objection?
Richard Kumbaga (Defense lawyer): No objection, my lord.
Judge: The Assessor's report of Christopher Okello dated 30 December 2025 authored by Dr Agenda.
Cross examination
Kumbaga: Doctor, are you aware that the history of illness of this suspect is already on the record?
Judge: What was the question?
Kumbaga: So, doctor, you interacted with the suspect because he was seeking citizenship in Uganda. Is that true?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
Kumbaga: Was this kind of citizenship based on mental sanity?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
Kumbaga: Are you aware that your

client was denied Ugandan citizenship?
Dr Agenda: No, my lord.
Kumbaga: Okay, in your report, you talked of alcohol that he was taking some. Did you extract any blood samples to know the content of alcohol in his body?
Dr Agenda: No, my lord.
Kumbaga: Did you also test his blood to see if there are any other substances in his body?
Dr Agenda: No, my lord.
Kumbaga: Apart from him telling you that there is no history of mental illness in his family, did you have any other mechanism to establish whether it was right?
Dr Agenda: We have mechanisms. The psychiatric interview and mental state examination give us a lot of information to ascertain if someone is of sound mind or not.
Kumbaga: Doctor, you have not answered my question. My question is, did you verify from his family that apart from him, there is no history of mental illness?
Dr Agenda: No, my lord.
Kumbaga: You have talked about the questions being open ended questions. Will be right to say that in your report, there is nowhere it suggests that you asked him those questions?
Dr Agenda: My lord, the report I wrote summarises what I got in the interview.
Kumbaga: So, confirm that those questions actually happened between you and the suspect?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
Kumbaga: Did you verify that the story he was telling you was right or wrong?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
Muwaganya: My lord, the witness is saying he's not hearing the questions very well because it is raining heavily. Can he go and sit closer there?
Judge: It is ok.
Kumbaga: With the interview with your client, it is not true that there were no safeguards to determine whether your client was telling the truth or not?
Dr Agenda: It is not true.
Kumbaga: So, doctor, will be right to say sickle cell anaemia is one of the underlying causes of mental illness?
Dr Agenda: My lord, I will call it a risk factor, not a direct cause for mental illness.
Kumbaga: So, a risk is one of the causes of mental illnesses.
Judge: Please do not confuse the witness; the witness said it is a risk factor but not a direct cause, so do not mix them, Mr Kumbaga.
Kumbaga: My lord, I just need clarification from him. So, sickle cell anaemia is a risk factor leading to mental illness.
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
Kumbaga: So your report is dated December 30, 2025?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
Kumbaga: In that report, as it is dated, can you be able to subsequently determine whether your client was normal?
Dr Agenda: My lord, this report verifies that the client is of sound mind.
Judge: Okay, his question was as of 30 December 2025. Would you know his mental health after this date? Is that the question?
Kumbaga: Yes, my lord.
Dr Agenda: My lord, this was a one-time contact with this client.
Kumbaga: So, you confirm you cannot know his mental status after 30th December 2025?
Dr Agenda: Yes, my lord.
 Court adjourned

2025

The year Christopher Okello did a sanity test at C-Care Clinic, International Hospital Kampala, with Dr Rogers Agenda, a psychiatrist.