

UGANDA

Dates of Elections: 10 and 11 December 1980

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament following the decision to re-establish the National Assembly*.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Uganda, the National Assembly, comprises 126 members elected for 5 years. There are 30 additional members: 10 specially elected by the National Assembly, 10 nominated by the President of the Republic and 10 representatives of the armed forces.

Electoral System

All Ugandan citizens who are at least 18 years old and have been resident in the country for six months immediately preceding the date on which they apply for registration as electors are entitled to vote. Disqualified are persons owing allegiance to a foreign State, undischarged bankrupts, the insane, and persons under sentence of death or imprisonment exceeding six months.

Electoral registers are revised by an Electoral Commission as the need arises. Voting is not compulsory.

All qualified electors who are able to speak and, unless incapacitated by blindness or other physical cause, to read the country's official language well enough to take an active part in the proceedings of the National Assembly are qualified to be members of this Assembly. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with central or local government offices and those of urban authorities, as well as with membership of district or municipal councils.

Each candidate must be a member of a political party. His nomination must be supported by 12 electors and be accompanied by a deposit of 10,000 Uganda shillings, which is reimbursed if the candidate is returned unopposed or polls at least one-eighth of the votes cast in his constituency.

The 126 directly-elected Assembly members are chosen in a like number of constituencies by simple majority vote. By-elections are held to fill seats of these members which become vacant between general elections.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The 1980 general elections were the first since 1962. In 1971, Parliament was dissolved when Major-General Idi Amin Dada came to power. President Amin was overthrown in

* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, pp. 26-27.

1979, paving the way for the elections that were contested by a number of parties, among which the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), headed by former President (from 1966 to 1971) Milton Obote.

The election date was set on 18 September 1980. The three-month campaign was turbulent. Opposing the socialist-inclined UPC—which advocated a programme of investment and reconstruction to restore the country's troubled economy—were the conservative Democratic Party (DP), led by Mr. Paul Ssemogerere, the Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM) and the Conservative Party (CP).

Voting was extended by an extra half-day because of the late arrival of ballot boxes and papers in many areas. A British Commonwealth team of observers monitored the procedure.

On polling day, the UPC came out on top with 74 seats, which represented more than 40% of the Parliament and thus allowed it, under the Constitution, to choose the President. The DP captured 51 seats and the UPM one, a fresh poll being ordered in two constituencies because of violence during voting.

On 15 December, Dr. Obote was sworn in as President; he subsequently announced the formation of the new Cabinet, which included Mr. Otema Alimadi as Prime Minister. On 23 December, the newly-elected Parliament first met.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats of Directly-Elected Members in the National Assembly

Number of registered electors.	4,899,146*
Valid votes.	4,179,111**

* Excluding two constituencies where polling took place without the registers reaching the Electoral Commission.

** Excluding 17 constituencies where candidates were returned unopposed.

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained		Number of Seats
Uganda People's Congress (UPC)	126	1,971,779	47.18	74
Democratic Party (DP)	108	1,965,823	47.04	51
Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM)	76	171,256	4.10	1
Conservative Party (CP).	47	70,253	1.68	—
				126

2. Distribution of Directly-Elected Members of Parliament according to Sex

Men.	125
Women	1
	126