

# Uganda military chief says would join Iran war if Israel faced defeat

**Kipchumba Ochieng**  
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General Muhoozi Kainerugaba, commander of Uganda's armed forces and son of Western-backed ruler Yoweri Museveni—in power since 1986—and widely regarded as his successor, has declared his readiness to support the US-Israeli war against Iran.

Writing on X, Muhoozi stated that “if Israel needs help, it only need ask,” adding that “It can't take us more than 2 weeks to capture Tehran. A UPDF [Ugandan Popular Defence Forces] Brigade is enough for that job,” and that “their Ugandan brothers are ready to assist.” He continued, “We want the war in the Middle East to end now... but any talk of destroying or defeating Israel will bring us into the war. On the side of Israel.” He warned that “if Tehran dares hit us with missiles, we shall retaliate with our own missiles.”

These statements are not a serious military proposal. Uganda lacks both the military capacity and the geopolitical position to intervene in such a conflict. Muhoozi is grovelling, to signal the loyalty of the Ugandan regime to US imperialism.

The US-Israeli war started with an assassination campaign aimed at Iran's leadership and then escalated into relentless bombardment of schools, residential neighbourhoods, communication systems, and essential infrastructure, alongside the destruction of cultural and historical sites. Thousands of civilians have been killed. It is driven by strategic imperatives of US imperialism, the control over oil resources, critical trade routes, and the reassertion of geopolitical dominance, above all against China, of a region central to the global economy.

Support for this neo-colonial war underlines the bankruptcy of the national bourgeoisie that took power across Africa amid the anti-colonial struggles of the post-war period. Most African governments have either remained silent or, like Kenya's President William Ruto, have explicitly condemned Iran's retaliatory actions. South Africa, the most industrialised economy in Africa, has clinged on its “non-alignment” policy, expressing concern and calling for restraint while avoiding any direct

condemnation of the US or Israel's actions.

Muhoozi's statements are part of a pattern of increasingly erratic pronouncements that expose the broader decay of the political order he represents. He has made repeated calls to invade Kenya to secure land-locked Uganda access to the sea, echoing longstanding ambitions the Ugandan bourgeoisie for a maritime outlet. He has praised Trump as the only “white leader” he respects, only to later accuse the US of intervening in Ugandan politics by backing bourgeois opposition figure Bobi Wine—a claim aimed at burnishing a pseudo-anti-imperialist image while he remains a stooge of imperialism.

On X, Muhoozi has threatened to behead opponents, boasting of killings of protestors carried out by his security forces, and openly admitted to the detention and abuse of opposition figures such as Eddie Mutwe, whom he claimed was being beaten up “in my basement”.

The war against Iran is already generating severe domestic economic shocks, with surging global oil prices, rising fuel and food costs, and disruptions to trade routes on which land-locked Uganda depends. With the country importing the overwhelming majority of its fuel and relying heavily on Middle Eastern markets for exports and remittances, these pressures threaten to drive inflation upward, weaken the currency, and slow economic growth.

Such conditions carry explosive social implications. Rising living costs, declining real incomes, and mounting taxes will drive workers and the rural masses into political struggle against governments that are ever more openly subordinated to imperialism while presiding over worsening conditions at home.

Uganda is already a social powder keg. Its richest 10 percent capture 35.7 percent of national income, while the poorest 10 percent survive on just 2.5 percent. The crisis is most acute among the youth, who make up over 70 percent of the population. More than half of those aged 18 to 30 are neither in employment, education, nor training, and only a small fraction of graduates secure formal-sector jobs each year. For the vast majority, life is defined by unemployment

or precarious, highly exploitative work in the informal economy.

Uganda's alignment with US and British imperialism and its ally Israel is deeply rooted in the geopolitics of the post-colonial period. In the 1960s, under the first post-independence regime of Milton Obote, Israel cultivated close military and intelligence ties with Kampala as part of its broader "periphery doctrine," seeking alliances with non-Arab states surrounding hostile Arab regimes.

Israeli advisers trained Uganda's army, while Ugandan territory was used as a logistical base to funnel support to insurgent forces in Southern Sudan. This was aimed at weakening Khartoum, which aligned itself with Arab states opposed to Israel. However, as Obote sought to respond to mounting post-independence disillusionment by carrying out limited nationalisations in the "Move to the Left" programme, he distanced himself from British imperialism and Israel, setting the stage for his overthrow.

The 1971 coup that brought Idi Amin to power was carried out with the backing of Britain and Israel. In the early years of his rule, Amin maintained close ties with Tel Aviv and London. But this alignment unravelled when imperialist powers refused to support his demand for advanced weaponry, including aircraft, to secure access to the sea through neighbouring Tanzania. Spurned by his former backers, Amin pivoted toward Libya and other Arab states, adopting an anti-Israeli stance.

Amin's regime was overthrown in 1979 through a British-backed Tanzanian invasion, which incorporated Ugandan exile forces including those linked to Museveni. After years of instability, Museveni seized power in 1986 and reoriented Uganda along openly pro-imperialist lines. His government implemented privatisations and market reforms under the tutelage of the IMF. He received more than a billion dollars in military assistance in the following decades.

Today, Uganda functions as a key regional ally and proxy for Western interests. It maintains over 15,000 troops deployed across Somalia, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Central African Republic, where they operate within frameworks shaped by US and European strategic priorities while advancing the interests of Uganda's ruling elite in plundering resource-rich areas.

The bourgeois opposition led by Bobi Wine and his National Unity Platform represents no alternative to Museveni's regime. Following the fraudulent elections held earlier this year—marked by repression, arrests, and widespread irregularities—Wine fled Uganda and resurfaced in the United States, where he has been engaged in lobbying efforts. His campaign has focused on calls for sanctions, aid conditionality, and international legal action against the Ugandan leadership, appealing to the very imperialist

powers that underpin the existing regime.

According to *Africa Confidential*, Wine is working with Jim Risch, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who described the January elections as a "hollow exercise" and proposed reviewing US security relations with Uganda. Risch is one of the most aggressive anti-China hawks in the US political establishment.

He repeatedly proposed legislation aimed at countering China's Belt and Road Initiative, expanding US military and economic leverage on Africa, and pressuring African governments that deepen ties with Beijing. He called for downgrading Kenya's status as a major non-NATO US ally after closer ties with Beijing, and urged a review of relations with Tanzania following its fraudulent elections. These moves seek to pressure these states to distance themselves from China.

In this context, Wine is trying to present himself as a more credible partner to imperialist interests. During the election, the manifesto of his National Unity Platform was centred on "attracting foreign investment," expanding industrial parks, and establishing special economic zones through tax incentives, infrastructure provision, and preferential access to land. In foreign policy, the programme was defined by its silence. It offered no opposition to Uganda's role as a regional imperialist-backed military proxy.

In Washington, Wine continues to appeal for regime change in Uganda. But for the moment, these appeals have fallen on deaf ears apart from US factions led by Risch. According to *Africa Confidential*, "Washington insiders say the US administration would prefer Wine to leave quickly, with the memo warning that 'while the election outcome is not in dispute among the United States or key allies, the continued emphasis on Bobi Wine risks elevating his profile unnecessarily.'"



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