

President Museveni of Uganda makes donation to Orthodox Church for cathedral construction



President Yoweri Museveni has donated Shs 300 million towards the construction of the Uganda Orthodox Cathedral at Luby Hill, in Rubaga Division in Kampala. He donated Shs 30m cash and pledged a further Shs 270m, saying he hadn't known the extent of the construction costs.

Museveni announced the donation while presiding over celebration marking 100 years of the evangelical mission of the Orthodox Church in Uganda. The cathedral will be built to commemorate 100 years of the Orthodox Church in Uganda.

According to Metropolitan Jonah Lwanga, the archbishop of the Orthodox Church who recently prophesied the obliteration of the ruling National Resistance Movement party due to gross human rights abuses and violations, the cathedral will be known as Hagia Sophia Cathedral.

The cathedral is expected to be a replica of Hagia Sophia Cathedral in Constantinople, which was taken over by the Ottomans. The construction will cost

an estimated \$4.5 million (about Shs 17 billion) is required for the construction works.

During his speech, Museveni asked the religious leaders to rally their followers to boost their household incomes through commercial activities including agriculture, services, ICTs and industries. Museveni says majority Christians are involved in subsistence farming, which is crippling them financially. He contends that once people are empowered economically they are able to support the construction of the church.

Museveni also contributed Shs 80 million to the Sacco of the church members and another Shs 20 million to the Sacco of Orthodox priests. He pledged to lobby for more funds towards the construction of the church across the orthodox fraternity using his diplomatic relations.

"I saw the fraternity of the Orthodox; the Eritreans, Ethiopians, Egyptians, the Serbians, the Russians, the Greeks although the Greeks have been having a few problems recently. So I will use my diplomatic channels to mobilize resources from those areas to support the building of this church." said Museveni.

CHURCH LAND GRABBING

Meanwhile, Museveni summoned all squatters on the land belonging to the Orthodox Church at Lubya Hill in Namungoona to discuss how to resolve the dispute amicably. He was responding to a complaint by Rev Father Paul Mutaasa, the vicar general of the Orthodox Church in Uganda about encroachers on their land.

Father Mutaasa said armed men have occupied six acres of the church land and intimidate them with firearms, saying they are 'untouchable' since they are connected to the president.

According to Fr Mutaasa, four Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF) generals, a major and veteran are among the squatters.

"Your Excellence now that you have come and indeed identified yourself with us at the start of this project, we earnestly request you to support us with any means at your disposal in order to overcome the said challenges" Mutaasa said.

Fr Mutaasa made the same appeal to the Katikkiro of Buganda kingdom, since it's the kingdom, which donated to them the land in question in 1930. Museveni said he will meet the squatters through the Kampala minister Betty Kamya and see how

to resolve the dispute. He however, said he will not compensate the squatters since they encroached on the church land on their own.

Encroachment on public and private land remains a huge challenge in Uganda. A report by the Judiciary released in January this year shows that the Justice Catherine Bamugemereire Land Commission registered over 6,000 land disputes last year alone.

[Source](#)