

Keesing's Record of World Events (formerly Keesing's Contemporary Archives),  
Volume 18, November, 1972 Uganda, Tanzania, Uganda, Page 25543  
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***Armed Invasion of Uganda by Followers of Ex-President Obote. –  
Resultant Conflict between Uganda and Tanzania. – Somali Mediation  
leads to Peaceful Settlement.***

A serious conflict between Uganda and Tanzania arose in mid-September 1972 as the result of an invasion of Uganda by some 1,500 armed followers of the former Ugandan President Milton A. Obote. After crossing the border into Uganda from Tanzania and scoring initial successes, the invaders were, however, defeated within a few days by the forces of President Amin of Uganda.

The Ugandan Government announced on Sept. 17 that invading "Tanzanian troops", numbering at least 1,000 men, had advanced to within about 100 miles of Kampala, the Ugandan capital, after occupying three Ugandan towns—Kyotera, Kakuto and Kalisizo—and that fighting was going on at the garrison town of Mbarara.

A Ugandan Army spokesman, in a broadcast the same day, accused Britain of sharing responsibility for the invasion with Tanzania and claimed that the Government knew that there were in Uganda "many British spies", some of them military men. In another radio broadcast all Whites who had entered Uganda "illegally" were called upon to report to the nearest security unit. In the course of the day the Ugandan police detained a number of British citizens, among them women and children, four newspaper correspondents and a photographer.

Later the same day Uganda Radio announced that the Government had appealed to both the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and to Dr. Waldheim, the U.N. Secretary-General, to intervene against "unprovoked aggression" which, it was claimed, had caused casualties which might be "very high".

In Tanzania, on the other hand, it was announced in an official statement on the same day (Sept. 17) that forces of a "People's Army" inside Uganda had taken over a military camp at Kisenyi and seized a large quantity of arms. Major-General Sarakikya, the C.-in-C. of Tanzania's armed forces, categorically denied that any Tanzanian troops were involved in the operations. Later the same day the Tanzanian radio reported that the Ugandan garrison at Umburra, in south-west Uganda, had been taken over by "dissidents" fighting against General Amin's troops, and that the two sides were still in combat.

On Sept. 18, however, it became clear that President Amin's forces had succeeded in gaining the upper hand over the invaders.

A military spokesman in Kampala announced that Ugandan troops had retaken Mbarara, Kalisizo and Kyotera and were advancing towards Mutukula, on the Tanzanian border, having inflicted some 200 casualties on the "invaders" while their own numbered only

nine. The spokesman also claimed that the invaders included White mercenaries, three of those killed having been identified as Israelis who had fought in the Congo in 1965.

Also on Sept. 18 Uganda Radio named three former Ugandan Army officers and two civilians, all linked with ex-President Obote, as being among those killed or captured.

President Amin himself was later shown on television receiving captured "guerrillas", among them Mr. Wilfred Odong (who came from Dr. Obote's home area in northern Uganda), Mr. Picho Ali (described as a former senior civil servant under Dr. Obote) and a Captain Oyile (said to be a cousin of the former President), who stated that his task had been to capture Mbarara but that he had been taken prisoner at Kikagati, before he had reached Mbarara. The guerrillas were alleged to have intended to restore ex-President Obote to power, to have hoped for support from British troops, and to have wanted eventually to rescind President Amin's order for the expulsion of Asians from Uganda.

On the same day (Sept. 18) the Ugandan Defence Council was reported to have asked President Amin to remove all remaining Asians and Europeans from the security forces by midnight because they could "not be trusted". Nine British and three other journalists were arrested on that day.

In a speech before diplomatic representatives of OAU member-countries, President Amin said that Uganda had been attacked by "some 1,500 men, including Tanzanian soldiers, supporters of ex-President Obote and Israeli mercenaries", 230 of the "enemy" having been killed and 50 captured. He added that Captain Oyile had admitted that there were guerrilla camps at Bukoba and Tabora (in Tanzania), where between 1,000 and 1,500 men were being trained.

Earlier on Sept. 18 two Ugandan aircraft bombed the Tanzanian town of Bukoba, about 40 miles south of the Ugandan border, nine persons having reportedly been killed and 200 injured. The Tanzanian Government on the same day moved its 4th battalion of over 1,000 men from Tabora, supported by a mortar company from Musoma (on the south-eastern shore of Lake Victoria), towards the Ugandan border in order to prevent Ugandan troops from crossing into Tanzania. On the following day (Sept. 19) it was announced in Dar-es-Salaam that Bukoba had again been bombed by Ugandan aircraft, this time without casualties being caused.

President Amin claimed on Sept. 19 that his forces had won a "complete victory" over the invaders and had pushed them back across the border into Tanzania.

General Amin added that 150 Ugandan civilians and a White teacher (later identified as an American Peace Corps worker) had been killed in the fighting around Mbarara. The invaders, he alleged, had planned to kill him and his whole Cabinet, as well as the Protestant and Catholic archbishops and other prominent supporters of the Government. He also said: "The situation in Uganda has been caused by Obote and Nyerere, and crooks like Akena and Oyite-Ojok. The Ugandan Army is fighting well because it knows the invaders want to ruin the country and put it in darkness like Tanzania."

Notwithstanding President Amin's claim of "complete victory", some 500 of the invaders were reported on Sept. 19 to be holding out in an area of marshes and lakes between Masaka and the Tanzanian border.

Late on Sept. 19, after the air attacks on Bukoba, President Nyerere sent a telegram to King Hassan of Morocco, the President of the OAU, protesting against "murderous attacks" which could not remain without consequences, and reiterating his rejection of Ugandan accusations of an invasion by 1,000 Tanzanian soldiers.

In London, the British Government had on Sept. 17 rejected President Amin's accusations of British involvement in the events in Uganda as "pure fantasy".

Lady Tweedsmuir (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office) said in the House of Lords on Sept. 18 that the allegation that Britain was "deeply involved" in the situation in Uganda had been repeated in an indirect message from the Ugandan Foreign Ministry. She reiterated that the British Government had no prior knowledge of operations then taking place in south-west Uganda, was not involved in any way in their planning or execution, and certainly had no plans of invading Uganda. She added that, of the British subjects detained in Uganda, 16, including all women and children, had meanwhile been released, following a strong protest from Mr. Richard Slater, the U.K. High Commissioner.

Five transport aircraft of the Libyan Air Force, carrying 22 officers and 377 other ranks with arms and ammunition, were on Sept. 20 ordered by the Sudanese authorities to land at Khartoum airport.

The Sudanese Foreign Ministry said in a statement the same day that the pilots of the aircraft had requested permission to fly over Sudanese airspace but that this had been refused and they had been told either to return to Libya or to land in Khartoum, and that in the latter case they would have to return to Libya on Sept. 21. The Sudanese Government also announced that it had informed the Arab League and the OAU of the action it had taken.

After landing in Khartoum, the commander of the first Libyan aircraft stated that they were flying to Entebbe and that more troops and weapons were to be sent from Libya to Uganda on Sept. 21. In Kampala a military spokesman had stated on Sept. 18 that Colonel Kadhafi, the Libyan leader, had offered President Amin the "total support" of his armed forces.

In a special message sent to President Amin, President al Nemery of the Sudan declared on Sept. 20 that he supported Uganda's right to defend her sovereignty but hoped that this would be done without armed conflict. President Amin, however, protested to the Sudan on Sept. 21 against its refusal to allow arms from Libya to be flown to Uganda.

The Libyan Government claimed on the same day that the Sudanese Government had been advised of the proposed flight on Sept. 18 and added that Libya's aid for Uganda would reach its destination despite Sudanese "treachery and ill-will".

In Dar-es-Salaam, it was disclosed on Sept. 21 that President Nyerere had previously assured President al Nemery that no Tanzanian troops were involved in fighting in Uganda, and that the Sudanese President had accepted this assurance and expressed the hope that further dangerous escalations in East Africa would be prevented. At the same time it was confirmed that ex-President Obote had returned to Tanzania at the end of June 1972 after spending more than a year in the Sudan.

After making the Sudanese authorities believe that they were returning to Libya, the Libyan pilots landed their five aircraft at Entebbe airport on Sept. 21, the troops they carried being personally received by President Amin.

The Sudanese attempt to prevent an escalation of the conflict having thus failed, there were further signs on Sept. 21 of an increasingly hostile attitude on both the Ugandan and the Tanzanian sides.

President Amin alleged that Tanzania was sending 10,000 troops with supporting arms to invade Uganda, and that there was therefore "no alternative for the Ugandan side except to defend the country's integrity and sovereignty"; he would, he said, instruct the Ugandan Air Force and the "sea-borne regiment" to "destroy Tanzanian camps where the enemy is planning to launch another invasion". On the same day the Tanzanian Government accused Uganda of having bombed the town of Mwanza, on the southern shore of Lake Victoria, killing two persons and wounding 17 others.

President Nyerere claimed, also on Sept. 21, that General Amin had killed "thousands of people" since he had taken power, adding that the Ugandan leader could well go on killing. Calling him "a lunatic and an idiot", the Tanzanian President declared that any further air raids by Uganda "would have serious consequences for peace between the two countries".

There were also signs of disorder and indiscipline inside Uganda.

Panic was caused in Kampala on Sept. 21 when the Chief Justice, Mr. Benedicto Kiwanuka, was removed from the High Court by armed soldiers. At 5 p.m. the same day, however, a military spokesman broadcast a message claiming that the situation was calm and that there was "no cause for panic at all". Two days later a Government spokesman denied that Mr. Kiwanuka had been arrested by members of the security forces, but the fact remained that the Chief Justice and also Mr. Joseph Mubiru (governor of the Bank of Uganda)—both of them Roman Catholics—had disappeared without trace.

While the total of British subjects detained in Uganda had risen to more than 80 on Sept. 18, most of them, including all journalists, were reported to have been released by Sept. 21.

Some of the released Journalists later gave harrowing descriptions of conditions at the Makindye military prison in Kampala, where they had been detained together with many other prisoners, most of them Africans, some of whom had described atrocities and frequent executions allegedly carried out by soldiers using sledgehammers to smash prisoners' skulls.

Meanwhile, however, efforts had been made to reach a peaceful solution of the conflict between Uganda and Tanzania, in particular by Mr. Nzo Ekangaki, the OAU Secretary-General, and the Government of the Somali Republic.

Mr. Ekangaki approached President Kenyatta of Kenya on Sept. 20 with a view to obtaining his mediation between the two parties. Mr. Ronald Ngala, the Kenyan Minister of Power and Communications, declared on Sept. 22: "We are friendly to both nations. Whatever is going on between them, Kenya will not get involved." The Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and Presidents Boumedienne of Algeria and Sekou Toure of Guinea all expressed their readiness to be associated with an OAU initiative.

In Egypt, President Sadat received Mr. John Malecela, the Tanzanian Foreign Minister, on Sept. 21, and agreed to his request to send a high-ranking diplomat to both Uganda and Tanzania to try to solve the conflict peacefully. President Sadat was reported to have explained that the Libyan troops were intended solely to protect President Amin against his "imperialist and Zionist enemies".

The Voice of Kenya Radio, quoting Somali sources, announced on Sept. 21 that Presidents Amin and Nyerere had agreed to an interim cease-fire, with Uganda promising to Stop bombing Tanzanian towns and Tanzania undertaking to withdraw its forces from the border, so that there could be "a period of peaceful negotiation".

On Sept. 24 both Presidents Amin and Nyerere were reported to be sympathetic to a five-point peace plan drafted by President Siyad Barreh of Somalia and submitted to the two Presidents by his Foreign Minister, Mr. Omar Arteh Ghalib.

Somali sources gave the plan as consisting of five questions, as follows: Would Uganda halt its bombing and land attacks if it were assured by Tanzania that it would not be attacked by Tanzanian troops or pro-Obote guerrillas? Would Tanzania, given an assurance that the Ugandan Army would not attack it, undertake not to attack Uganda? If so, would Tanzania withdraw Its troops from the frontier? Would Tanzania also withdraw the pro-Obote fighters from the border? Would Tanzania oppose subversive activities threatening a neighbouring State?

Mr. Arteh announced in Kampala late on Sept. 24 that both Governments had accepted the proposals in principle, and that these now remained to be implemented in detail.

After his meeting with the Somali Foreign Minister, President Amin issued a warning to "Ugandan guerrillas and Tanzanian troops" in the border towns of Mutukula and Kikagati

to withdraw immediately, threatening that otherwise he would order "a big air raid" and a paratroop operation to "destroy them completely".

A Ugandan military spokesman had meanwhile asserted that, according to statements by prisoners taken, the remaining guerrillas had been fighting amongst each other over their leadership, with members of the Acholi tribe, who claimed to have borne the brunt of the fighting, in conflict with the Lango, ex-President Obote's fellow-tribesmen. Half of the invaders, led by Lieut-Colonel Oyite-Ojok and Colonel Tito Okello, were said to have withdrawn to Tanzania in utter exhaustion, while the other half was "completely demoralized". On Sept. 23 a Ugandan Government spokesman had given the insurgents' casualties as 230 killed and 75 captured. On Sept. 24 it was announced that, among those captured, Mr. Joshua Wakholi, a former Minister of Public Service and Cabinet Affairs, had died of his wounds.

President Sadat of Egypt declared in a message sent to President Amin on Sept. 26 that he had heard "with great sadness" of the "barbarous aggression against Uganda" and offered his help to the Ugandan President in his "struggle against imperialist and Zionist aggression".

Although Mr. Omar Arteh confirmed on Sept. 26 that both Presidents had accepted the Somali peace plan, further official allegations of threats against Uganda were made in Kampala.

A Ugandan military spokesman alleged on Sept. 26 that India, Zambia and Tanzania were preparing a new attack on Uganda. President Kaunda of Zambia had visited Dar-es-Salaam on Sept. 24, and a visit to Tanzania by President Giri of India, scheduled for Sept. 28, was alleged by the Ugandan spokesman to be designed to implement the proposed "invasion", with Indian Navy and Air Force units being en route across the Indian Ocean for this purpose. Later the same spokesman claimed that a convoy of Tanzanian Army vehicles had crossed the border and entered the area between Mutukula and Kikagati. The Indian Government on Sept. 24 rejected the Ugandan allegation of Indian involvement as "a mischievous and fantastic rumour... without any foundation whatsoever". The Tanzanian and Zambian Governments similarly rejected the Ugandan accusations as being completely without foundation.

While Uganda Radio gave the total of Ugandan casualties on Sept. 27 as three officers and 30 soldiers killed in the fighting with the invaders, a military spokesman in Kampala said on the same day that "a large convoy of vehicles and troops from Tanzania" had been seen heading towards the border. On the following day President Amin accused Tanzania of having started a new offensive against Mutukula, and claimed that his troops had inflicted heavy losses on the intruders and had captured, among others, Mr. Alex Ojera, a former Minister of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism under President Obote. On Sept. 29 President Amin questioned Mr. Ojera in the presence of diplomatic guests, among them Mr. Ekangaki, then in Kampala on his reconciliation mission.

In a further pronouncement on Sept. 28, President Amin criticized President Nyerere as being—though he was Supreme Commander of Tanzania's armed forces—"ignorant of the position at the border"; he himself, said General Amin, had inspected the area, in which there were "some 50 guerrillas combined with Tanzanian troops and mercenaries," all of them surrounded by Ugandan troops, about 25 miles inside the border.

Negotiations on the Somali peace plan were scheduled to begin in Mogadishu on Sept. 27, when Mr. Malecela arrived there; Mr. Ekangaki was still pursuing his efforts to obtain the agreement of both Presidents on the final settlement, so that after visiting Kampala, Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi he did not reach Mogadishu until Oct. 1.

Earlier, after receiving a letter from President Siyad Barreh, President Amin had demanded that President Nyerere should give him written answers to the following questions: Why had he allowed the training of pro-Obote guerrillas in Tanzania? Why had he decided to let "troops, guerrillas and mercenaries" enter Uganda on Sept. 17? Why had he equipped them with weapons? And why did he make propaganda against Uganda, especially in connexion with the decision on Ugandan Asians? In addition, President Amin was reported to have demanded the expulsion of Dr. Obote and his followers from Tanzania.

On Oct. 1 the Ugandan President again alleged that Britain was "looking for a pretext" to send troops to Uganda, with the help of some African leaders, and a military spokesman in Kampala warned refugees from Rwanda not to engage in espionage for their country.

A few days earlier it had been officially announced in Uganda that a number of prominent persons had disappeared, allegedly after making contacts with Obote partisans. Among such persons mentioned by name were Mr. Frank Kalimuzo, vice-principal of Makerere University, and Mr. Basil Bataringaya, a former Minister of the Interior under the Obote regime.

After Mr. Kibedi (the Ugandan Foreign Minister) had arrived in Mogadishu on Oct. 3, President Siyad Barreh said on Oct. 4, at a private meeting with Mr. Malecela and Mr. Kibedi, that the conflict between their two countries was "nothing but a colonialist conspiracy aimed at weakening African unity".

Meanwhile President Amin renewed his accusations against other Governments, announcing on Oct. 4 that he had taken full operational control of his armed forces because, he alleged, a new invasion was being planned by Britain, Tanzania, Rwanda, India and Zambia as well as two other countries which he did not name.

At the end of two days of talks, Mr. Malecela, Mr. Kibedi and Mr. Arteh, in the presence of Mr. Ekangaki, on Oct. 5 signed an agreement which was published simultaneously in Dar-es-Salaam, Kampala and Mogadishu on Oct. 7—after President Siyad Barreh had paid a visit to Dar-es-Salaam on Oct. 6 (this visit being followed by one to Kampala on Oct. 8).

Under the agreement the two sides undertook to withdraw their forces at least six miles (10 kilometres) from the Ugandan-Tanzanian border by Oct. 19, this withdrawal to be witnessed by Somali observers; to cease all military activities against each other; "to refrain from harbouring or allowing subversive forces to operate in the territory of one State against the other"; to end all hostile propaganda against each other; and to return all nationals and property captured from the other side.

President Amin said on Oct. 11 that his troops had already been withdrawn six miles from the border and that fighting had ceased, as Ugandan troops "in the war zone" were disarming guerrillas in hiding or trying to escape. Completion of the Tanzanian withdrawal was subsequently announced in Bukoba by Mr. Edward Sokoine, the Tanzanian Minister of Defence.

Upon an invitation by President Siyad Barreh, Presidents Amin and Nyerere both attended the Somali Republic's national day celebrations on Oct. 20; they sat at opposite ends of a reviewing stand, however, and left Mogadishu without meeting each other.— (Times - Daily Telegraph - Guardian - Financial Times - Le Monde - Neue Zürcher Zeitung - New York Times - Cape Times) (Prev. rep. Border Clashes, 25022 A; 24849 A; Uganda asians, 25469 A.)

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