

Meeting at Valley Hotel, Bushenyi
On Sunday 10th.10.2010. (Afternoon)

Mr. Chairman Mzee Mukaira
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Before you give me your views and reasons why you want me to stand, I have a few things to say before I communicate my decision. In the religion I am familiar with, there are what they call the clergy and the evangelist. The clergy i.e. Reverends have a fixed area of operation. A kind of constituency while evangelists roam places spreading the good news or gospel.

Part of the problem facing our parties is that most people want to have constituencies to operate in and few are available to plan for and spread the party ideas across. So where would I be most useful, in a constituency or being available to cover many areas? For example, yesterday I was in Kasese on a mobilization tour with my colleagues, the leaders in that district. It was quite challenging. Can one be both priest and evangelist? Once again where is one most useful?

In football, there are players, coaches, advisors and commentators. One should study and know when to stop being a player, however good you are, and try to train to be a coach or technical advisor. You cannot be a player forever, in spite of the many exercises and press ups you do.

In 2001, when I left for Arusha, I was already unhappy and disturbed by the way the country was being run and the way the resources were being handled. When I returned in 2006, there was a discussion on my future political participation. Then, there was a broad consensus on my participation at the constituency level and actually many advised me not to stand for Igara East Constituency. Many reasons were advanced and I never tried to run for that constituency. When I mentioned this to Honorable Nduhura, he looked very pleased.

However, when the Bushenyi-Ishaka Municipality seat was created, a lot of friends, old and new, including those in NRM, approached me and asked me to stand. A lot of you who are here did so too. My main question is, what is the main difference between not being an MP for Igara East but being one for Bushenyi-Ishaka, which was largely carved out of Igara East. What has changed to make this dramatic change of mind? When many of you approached me including those who did not support me when I was an MP, when I see your resolve urging me to stand, even when I have not approached anyone of you asking for your vote, it makes me more determined that this is the right moment not to stand. It is better not to stand at a time when you still see value in me, rather than wait until people start throwing dust at me.

I know with your support and those not here I can win the primary and go on to win the elections. But that is not the issue. I left parliament in 2001 after I had been a member of NRC, Constituent Assembly, a Minister for fifteen (15) years and then became Secretary General East African Community for five (5) years and I am not desperate to become an MP. This is not to suggest that I would have no benefit if I became a Member of Parliament. There is the aura, the pay package and the other privileges that go with it. But that is not the main issue. The key message is; for how long must one go on? What example do I give to those who are glued to one position, that they are being urged, that without them chaos will return, that it is only them who can manage. I am not part of those whose goal is to be in power and then think of what to do. For example Mzee Mukaira here was a Minister in the Ankole Kingdom Government in the 60's and was a Chairman of the then larger Bushenyi District and retired after one term. He is now a respected and wise elder, Party leader and development pillar. He earns all this owing to discernment on when to be on and when to be off the political stage and when to play which or what role.

The struggle for democracy, freedom and rule of law did not start with Reform Agenda or FDC. It has long roots and long history. Building a new party is like bringing up a child or starting a new business. When the child is young, very few are attracted to it. It is usually the mother who takes care of the child in the early stages even more than the father. As the child grows, and is no longer a "nuisance", is talking and playing around more people take interest in it. To cut a long story short, when a child becomes successful, more people associate and monopolize him/her.

I have been here for two days and I have not been able to see my mother. The other day, I was in Mbarara attending to party issues. Yesterday I was in Kasese. I am now with you and you are insisting that I spend more time with you to the exclusion of my mother who cared for me in my infancy. So I beg to leave early.

You who are building the party will spend more of your time and resources to nourish it and make it grow bigger and stronger, taking into account the history of our country and other places.

The other point is, what I had told you in our last meeting here in this place. Whoever intends to be our MP or leader, there must be an agreed programme so that together, there are goals and objectives to achieve. Not just an MP moving from house to house, greeting people, attending burials and weddings and he or she being responsible for whatever has to be done. Each leader at his or her level should have a part to play. It is a collective effort.

Finally, there is what we call humanity. How should human beings treat each other. How should those in power treat others. We need to build that culture to have values. How Ugandans should be treated to make them value themselves

and in turn value others. What values, ideals, goals that we should espouse that will bind us together?

The Americans and the Europeans value themselves. They may mistreat others but you can not mistreat them. You never see pictures of dead bodies even in war on their TVs and newspapers. For us we show pictures of dead bodies, gusty wounds and flies over dead bodies. We never pose to think how do their dear ones see this. We take pride in caning our fellow beings through Kiboko squads. That way, we de-mean and de-humanize both the beater and the beaten. Cows are better valued by their owners. When I was young, if I beat and bruised a cow and my father saw it, he bruised us too. And there were some stubborn cows. But if we did so, we hid it by bringing the cows home late under the cover of darkness so that the bruises are not seen. There was a sense of fear and respect. Not the impunity and pride of **“I have done it what can you do?”** Our parents valued their cows better than some of our leaders value the people they are supposed to lead. What is my conclusion? You urge me to stand in Bushenyi Municipality when you had dissuaded me from standing in Igara East. Thank you for the support and encouragement but am not ready to stand to become an MP again, for the reasons given above. Feel free to discuss the issues I have put forward to you.

I am ready to listen to them. As I told you earlier, I beg to leave a bit early to have time and supper with my mother and not just to go and eat her “amawolo” as some of you had suggested.