

Rethinking Incentive Pay to Parliamentary Commissioners in Uganda: Perspectives of Corruption Risks, Moral Conduct, and Mitigation Challenges

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The extensive power the law grants to the Parliamentary Commission (ers) concerning their incentive pay poses corruption risks and moral concerns among the Commissioners and also causes mitigation challenges to the anti-corruption agencies in Uganda. Established under Article 87A of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 (the Constitution) and Section 2 of the Administration of Parliament Act, Cap. 272, the Commission is composed of the Speaker and the deputy, the Leader of Government Business, the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament (LoP), and four backbench Members of Parliament (MPs). The Commissioners occupy a critical position in the Parliament as they are responsible for the administration of the Parliament. Their mandate, includes broad human resource functions such as the appointment and promotion of the staff of the Parliament and providing the required facilities to ensure the efficient running of the Parliament. It is also enjoined to prepare financial estimates for the Parliament each financial year. Given the centrality of their function in the Parliament, the Commissioners receive incentive pay over and above those of other MPs. Whereas the above appears to be within their mandate, they are liable to abuse which may increase the risk of corruption. Determining their emoluments and incentives poses the risk of conflict of interest. Investigating acts of corruption and prosecuting it by anti-corruption agencies also appears problematic as, for example, the Auditor General is an officer of Parliament and reports to it. Even when such acts are to be prosecuted, the risk of some powerful individuals exerting undue influence to subvert the cause of justice remains high. Against this backdrop, this article critically examined corruption risks within the Commission given the broad role it plays in Parliament, especially in light of the extensive powers it wields, the moral questions that may arise, and the challenges anti-corruption agencies face in their attempt to combat the vice. It was found that the power of the Commission has been previously challenged in court and the court interpreted the relevant law. As a way forward, a salary review Board should be established to determine the emoluments and incentives of MPs, which could lower corruption risks at the Commission. Inadequate funding to anti-corruption

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agencies, inadequate human resource capacity, and inadequate political will tend to hinder the anti-corruption fight in Uganda posing mitigation challenges.

Keywords: incentive pay, parliamentary commissioners, corruption risks, ethical concerns, mitigation challenges

Introduction

This article examines the potential risk of acts of corruption and the likely moral questions the Parliamentary Commissioners are likely to face, given the extensive power they possess in the administration of Parliament. It also analyses the mitigation challenges anti-graft agencies face in tackling the vice in Uganda. This is against the backdrop that the Constitution and the Administration of Parliament Act, Cap. 272, Laws of Uganda, establishes the Parliamentary Commission which comprises the Speaker and the deputy, the Leader of Government Business or a nominee, LoP, the finance minister, and four backbench MPs (Administration of Parliament Act, S. 2(2)). The law also mandates the Commission to run the day-to-day affairs and the strategic administration of the Parliament including, human resource matters, providing facilities for running the institution and more importantly, determining their pay and incentives which, appears to be problematic (Administration of Parliament Act, S. 23).

Despite its well-intended mandate, the extensive power, the law grants the Commission tends to induce certain behaviour in its members which may heighten corruption risks and questionable moral conduct. It may also be a challenge to anti-corruption agencies such as the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) to tackle the vice. Indeed by extension, OAG is a part of the same Parliament to which it reports its audit findings on public institutions including the Parliament (The Constitution, Art. 163(4)). This is against the backdrop of concerns about acts of corruption in the country, including the high risk of the vice at the Parliament (Amnesty International, 2024).

This article takes this debate further by analysing corruption risks to which the Parliamentary Commissioners appear to be exposed, the moral concerns about their conduct, and the challenges anti-graft agencies face in tackling the problem in Uganda, considered below.

Background

This section begins by providing a background to the problem followed by a review of selected theories that can explain corruption in the public sector namely, the Institutional and the Game theories, finally, it describes the methodology adopted for this article, as below.

Establishment and Power of the Commission

The Constitution establishes the Parliamentary Commission of the Parliament of Uganda. Consistent with the foregoing, the Administration of Parliament Act, Cap. 272 (as amended in 2021) gives effect to the above provision of the Constitution. It lays down the composition of the Commission (Administration of Parliament Act Sec 2(2)), under this provision, the members are the Speaker and deputy, the Leader of government business or a nominee, LoP, and four backbench commissioners one of which shall come from the opposition, granting it a body corporate status (Administration of Parliament Act Sec 2(3)). It also empowers the Speaker of Parliament to be the chairperson (Administration of Parliament Act Sec 2(4)). To ensure that the records are kept, the Act

enjoins the Clerk to the Parliament to maintain the record of proceedings of the Commission, being its secretary (Administration of Parliament Act Sec 2(5)).

The power of the commission is extensive, including appointing staff of the Parliamentary Service and taking disciplinary actions (Administration of Parliament Act Sec 6(a)). It is also mandated to provide facilities for running the parliaments and ensuring the preparation every financial year of the revenue and expenditure estimates for Parliament for the subsequent financial year (Administration of Parliament Act Sec 6(e)). Of particular interest to this article is the responsibility of recommending to Parliament or with its approval deciding the allowances payable to the Speaker including the deputy, MP's privileges and to do such other things considered essential for their well-being (Administration of Parliament Act Sec 6(g)). These powers are extensive although other aspects do not seem to be explicitly defined in the Act, which requires court interpretation.

Corruption in Uganda

The problem of corruption in Uganda is real and has recently surged. The Inspectorate of Government (IGG), for example recently disclosed that approximately 10 trillion shillings (approximately US \$2.72 billion) was lost to corruption annually (Matovu, 2024). The international corruption assessments have consistently ranked Uganda poorly in the area. In 2023, Uganda scored 26 out of 100, in the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) taking the 144th position of the 180 countries assessed (Transparency International, 2024). In 2019, it ranked 137th out of 180. The score signifies that the perception is high concerning corruption in the public sector, highlighting the gravity of the problem.

Similar findings using other metrics have also highlighted the corruption in Uganda. The World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators have, for example, identified the challenge of the vice in the country. In the 2022 report, Uganda scored -1.04 (on a -2.5 to 2.5 rating scale) on the Control of Corruption Indicator. This negative (-1.04) score depicts that efforts to control corruption were significantly below the world mean and it also showed paltry progress over the years. Moreover, recent IGG findings put money lost to corruption of up to (UGX 9.1 trillion), equivalent to 44 per cent of the total revenue of the government in 2019 (Inspectorate of Government, 2021).

Rationale for Focusing on the Parliament

The forms of corruption in Uganda are diverse and widespread. Of particular interest to this article is grand corruption involving high-level officials including MPs in which colossal sums of money or their equivalent have been lost. The "Parliament Exhibition" released on social media platforms focusing on the alleged misuse of public resources and abuse of power within the Parliament in Uganda has sparked debate concerning the potential acts of corruption at the institution (Report on Uganda Parliament Exhibition, 2024).

The findings during of this Exhibition were compiled into Report which observed that top officials of the Parliament were paid exorbitant per diems and dubious allowances, which had come into the public domain. The report further observed that billions of Shillings were misappropriated, with reports of MPs receiving over 1.9 billion Ugandan shillings in just six months for various purposes, which highlights the seriousness of the problem involving MPs (Report on Uganda Parliament Exhibition, 2024).

Another scandal implicating parliament was the iron sheets and goats' scandal at the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) where the roofing sheets were meant for distribution to the poor in Karamoja were

misappropriated (Kahungu, 2023). Although at the beginning, the Police interrogated several MPs associated with the impugned issue, many of them were not followed up, raising concerns about the existence of political will to tackle high-level corruption (Mafundo, 2023). More recently, the Parliamentary Commissioners awarded some of its members (what they termed a “Service Award”). This has sparked a public debate about whether the award had any legal basis or posed a moral question. The effectiveness of the anti-corruption agencies has also been questioned (Report on Uganda Parliament Exhibition, 2024).

Initiatives to Control Corruption

In modern times corruption has become complex and at times, well-syndicated making it difficult to fight. Moreover, several factors tend to contribute to the ineffectiveness of anti-graft agencies in fighting the vice, such as the lack of political will and institutional ineffectiveness (independence, funding, professionalism, etc.). In Uganda, government efforts to fight corruption appear ineffective as one institution after another has been created for the same purpose.

Some agencies established to deal with the vice include the IGG, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), and the Directorate for Public Prosecution (DPP). The others are the Directorate for Ethics and Integrity (DEI), the Anti-Corruption Court, and the State House Anti-Corruption Unit (U4 Expert Answer, 2024). Several Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have also participated in the anti-corruption drive in Uganda.

During the period 2023/2024, IGG made efforts to recover money taken as a result of corruption. It was reported that the IGG recovered over 30 billion shillings appropriated because of corruption. Although this was considered a big effort, if it is compared with the loss of approximately 10 trillion Shilling annually, then one would indeed feel the efforts are paltry (Kitone, 2024).

Concerning commitment to fight the vice, the Ugandan President has shown some degree of commitment to deal with the problem of corruption. Indeed the President has demonstrated consistency in his rhetoric and has also taken action. For example, in 2019 he participated in an anti-corruption walk organised in the capital city, Kampala (Xinhuanet, 2019). However, some critics have disparaged his efforts referring to them as theatre in politics (VOA, 2019). They instead argue that the anti-graft bodies had made some effort in the fight by prosecuting some of the suspects. However, they feel that those apprehended were involved in petty corruption, while “big fish” were left out.

Theoretical Review

In research, theories conceptualise issues and facilitate an understanding and analysis of the problems being researched. More importantly, they simplify the explication of the complexity of ontology in research. Accordingly, the Institutional and Games theories were adopted to guide this article as discussed below.

Institutional Theory

Institutional theory, also referred to as institutionalism relies on a state’s institutional features, for example, the existence of the rule of law, explicit anti-corruption norms, and the existence of independent institutions to fight corruption with powers to enforce the law. The above can be used to explain corruption in the public sector. According to Scott (2005), institutional theory examines the processes and mechanisms by which structures, schemes, rules, and routines become established as authoritative guidelines for social behaviour. Concerning an

understanding of corruption, the theory brings along with it the social context and a classification for comprehending how it might become rooted in institutions even when the anti-corruption mechanisms exist.

Institutional theorists argue that the character, design, and transparency of the political system and its institutions influence corruption. At the same time, it acknowledges that the relationship between corruption, institutions, political systems, culture, and gender is highly complex (Debski, Jetter, Möse, & Stadelmann, 2018). The “institutionalists” view of political corruption stresses that while corruption can occur at an individual level, it can also be institutional in cases where institutions are structured in a way that makes them deviate from their original purpose (Thompson, 2018).

Linking the institutional theory to the risk of corruption in this article, the author argues that public institutions like the Parliament has laws such as the Administration of Parliament Act (APA) which empower the Parliamentary Commissioners with extensive powers. At the same time, the government has created various anti-graft agencies established by law to fight acts of corruption defined under the law. Previous experience indicates that the institution involved in paying out money in questionable ways tends to mirror the mechanisms.

Game Theory

Another theory which explains the prevalence of public sector corruption is the Game Theory. This theory borrows from economic literature and seeks to provide rationales for corrupt decisions by public officials. In particular, John Macrae (1982) suggests that corruption is part of a rational calculus and an integral and often deeply rooted method by which people make decisions. In this context, according to Kuhn (2019), individuals face a “prisoner’s dilemma”, which illustrates a conflict between individual and group rationality. The individual fears a disadvantage if she refuses to engage in corrupt practices while other individuals do not refuse to do so in the same situation. As a result, all individuals obtain some form of benefit which, however, is always less than the benefit that each of them would have received if they refused to engage in corrupt practices. It should also be noted that various situational and psychological factors could play a role in fostering unethical behaviour, sometimes despite an individual’s best intentions to act ethically.

Linking to this article, where Commissioners think involving in acts of corruption and appropriating a part of the proceeds, for example, giving more allowances to the other MPs, they would receive it even if it is less than what the commissioners received consistent with the theory.

Methodology

This article relied exclusively on secondary data. It also adopted the doctrinal methodology which enabled the author to analyse the law as is and court cases to evaluate the position of the law and identify weaknesses within them (Bhat, 2020). The author reviewed documents which included the Constitution and the relevant statutes and cases. The review also enabled him to gather the required data. Data analysis involved doctrinal and case analysis. It also involved an analysis of the content of the documents considered such as newspaper articles.

Corruption Risks, Ethical Concerns, and Challenges of Anti-Corruption Agencies

The discussion in this section concerns the Parliamentary Commission’s decision to recognise the service of some of its members using monetary awards. The decision of the award arose from a meeting of the Commission where five of its members attended namely the Speaker (Chairperson), LoP, and the three

Backbench Commissioners where the Clerk to Parliament was in attendance (Secretary). The other three members were absent namely the Deputy Speaker, the Leader of Government Business in Parliament (the Prime Minister), and the finance minister having tendered their apology.

The beneficiaries of the award were LoP and three Commissioners of Parliament. In the meeting in the Speaker's boardroom, the award was discussed (described as a service award) and passed on 6 May 2022. The members decided on a one-time pay of Uganda Shillings 500,000,000 (approximately US \$186,917) for the LoP and Shillings 400,000,000 (approximately US \$108,844) for each Backbench Commissioner, irrespective of the period they will have served. Also, the award was restricted to the benefit of the sitting LoP and the Backbench Commissioners then. Indeed, the payment was effected in 2024 approximately two and a half years later. However, in the new term (currently) all the members except the new LoP are again serving on the Commission with the former LoP bouncing back as a Back-bench Commissioner.

Based on the above, this article discusses corruption risks, ethical concerns of the Commissioners, and the effectiveness of anti-graft agencies in tackling the problem of corruption, discussed below.

Corruption Risks

Some commentators have argued that awarding employees is germane to large companies, with the motive to profit. Such companies operate profit-sharing and stock options schemes to motivate employees (Agaba, Turyasingura, & Kyabarogo, 2022). In several countries whether consolidated democracies or otherwise, the practice of rewarding/recognizing individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to political development, social institutions, or scientific advancement is institutionalized through various national honors and awards. A proper reward system for exceptional performance is usually intended to promote innovation and creativity. Some scholars, however, warn that caution should be exercised in executing awards to ensure that the system adopted is neither unlawful nor arbitrary. The idea of monetary awards to employees in the service of public officials has, however, generally been rare, globally.

Situations where public officers have benefited from such awards are, however, not new in Uganda. The former Uganda's Deputy Attorney General (Fred Ruhindi) was reported to have requested the President of Uganda the so-called "presidential reward" and received six billion Shillings they shared with a team of government officials including the Commissioner General of Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) at the time when they won the 2014 capital gains tax case against the UK-based oil company, Heritage (The Independent, 2017). Moreover, a legal provision that empowered such payment at that time was non-existent in Uganda.

Back to the Parliamentary award, in the application for judicial review at the High Court between Bwete Daniel (the applicant) and the Parliamentary Commission (the respondent), the applicant filed a motion seeking to challenge the decision of the Parliamentary Commission (the respondent) to recognise some Commission members with monetary awards (High Court of Uganda Miscellaneous Cause No. 85 of 2024). The court noted that what could be looked into as a challenge was when such recognition was in the form of a monetary benefit, which was directly charged to the consolidated fund and where the required law was not followed.

In determining the matter, the court relied on the case of *Parliamentary Commission v Mwesige Wilson* (Supreme Court Constitutional Appeal No. 8 of 2026), the Supreme Court Constitutional Appeal decision overturned the constitutionality of section 54 of the repealed Parliamentary (Remuneration of Members) Act

(PRMA). The Constitutional Court had been invited to consider whether such a provision was not in conflict with the provisions of Articles 93 and 25 of the Constitution. The Constitutional Court held that the remuneration of Parliament under Section 5 of the PRMA needed to be construed together with the provisions of Article 93 of the Constitution which stipulates that any remuneration to MPs has to originate in a bill or motion on behalf of the central government. The Constitutional Court made six key pronouncements holding as follows:

- (1) The national granary is managed by the executive arm of the government, whose power to spend is limited by the requirement of legislative consent.
- (2) Whereas Parliament under the power of Article 85 of the Constitution may determine the MPs' emoluments, the motion on those emoluments must be presented by the executive arm of government in terms of Articles 93 and 98(1) of the Constitution.
- (3) Given the injunctions in place in considering bills of motions that impose a charge on our national granary, Parliament cannot create any charge on the national granary before the executive arm of government has acquiesced to such a charge.
- (4) Parliament is authorised to determine the emoluments of the MPs under a motion originated by the executive.
- (5) The power of Parliament to make any statutory changes to the MPs' emoluments must be proposed first by the executive arm of government.
- (6) Notwithstanding the appropriation power of Parliament, no charge can be created on the national granary without seeking the authority of the executive arm of the government under Article 93 of the Constitution.

The above Constitutional Court decision did not go well with the Parliamentary Commission which appealed to the Supreme Court. On appeal, the Commission argued that concerning Article 85 of the Constitution, the executive had no power to veto any decision concerning MP's emoluments after the Parliamentary Commission had adopted it as it would interfere with the principle of separation of powers. The appellant further argued that Article 93 of the Constitution could not be read in isolation, rather they should be considered together with Articles 154, 155, and 156 as they played supportive functions in appropriation.

The respondent through his counsel (Mwesige Wilson) opposed and argued that MPs' emoluments were guided by Article 93 of the Constitution and could not, therefore, be entertained without paying attention to it, rather the discretion the Constitution grants to the Parliamentary Commission in Article 85 was restricted by the authority of the executive under Article 93. Although the Supreme Court, generally concurred with the Constitutional Court, it held as follows:

- (1) Since the emoluments of the MPs are a charge on our national granary, to foster good accountability, the provisions of Articles 85 and 93 of the Constitution must be read together to ensure constitutional harmony.
- (2) The executive head of the central government is the President, in terms of Article 98(1) of the Constitution, and his authority in terms of Article 93 of the Constitution cannot be exercised by the Parliamentary Commission even if some of the members of the Parliamentary Commission are members of the executive arm government.
- (3) Only the executive arm of the government could move a motion on the emoluments of MPs in terms of section 5 of the PRMA.

The court observed that the principle appeared to ensure that what was embodied in the final budget was part of the executive arm of the government's set of priorities and was authorised by the law and without that, nothing could have formed it. The court also considered it a significant aspect of a transparent process of political accountability in the country's hybrid constitutional arrangement. Furthermore, it also applies to the agencies of government that are self-accounting as the condition of Presidential approval of their budgets.

Having reviewed the above case, in the case of the service award, the court noted that the power to review the matter before it was based on the procedure the respondent followed in deciding on the service award, although the funds obtained to satisfy the impugned award was embodied in the national budget. The court ruled that the applicant's claim of conflict of interest was unsustainable because section 42 of the APA, stipulates that the allowances paid to the Commission are determined by the Commission with the approval of the Parliament. The court was satisfied that the award was embodied in the Parliament's budget.

This position of the court in the above case is similar to the Presidential handshake following the Heritage tax case. Earlier, the Parliamentary Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities, and State Enterprises (COSASE) had recommended that the beneficiaries of the Shillings 6 billion presidential handshake were to refund the money they had received. Furthermore, the committee recommended that the IGG investigate the matter to identify possible offences. However, when Ali Ssekatawa (one of the beneficiaries of the handshake) petitioned the court against parliament's role in questioning the presidential donation to the team that worked on the oil case which they argued earned Uganda millions of dollars, Justice Andrew Bashaija ruled that the recommendations of the COSASE were illegal and said the orders of the committee "be removed from public orders and should not be implemented" (The Weekly Observer, 2020). He further stated that he did not find anything wrong with the officials who received the money. Ali Ssekatawa (the applicant) had received over Shillings 200 million (approximately US \$54,422) from "the handshake". (Ali Ssekatawa vs. The Attorney General, The Parliamentary Commission, The Committee on Statutory and State Enterprises (COSASE) of The Parliament of the Republic of Uganda, High Court Miscellaneous Application No. 293 of 2017, Civil Division). This caused unease among Ugandans on whether public officials paid using taxpayers' money should be receiving more money as "handshake" for doing the work.

Another area of concern, which could heighten the risk of conflict of interest, is the meeting of the Commission where the issue of the service award was discussed. The Commission members who deliberated on the matter were all interested parties (LoP and three Backbench Commissioners). The law indeed empowers the Commission proceedings to progress with a quorum of four. But in this case, only interested parties deliberated it. What options could be taken to sanitise it? What about the following: The Speaker postponed the decision until the other members without interest were present? Bring a motion on the floor of the Parliament? The proposal on the award should vividly stand out in the budget estimates under the relevant budget item (so MPs can identify it). Surprisingly, some MPs did not scrutinise the parliament's budget estimates to identify the proposal for the award.

Concerning the Administration of the Parliament Act, Section 6(h) is to the effect that the functions of the Commission include doing "such other things as may be necessary for the well-being of the members and staff of Parliament". When such things are done, how does the house react to them or provide their views? This may also need to be clarified.

Commissioners' Award as a Moral Problem

Morals are more inclined to the notion of:

the good and bad value of every human action, morality is the behavioural belief of wrong and right. It could also be defined as a certain degree that is defined as right or wrong. The word *moral* comes from the Latin word *moralis*, meaning custom or manner. (Tschudin, 2003)

Moral refers to an individual's personal stance, principles, and values of what is right and wrong. The moral values in life hold great importance from the point of personal, social, and spiritual development (Tazuddin, 2020). Whereas, moral wrongs do not constitute illegality, they may affect society negatively. It concerns how people should and should not behave, and different societies and cultures have different ideas of ethical behaviour. However, when one breaks a moral rule, enforcement is more often public shame or the loss of personal relationships rather than money or time.

Where the Parliamentary Commissioners apportion to themselves hefty incentives, it may be difficult to determine whether it is a moral or legal question. Arguing from the moral standpoint, it may be assumed that the law provided such leverage including the extent of the incentive. But, if they were made for social services, would that be a better option from the perspectives of the general public?

Before the Commission sits, do they have a code of conduct form that they sign to declare a conflict of interest, if any? It is in this regard that the trial Judge, Douglas Karekoma Singiza in an orbiter proposed to the Hon. Attorney General, to urgently consider a Salary and Emoluments Review Board Bill, whose object would be to review and harmonise emoluments and allowances of government and political leaders. Such a board would reduce the temptation of leaders adopting rather *ad hoc* ways of enhancing their emoluments under the cover of prize money, these being matters which the board should report directly to the President.

Mitigating Corruption Challenges

Recent public concerns about corruption in Uganda have highlighted the need to mitigate the challenges. Whereas the Parliamentary Commission is mandated to run the day-to-day affairs of the Parliament including determining their emoluments, this does not, however, signify that they have a blank cheque. Accordingly, the government (the executive) should take an interest in this matter and establish an independent salaries and benefits review Board to review them.

The executive recently demonstrated how it could check the Parliament when the President refused to endorse the Appropriation Bill 2024/2025 because his priorities had been tampered with (The Independent, 2024). He accordingly returned it to the Parliament. When his priorities were satisfied, he signed it into law. The executive should also take this bold step to ensure that wasteful expenditure of the Parliament is not permitted.

The OAG is an extension of the Parliament, it cannot, therefore, be expected to audit the institution to which it belongs in a way that may antagonise it. This is not to say that there are no power centres in the Parliament which could influence the work of the OAG, especially regarding auditing it including the Commission. Recently the Parliament discussed a one-off award to the outgoing Auditor General (Sserugo, 2024). It passed a one-off award of 500 million Shillings to the benefit of the retiring Auditor General. Having witnessed the above, how would one think incoming and subsequent ones would antagonise the Parliament with an audit report? Perhaps, an external audit would be tenable. Even when the report is made, the executive gets hold of it, but how does it respond?

One of the challenges of the anti-graft agencies is their capacity to combat the vice. Several factors tend to contribute to the low capacity of the agencies. Staffing level is one of them, and this is on account of insufficient budgetary allocations. When these agencies are adequately funded, then they could become effective to fight the vice. For example, IGG has come out to air her frustration in this matter (Daily Monitor, 2022). Related to funding

is training, given that corruption has become sophisticated, the agency should have employees that are right for the job.

Another problem is the politicisation of the vice. There is evidence to show that the fight against corruption has taken a political dimension. When politicians compel anti-corruption institutions to investigate certain individuals publicly, such actions do not at times sit well with the investigative and prosecution agencies (New Vision, 2018). These institutions should act without external direction. Instead, they should be strengthened to run the show.

Finally, one of the factors that can drive the fight against corruption is political will. Political will signifies a state's effort to create a favourable environment for the institutions to operate independently. It should also ensure that they are facilitated to drive the anti-corruption agenda.

Conclusions

This article examined the risk of corruption among the parliamentary Commissioners, ethical concerns, and the challenges the anti-corruption agencies face in Uganda. There is evidence of corruption in Uganda over the years with the vice generally soaring. Recent focus on the Parliament has pointed to risk in the institution which has been heightened by several factors such as the legal framework bestowing extensive powers on the Parliamentary Commission coupled with some unclear provisions in the Administration of Parliaments Act, which the courts have interpreted as signifying that some of the activities going on within the Commission may be unlawful and at the same time immoral.

Several factors seem to impede the anti-graft agencies in the fight against corruption. Funding gaps appear to cut across the institutions impeding their work. Political will also adversely affects the fight against the vice. Finally, politicising the vice seems to interfere with the work the agencies do, limiting their independence. The risk of corruption is likely to continue in the future while at the same time, funding for anti-graft agencies will continue to dwindle without a meaningful commitment to fighting the vice.

Way Forward

To reduce the risk of corruption among the parliamentary Commissioners, the Government should establish a salaries and benefits review Board to streamline the problem at the Parliament. The Commission should abide by the provisions of the law to recommend its proposals to the Parliament. The procedure of meetings should be revised to ensure that matters that benefit some Commissioners in execution of their duties as Members of Parliament in whatever perspective should be recommended to the Parliament for consideration. To mitigate corruption, anti-graft agencies should be allowed to enjoy independence. Finally, the public anti-graft agencies should collaborate with Civil Society Organisations to create synergy.

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