

**THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL ELDERS' COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO RESOLVE
A SPECIFIC DISPUTE AMONG SOME SENIOR FDC PARTY LEADERS.**

Prepared By:

Dr. Nabwiso Frank (Chairperson) _____

Mr. Tugume Stanley Katembeya (Vice-Chairperson) _____

Mama Tiko Martha Ondoga (Member) _____

Mr. Emusu Joe Ediegu (Member) _____

Mr. Kasozi Robinson (Member) _____

Mr. Mukalazi Kibuka (Member) _____

**Submitted to the FDC Party President (Hon. Engineer Patrick Oboi Amuriat)
on 13th July 2023**

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[1.0] ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Committee is very grateful to the National Executive Committee of FDC for authorizing and approving our appointment. We are also delighted that we received maximum cooperation from all the people we invited to appear before us and FDC staff at Najjanankumbi who took care of us during our deliberations. We were particularly honoured to have a joint interface with Rtd.Col.Dr. Kizza Besigye (the founding FDC Party President), Hon. Eng. Patrick Oboi Amuriat (the current Party President), Hon. Nathan James Nandala Mafabi (the current Secretary General) and Hon. Geoffrey Ekanya (the current Treasurer General).

[2.0] APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

[2.1] The 15th National Council meeting held on 24th-25th November 2022 having witnessed the accusations traded between two senior FDC leaders over the contentious issue of “dirty money” resolved to constitute an Elders Committee to resolve the dispute. Thereafter, the National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting held on 12th May 2023 under Min 2:12052023 approved a Committee of seven (7) elders to handle the matter. In his letter of 25th May 2023, President Amuriat appointed the following.

- a. Mr. Charles Makaru (who unfortunately did not attend any meeting)
- b. Mr. Joe Emusu Ediegu
- c. Mama Tiko Martha Ondoga
- d. Mr. Kasozi Robinson
- e. Dr. Frank Nabwiso
- f. Mr. Mukalazi Kibuka
- g. Mr. Tugume Stanley Katembeya

[2.2] The Committee was given a Legal Advisor (LA) in the name of **Mr. Tugume Moses** (an advocate of the High Court and all Subordinate Courts) and **Mr. Kayanja Thomas** (a lawyer by profession) to serve as the Secretary to the Committee. The Committee held eleven (11) meetings in a period of 13 days at the Forum for Democratic Change Party Headquarters-Najjanankumbi, Kampala.

[3.0] THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMITTEE (TOR)

[3.1] These were listed as shown below:

- a. Invite the aggrieved parties to make their presentations to the Committee.
- b. In consultation with the aggrieved parties, frame issues or questions that are to be resolved between them.
- c. Have an interface with the aggrieved parties and their witnesses (if any) and allow them to present evidence.

- d. Invite any person or expert that the committee may deem necessary or may be having important information that the committee may use in resolving the dispute.
- e. Come up with a detailed report with findings, recommendations and prescribed remedies to the parties.
- f. The duration for the entire exercise of listening to the aggrieved parties, witnesses, evaluating evidence presented and compiling the final report shall be ten (10) days from the commencement date.
- g. The spirit in which the committee has been constituted is to resolve the dispute between senior party leaders in an honest, balanced, peaceful manner and with equity.
- h. The Committee shall observe the principle of natural justice and the principle of utmost good faith.

[4.0] INAUGURATION OF THE COMMITTEE

[4.1] The Committee first convened on 5th June, 2023. President Amuriat thanked the members for accepting their appointment and addressed them on the Terms of Reference (TOR). He informed them that during the already quoted National Council sitting, the founding Party President Dr. Kizza Besigye explained why he did not actively participate in the 2021 General Elections, and that he received private information that the Secretary General of the Party (Hon. Nathan Nandala Mafabi) had received money from hostile sources or “dirty money” intended to weaken the Party’s ability to challenge NRM’s long military and dictatorial rule.

[4.2] *The President further informed them that the main task of the Committee was to help bring about reconciliation between the two mentioned leaders. He accordingly implored the members to exercise impartiality in handling the investigation process so that the Party can remain intact, and move forward more peacefully with greater hope.*

[4.3] The LA addressed the members about the legal modalities that had to be observed throughout their meetings. He stressed that the Committee was not a Court, but could perform some quasi-tribunal functions. Next, he pointed out the expected outputs from their investigations:

- a. Reconciling the two parties or conducting successful mediation between them, preferably including a mediation agreement and a report.
- b. In case it is not successful, there will only be a Report of the Committee detailing what transpired during the Committee meetings, findings and recommendations.

[4.4] On TOR No. 8 concerning the need to observe the principles of natural justice and the principle of utmost good faith, the LA explained that it was about not

condemning anyone unheard, and took members through what constitutes the right to be heard that inter alia include:

- a. Sufficient notice
- b. Each of the parties has a right to know the evidence brought against them.**
- c. Giving the parties opportunity to correct, contest and contradict the evidence that has been brought against them.**
- d. Duty to give reasons for each decision made.
- e. The parties can choose to write or give oral explanation.

[4.5] In addition, the LA explained to the Members the rule against bias which inter alia constitute (a) direct pecuniary interest and (b) reasonable suspicion.

[4.6] The LA implored the Members to be aware of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and other National Laws in regard to establishment and management of political parties.

[4.7] Lastly, the Members elected **Dr. Nabwiso and Mr. Tugume to serve as the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of their Committee respectively** and agreed to focus on:

- a. Reconciling the two Party Leaders, and
- b. Fostering more harmony within the Party

[5.0] METHODOLOGY OF WORK

[5.1] First, the Committee invited the two main “aggrieved parties” (Rtd Colonel Dr. Kizza Besigye the founding Party President, and Hon. Nathan James Nandala Mafabi the current Secretary General of the Party) and other Party Members to give oral information on the matter and secondly, to submit more information through memoranda if they wished to do so. Thirdly, the Members got an opportunity to interact with some university academicians who attempted to do a quick analysis of FDC’s current strengths, weaknesses and opportunities plus the threats which it is facing. Lastly, the Members encouraged themselves to search for any other document which would give them more background information on FDC’s past and continuing challenges from which they would draw relevant recommendations.

[6.0] THE INFORMATION FROM OUR INFORMANTS

[6.1] The Two Main “aggrieved parties”

[6.1.1) These were Rtd. Col. Dr. Kizza Besigye (the founding President of the Party) and Hon. Nathan James Nandala Mafabi (the current Secretary General of the Party).

[6.2] Dr. Besigye

[6.2.1] He appeared before the Committee on 6th June 2023. He was asked to explain the root-cause of the disagreement between him and Hon. Mafabi. He stated that he had known Hon. Mafabi for over 20 years (since 2001) and had never had any personal disagreement with him. He further stressed that he had a cordial working relationship with Hon. Mafabi until around September 2021. What caused the disagreement stemmed from the fact that Hon. Mafabi asked Dr. Besigye to keep for him money which was to a tune of Uganda Shillings 500 million but later alone only 300 million that was delivered. Around the same period, Dr. Besigye was contacted by a source from State House saying there was some money received by some FDC Party leaders from State House. This made Dr. Besigye to cause a meeting with some of the leaders who were directly concerned about the matter but that meeting and other subsequent meetings did not yield results.

[6.2.2] Dr. Besigye also stated that around the same period within which he received money from Hon. Mafabi, a colleague visited him and reminded him of how they had suffered together, and how many FDC members are becoming desperate. In turn, Dr. Besigye asked him what could be done about the matter. The colleague advised Dr. Besigye to cause a formal agreement with NRM to establish a Government of National Unity. He asked the colleague whether he was advocating for terms of surrendering, and he answered in the affirmative. The colleague also told him that there were already some contacts with Museveni, and also requested Dr. Besigye to keep the information confidential.

[6.2.3] Dr. Besigye further informed the Committee that after getting the information from a person working in State House, he reached out to President Amuriat and asked him whether he had received any money from Hon. Mafabi. President Amuriat admitted having received some money from Hon. Mafabi to the tune of Uganda Shillings 280 million which was intended to help the Party during the electoral process. Dr. Besigye added that that is when the bad blood between him and Hon. Mafabi began to emerge.

[6.2.4] Regarding how the matter went to National Council, Dr. Besigye responded that there were several meetings which attempted to iron out the matter but all efforts were in vain. He cited a meeting that was convened after the 2021 General Elections at Busabala at Owek. Amb. Wasswa Birigwa's home, where they agreed that the Treasurer General should give them a report of how much he had received and how it was disbursed.

[6.2.5] In another meeting, where the report was supposed to be availed, Hon. Mafabi allegedly asked Dr. Besigye in what capacity he was asking for the report. Hon. Mafabi insisted that Dr. Besigye would see it, after it had gone through the appropriate organs

of the Party, so that meeting also became unsuccessful. That is why Dr. Besigye took the opportunity to raise the matter in the National Council after delivering his key note address.

[6.2.6] When asked whether it was true that he never supported Hon. Mafabi for the post of Party President in 2012, he responded that he chose to remain neutral because he was the Party President and could not take sides.

[6.2.7] Next, the Committee asked Dr. Besigye why he did not campaign for Eng. Amuriat as FDC's Presidential Candidate. He reiterated that he gave a detailed explanation to the National Council as follows:

- a. That in the year 2018, he met Senior Party Leaders and told them that he would not be a candidate in the 2021 General Elections and advised them to find someone else. He was surprised that there were no efforts taken to follow his advice and hurriedly settled for Eng. Amuriat at the last minute.
- b. He expressed concern that when Eng. Amuriat became the candidate, he set up a Campaign Bureau which was supposed to be headed by Amb. Birigwa only to be notified later that the Campaign Bureau had been disbanded. Furthermore, Dr. Besigye took the initiative to contact Eng. Amuriat over the matter but it seemed that the latter did not have plans to reinstate the Campaign Bureau.

[6.2.8] *Dr. Besigye concluded his submission by asserting that the FDC which is supposed to be the vanguard of challenging the NRM dictatorship has remained inactive in the last two and a quarter years (March 2021-June 2023).*

[6.3] Hon. Mafabi

[6.3.1] He appeared before the Committee on 7th June 2023. The Committee first thanked him for his contributions to FDC, Uganda's Parliament and the Country at large. The Chairperson then asked him about the rumours on social media that President Museveni was planning to appoint him Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development or Governor Bank of Uganda. He responded that the same rumours have always come up whenever there are internal Party elections in the FDC as a way of blackmailing him although he has always ignored them.

[6.3.2] The Committee then asked him whether he had received any **"dirty money"** as alleged by Dr. Besigye's informers. He replied that towards the 2021 General Elections the Party was in a financial crisis as it needed close **to 2.7 billion shillings**, excluding the cost for printing posters and financing candidates. ***The National Executive Committee authorized him to borrow funds to run the Party activities during that period and he produced an extract of the minutes***

where he was authorized. He further averred that in the process of looking for money they approached Dr. Besigye to help them raise the money. Instead, Dr. Besigye asked them to prepare the budget which they did, but he never got back to them. Hon. Mafabi and his team were upset by the way Dr. Besigye treated them whereas they had firmly stood with him in 2001-2020.

[6.3.3] After realizing that Dr. Besigye was not willing to mobilize or help them get any funds, Hon. Mafabi embarked on intensive mobilization of the required resources. So, what he did was not to benefit him as an individual but the Party.

[6.3.4] Specifically, on the issue of “dirty money” he contended that he had mobilized some money for agents but that URA had always garnished his accounts during the period for elections, so he requested Dr. Besigye to keep for him Uganda Shillings 300 million which the latter willingly accepted. He showed the Committee evidence of the Bank Statement indicating the money that he withdrew from his account in Stanbic Kyambogo Bank which was to a tune of Uganda Shillings 500 million.

[6.3.5] *Hon. Mafabi revealed to the Committee that the money for agents he advanced to Dr. Besigye was paid back to the Party (from Dr. Besigye’s Petrol Station in Nsambya) in three installments that is:*

- a. On 14/01/2021 Uganda Shillings 120 million was paid back to the Chief Administrative Officer of the Party.***
- b. On 14/01/2021 Uganda Shillings 80 million was paid back to the Chief Administrative Officer of the Party***
- c. On 15/01/2021 23, 600,000/= was paid back to the Chief Administrative Officer of the Party.***

[6.3.6] So, the total amount of money advanced to CAO was 299,330,000/=, leaving a balance of an unpaid sum of Uganda Shillings 670,000/=.

[6.3.7] Hon. Mafabi demonstrated to the Committee that the money used was from legitimate sources. He intimated that the money that he lent to the party would be paid back but with no interest.

[6.3.8] The Members asked Hon. Mafabi why he disbanded the Campaign Bureau. He responded that the money for the Bureau was inflated to a tune of Uganda Shillings **130 billion** whereas the party was struggling to find finances to run basic activities. He however revealed that the activities of the Bureau were run by the Party Administrative Staff. He further clarified that the matters regarding the Campaign Bureau were decided by the Presidential Candidate himself.

[6.3.9] The Members asked Hon. Mafabi to explain how the Party vehicles were acquired. *In response he gave the following information:*

- (a) UBF-042E-Land Cruiser was bought around on 6th May, 2019 and registered in the names of the Party.*
- (b) The two pickups i.e. UBH 236Z, UBH 410Z Hard body and Toyota HIACE UBH 762V Model 2012 were bought on loan agreements and registered in the names of the Party.*

[6.3.10] The Members confirmed from the documents provided to them that the transfer for the said vehicles was indeed effected.

[6.3.11] Hon. Mafabi concluded with another allegation that Dr. Kizza Besigye wanted to micro manage the Party, yet during his tenure a lot of funds were mobilized from both covert and overt sources without being questioned about them.

[6.4] The Submissions of other people

[6.4.1] They were invited in order to dig deeper into the root-causes of the above mentioned disagreements, namely:

- a. Hon. Ekanya Geoffrey (FDC's current Treasurer General)**
- b. Mr. Kyambadde Wilberforce (FDC's current Deputy Treasurer General)**
- c. Mr. Bakandonda Wycliff (a former FDC Chief Administrative Officer)**
- d. Hon. Jack Sabiiti (a former FDC Treasurer General)**
- e. Hon. Eng. Patrick Oboi Amuriat (The Party President)**
- f. Ms. Namyanzi Pauline (current FDC Chief Administrative Officer).**
- g. Ambassador Wasswa Birigwa**

[6.4.2] Hon. Ekanya

[6.4.2.1] The Members asked him to explain the status of finances of the Party and how he found them in 2015. He replied that the sources of finance for the Party have been shrinking and fundraising has also reduced. He added that the Party is entitled to money from (a) the Consolidated Fund with approval of the Electoral Commission (b) its Members of Parliament and (c) contributions from other Party members and well-wishers.

[6.4.2.2] Hon. Ekanya further expressed concern that some of the former Party Leaders went without disclosing their previous sources of fundraising and claimed that he did not know of any dispute between Dr. Besigye and Hon. Mafabi regarding "dirty money" though he had heard about it from social media platforms.

[6.4.2.3] Hon. Ekanya also denied being personally involved in the deals related to “dirty money”. He described the rumors about such money as wild accusations that he did not know about. He further submitted that the issue of money was intended to blackmail the current leadership including him, and averred that since 2005 they agreed that some of the sources of finances to the Party cannot be disclosed to all members. He affirmed that since 2006 it has been the practice not to disclose all the sources of money to all members.

[6.4.2.4] *He implored the Committee (if possible) to look into the finances of the Party and how they have been spent since 2005.* He was shocked that some people were hyping the issue of money which was legitimately raised through a directive issued to the Secretary General (Hon. Mafabi) to borrow money for the Party for the 2021 General Elections. If he had not done so, the Party would have become a laughing stock.

[6.4.2.5] Hon. Ekanya further expressed disappointment on Dr. Kizza Besigye’s failure to extend financial assistance to the Party in the 2021 Elections and expressed concern about “some big people who are not happy when others do work efficiently”!

[6.4.2.6] He also alluded to the fact that they have been channeling money for activism without receiving accountability reports. He cited the example of how Najjanankumbi gave money to Katonga during LC I Elections to mobilize people who were to contest on FDC ticket but they were disappointed, because Katonga never delivered on its commitment. He also said that he was disappointed that Dr. Besigye received classified information and chose to disclose it and further averred that all the problems that are arising are as a result of Dr. Besigye wanting to know each and everything.

[6.4.3] Mr. Kyambadde

[6.4.3.1] He was asked by the Committee to explain to them about his role in FDC. He responded that his role is laid out in the FDC Constitution that inter alia includes maintenance of accurate records of the Party assets and liabilities, preparing budgets and serving as a signatory to the Party accounts.

[6.4.3.2] Mr. Kyambadde confirmed that there are some sources of funding to the Party that cannot be disclosed, and that it is not a requirement for all sources of funds to be disclosed. He asserted that the finances of the Party are currently being managed well than previously and cited the example of 2016 where there were numerous complaints about how the money in the General Elections was misused.

[6.4.3.3] He, too, was disappointed by the way Dr. Besigye chose to discuss the “dirty money” matter in the National Council. In his opinion, the issue should have been

handled by a few people at a higher level. ***He commended the appointment of the Elders' Committee because it was a good step towards resolving the ongoing financial conflicts.***

[6.4.3.4] When Members asked him for advice on how to handle the allegation of "dirty money" he did not give a direct answer. He however pointed out that in 2016 Dr. Besigye gave them a lot of money without disclosing its source. He further believes all the money that came into the Party in 2016 came from legitimate sources including three major instances i.e. 100,000 USD, 200,000 USD dollars and 400,000USD. He did not know, neither did he ask for the sources of the said funds. Similarly, he believes that the money which came into the Party in 2021 General Elections was from legitimate sources.

[6.4.4] Mr. Bakandonda

[6.4.4.1] Asked about the cause of animosity between Katonga and Najjanankumbi, he responded that the alleged dichotomy between Katonga and Najjanankumbi was a "misplaced talk". He insisted that Katonga is an office for activists while Najjanankumbi is the Headquarters for the Party. He emphasized that they are supposed to play complementary roles.

[6.4.4.2] Regarding the issue of the Campaign Bureau for the FDC Presidential Candidate in 2021, he responded that indeed Hon. Amuriat requested him to be the Director, and that he initially refused because he had issues with some of the people at Najjanankumbi back in 2016. Later, he was made to accept the responsibilities and he drafted a budget only to be notified that the Bureau had been disbanded. Additionally, Mr. Bakandonda informed the Committee about the scenario of 2016 where someone unilaterally suspended the operation of **Power Ten (P.10)**.

[6.4.4.3] Mr. Bakandonda was also asked whether it was true that Najjanankumbi funds for activism at Katonga, but never provided accountability. He responded emphatically that he has never seen Najjanakumbi funding activism. He however admitted that when activists are arrested, sometimes the Party has helped to rescue them.

[6.4.4.4] The Committee further asked Mr. Bakandonda whether it was true that Katonga was giving refuge to those who ceased to be FDC Members. His answer was that Katonga is an all-inclusive vehicle, it is better not to lock out members who want to associate with Katonga.

[6.4.4.5] On the issue of "dirty money", he said he has nothing much to say when the Committee has already met those involved. The Committee further asked him why Hon. Mafabi was appointed Minister of Finance under Peoples Government yet it was

him (Bakandonda) handling all issues of Peoples Government related to finances. He answered that Hon. Mafabi abandoned the Peoples Government and that it is not true that he took over his (Mafabi) duties in Peoples Government.

[6.4.5] Hon. Sabiiti

[6.4.5.1] The Committee wanted to know what he knew about the “dirty money” allegations. He expressed concern that Dr. Besigye used the platform while addressing the National Council to raise the issue of “dirty money” before making adequate research about it. He further claimed that during the time he was the FDC Treasurer General (2006-2016) a lot of money could come in and no one would question the sources. He also alluded to the fact that during the 2016 elections a lot of money was borrowed as happened in 2011, but no accountability was provided.

[6.4.5.2] Hon. Sabiiti also stated that the FDC Constitution gave a lot of powers to the Party President and Secretary General for mobilizing funds, and that Dr. Besigye used those powers successfully during his tenure, but when other people took over the FDC Leadership he started accusing them about “dirty money”. He added that he was aware that the Secretary General and the Treasurer General were looking for money as he (Sabiiti) and the then Secretary General used to do before. He further averred that during Dr. Besigye’s tenure, they used to get money from people who were close to Museveni.

[6.4.5.3] Hon. Sabiiti also expressed displeasure that himself, Hon. Ekanya and Hon. Mafabi went to Dr. Besigye to seek financial assistance to the Party but he showed no interest in the matter. Hon. Sabiiti alleged that Dr. Besigye did not wish FDC well in 2021, because one day he asked them why they were insisting on the campaigns which would not yield anything! Thereafter, Hon. Sabiiti confided to the Committee Members that after being frustrated by Dr. Besigye he advised Hon. Mafabi and Eng. Amuriat to look for money.

[6.4.5.4] Hon. Sabiiti made further allegations that some people think FDC is theirs and stressed that the **Peoples Government is an offshoot of FDC** yet Dr. Besigye wants the entire Party to account to him. **He accordingly implored the Committee to deeply look into this matter and come to an appropriate solution.** He concluded with a demand from Dr. Besigye to prove that he (Sabiiti), Hon. Mafabi and others received money from hostile sources.

[6.4.6] Hon. Amuriat

(a) Money issue

[6.4.6.1] He confirmed that Owek. Nabosa Ssebugwawo (a former FDC Vice President) chaired the NEC meeting where a resolution was passed to borrow money and in that same meeting she led by example by donating Uganda Shillings 20 million. He also confirmed that in an attempt to look for money for the Party they reached out to Dr. Besigye to help them. He asked them to prepare the budget but he never got back to them. Hon Amuriat further revealed that Hon. Mafabi took the initiative of mobilizing money and gave some of it to him in three instalments of Uganda Shillings 150 million, 100 million and 30 million.

[6.4.6.2] The Party President was aware that Dr. Besigye received Uganda Shillings 300 million from Hon. Mafabi during the 2021 elections, and that it was from that time when Dr. Besigye started alleging that the money came from State House. ***He accordingly advised that the dispute between the said two leaders could be resolved by focusing on facts but not rumours.***

[6.4.6.3] Hon. Amuriat reiterated that no money came from State House although there has been a practice that some of the sources of funding be kept secret. He expressed displeasure that in one of the reconciliation meetings that turned out to be acrimonious Dr. Besigye promised to introduce the matter to the public, which he did when he came to address the National Council.

(b) Efforts taken to resolve the dispute between Dr. Besigye and Hon. Mafabi

[6.4.6.4] Hon. Amuriat informed the Committee that several meetings were convened at Busabala at Owek. Birigwa's home but no resolution was made to reconcile the two leaders. Instead Dr. Besigye stuck to his allegations even after Hon. Mafabi had tendered the documents indicating the sources of the money. Since then Dr. Besigye has never disclosed the person who told him that Hon. Mafabi got money from State House.

(c) The Campaign Bureau

[6.4.6.5] ***Hon. Amuriat explained that he disbanded the Campaign Bureau because the Party was in a financial crisis including looking for money to nominate candidates, print posters and run the Presidential Campaign in the whole of Uganda. So, a decision was taken to use the Party staff instead of a separate Campaign Bureau.***

[6.4.7.] Ms. Namyanzi

[6.4.7.1] The Committee asked her about her major responsibilities. She responded that her major responsibilities include helping the Secretary General to implement the decisions taken by the different organs of the Party. She also confirmed that she collected the following sums of money from Dr. Besigye's Nsambya Petrol Station:

- (a) Uganda Shillings 120 million on 14/01/2021
- (b) Uganda Shillings 80 million on 14/01/2021
- (c) Uganda Shillings 23,600,000/= on 15/01/2021 leaving unpaid balance to this day of Uganda Shillings 670,000/=.

[6.4.8] Ambassador Birigwa

[6.4.8.1] He declined to interface with the Committee for reasons connected with FDC's Constitution concerning the responsibilities of the Party Chairpersons (see Article 28 of the FDC Constitution)

[6.4.9] Interaction with some Academicians/SOJUN LEADERS

[6.4.9.1] The meeting took place in a Restaurnt at Lugogo . It consisted of four members from the Elders's Committee (Frank Nabwiso, Robinson Kasozi, Tiko Martha Ondoga and Mukalazi Kibuuka) plus four members from the Society for Social Justice and National Unity (SOJUN) in Uganda (**names withheld**).

[6.4.9.2] The meeting was organized to help the Elders to get more ideas on how to promote reconciliation and unity in FDC so that it can continue to pursue its social justice goals more effectively.

[6.4.9.3] In summary, the SOJUN leaders reminded the Elders about the ongoing disintegration of African countries despite the fact that most of them have been "independent" for the last 60 years. They gave the examples of Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan and the failure of Uganda to transform into a Nation because of NRM'S concentration on allocating resources along tribal lines. They also urged FDC leaders to avoid becoming "affiliates" of the NRM like DP and UPC have done chiefly for financial gains to some of their leaders. They further advised the FDC Party to quickly control the damage which is spreading fast in the Countryside that some of its leaders obtained huge sums of money from State House during the 2021 Elections. They stressed that FDC is already losing its national outlook or character and it is likely to lose support in several of its strong political strongholds.

[6.4.9.4] Lastly, they expressed interest in continuing to work with FDC in the future (as they have done in the past) and help it to regularly assess its strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, internal and external threats in order to develop and implement relevant social justice programs to ordinary Ugandans.

[6.4.10] THE COMMITTEE'S INTERFACE WITH FOUR PARTY LEADERS

[6.4.11] The interface took place in the FDC Boardroom on Wednesday 12th July 2023. It was between the Elders and Dr. Besigye, Hon. Amuriat, Hon. Mafabi and Hon. Ekanya. It was organized to brainstorm on the need for reconciliation and development of the Party in the coming years, particularly to groom young leaders for the Party.

[6.4.12] In the opinion of the Committee, it was a successful interface as it helped the four leaders to share with us their grievances, particularly between Dr. Besigye and Hon. Mafabi. None of the four leaders was against the idea of reconciliation, although Hon. Mafabi still wanted Dr. Besigye to disclose the name of his informer and come out to pin him over the allegations of "dirty money" which was allegedly received from State House. Each one of them agreed that he was not above the Party and expressed willingness to continue seeking unity and reconciliation.

7.0 THE MAJOR FINDINGS

[7.1] The Committee identified three major issues which have continued to cause disagreements or conflicts from the above mentioned leaders. These are:

- (a) "Dirty money" or money from hostile sources,
- (b) Management of the 2021 General Elections,
- (c) Elections versus Activism.

(a) Money from hostile sources

[7.2] The Committee found this issue a sensitive one and responsible for the dispute between Dr. Besigye and Hon. Mafabi as already highlighted. The disagreement stemmed from the fact that Hon. Mafabi asked Dr. Besigye to keep for him Uganda Shillings 300 million for the agents. In turn Dr. Besigye was allegedly contacted by a source from State House saying there was some money received by some FDC Party leaders from State House. This made Dr. Besigye to cause a meeting with some of the leaders who were directly concerned about the matter but that meeting and other subsequent meetings did not yield results. Dr. Besigye stated before the Committee that money released from Bank of Uganda is dispatched to three entities i.e. commercial banks, security agencies and State House. He further averred that he also took the initiative to find out and the serial numbers on the new notes he received pointed to State House.

[7.3] On the other hand, Hon. Mafabi while appearing before the Committee denied that he never received any money from State House, he contended that towards the 2021 General Elections the Party was in a financial crisis as it needed close **to 2.7 billion**, excluding the cost for printing posters and financing candidates. The National Executive Committee authorized him to borrow funds to run the Party activities during that period and he produced **an extract of the minutes where he was authorized**. He further averred that in the process of looking for money they approached Dr. Besigye to help them raise the money. Instead Dr. Besigye asked them to prepare the budget which they did but he never got back to them. The account of Hon. Mafabi is in consonance with the submission of Hon. Ekanya, Mr. Kyambadde and Eng. Amuriat who all confirmed that NEC authorized Hon. Mafabi to borrow money but also averred that they knew the money was obtained from legitimate sources. Hon. Mafabi tendered before the Committee a bank statement from Kyambogo Stanbic Bank where the money that was delivered to Dr. Besigye was withdrawn.

[7.4] In principle, Dr. Besigye was not wrong to seek clarification on the sources of money for promoting transparency in the Party. He was not also wrong to table the matter in the Busabala meetings, but Busabala's failure to resolve the matter was unfortunate. If it had resolved the matter, Dr. Besigye would have not raised it in the National Council meeting.

[7.5] The Committee further notes the long standing practice in the FDC of not disclosing all the sources of its money. This is also the practice in many political parties across the world. It is therefore difficult to abandon it given the little income which can be raised from the FDC members. Therefore, there is need for the Party to review how it will continue to work with its private funders Vis-à-vis covert sources and public image.

Management of the 2021 elections

[7.6] From the information the committee received, it is clear that management of the said elections contributed to the disagreements which developed among Dr. Besigye, Hon. Amuriat and Hon. Mafabi. The information shows that it was the financial crisis in the party which caused Hon. Amuriat to disband his own campaign bureau. Therefore, the assertion that Hon. Mafabi disbanded it is not justified. Furthermore, the information shows that Dr. Besigye did not participate actively in the presidential elections based on his decision in 2018 not to stand again and the manner in which Hon. Amuriat eventually became FDC'S Candidate after Amb. Birigwa had stepped down for him.

[7.7] However, Dr. Besigye's decision disadvantaged the FDC. It added more negative impression to many people inside and outside that the FDC was not ready for the elections.

Elections Versus Activism

[7.8] Undoubtedly, strong disagreements have developed between Dr.Besigye and Hon.Mafabi arising from their supporters' interpretations of the importance of elections and activism in Uganda's struggle for democracy or good governance.The pro-Besigye and pro-Mafabi groups are generally referred to as the "Katonga" and "Najjanankumbi" groups respectively. Some people in the "Katonga group" are believed to have lost hope in future elections, while the "Najjanankumbi group" believes that they should continue to participate in elections despite the rigging, violence, intimidation and other criminal acts which have taken place from 1996 to date. They believe so, because, it is one of the most important avenues through which they can sell their policies to the public, open the political space and defeat electoral autocracy in the Country.

[7.9] Both Hon. Mafabi and Hon. Ekanya complained that the money the Party has been sending to Katonga activists has not been accounted for, although they did not disclose the amount to the Committee, both leaders added that the Party has no more money to spend on activism.

[7.10] While Katonga Group does not believe anymore in elections, the two leaders believe that if the Party stops conducting elections it will vanish from Uganda's political map.

[7.11] Activism is universally accepted as one of the strategies which have been used to bring down some dictatorial regimes in the World, hence it needs to be supported by FDC mainstream at Najjanankumbi.

[7.12] The committee is of the view that the Katonga and Najjanankumbi groups are still superficial divisions and stem from failure to harmonize and integrate their major activities. Katonga is not a breakaway group or irreconcilable with the leaders at the Party Headquarters at Najjanankumbi who are in charge of implementing the Party's work plans.

[8.0]. RECOMMENDATIONS

[8.1]. Reconciliation

Both Dr.Besigye and Hon.Mafabi have been friends and have worked together in FDC in the last 21 years. For the sake of the Party, they should reconcile and not allow to split it like what has happened in Uganda's oldest Parties (DP and UPC).The so called Katonga and Najjanankumbi groups should be encouraged to co-exist. The Party should develop practical modalities for reconciliation.

[8.2] Tolerance

Since there is no one who is perfect, there is need for all FDC members to tolerate each other. This means pursuit of the Party's goals instead of individual benefits.

[8.3] Grooming young leaders

It is important to groom younger persons in all sub regions' in the Country in accordance with the FDC Constitution or to prepare them for leadership positions and help elderly leaders to sign out with dignity.

[8.4] Amendment of the Constitution.

[8.4.1] The Constitution gives a lot of powers to the office of the Secretary General and the Treasurer General. The Committee has also found some other aspects in the Constitution that need to be amended in order to streamline the operations of the Party. For example, Article 28 gives mandate to the Party Chairperson to ensure harmony in the Party which can be interpreted to include constituting Committees for resolving disputes. However, under Article 21(7) it is NEC which is empowered to establish committees as it may deem necessary for the efficient discharge of Party functions.

[8.4.2]. The Constitution should also specify the role which our senior leaders who have served the Party diligently can play in the Party to continue tapping their wisdom and not to forget them.

[8.5] Absence of an Organogram for the Party.

During its investigations, the Committee found out that the Party does not have a clear organogram to guide its operations at the Headquarters and in the Districts. This absence has often contributed to some confusion in the responsibilities of its leaders and staff at different levels.

[8.6] Development of Party Alliances

FDC should take great interest in developing Party alliances in Uganda as one of the strategies towards dislodging NRM's military or oligarchical rule in Uganda. FDC should take special interest in the evolving culture of forming political party alliances to promote democracy and socio-economic development just like in Kenya. This will necessitate clear guidelines from the Party on how to forge Party and collaborations.

[8.7]. Need for a detailed history of the FDC

Arising from the unpublished paper on "Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) Historical Tracking" it is now necessary to prepare a detailed history of FDC in book-form which

will among other things, highlight the commendable contributions of the FDC founders in the last 19 years (2004-2023)

[8.8] Management of Opposition African Political Parties

Managing a political party in Africa particularly an opposition party is no easy task. Consequently, there is need to compile information on them for benchmarking reasons.

The newly established FDC's leadership Training Institute can handle this exercise and provide appropriate training for the FDC leaders down to District levels.

[9.0] THE REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

[9.1] Anonymous: "Forum for Democratic Change" (FDC) Historical Tracking"an unpublished paper

[9.2] Besigye Kizza : Additional suggestions to the Committee

[9.3] Kalinaki Daniel: Kizza Besigye and his Unfinished Revolution.

[9.4] Prof Naluwairo: In defense of Besigye's basic human rights

[9.5] Nabwiso Frank: "Building an appropriate socio-economic and political ideology for FDC in Uganda" an unpublished paper

[9.6] Nabwiso Frank: Election rigging Versus Uganda's struggle for democracy/good Governance in 1963-2021" an unpublished paper.

[9.7] Sabiiti Jack: "My thoughts about the problems in the (FDC) Party"an unpublished paper