

**THE BATWA DECLARATION TO
THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
ON
SECURING THEIR LAND RIGHTS**

**MADE ON THE 13TH FEBRUARY
2009**

AT

**MUBAANO HOTEL, KISORO
DISTRICT**

DECLARATION ON SECURING THE LAND RIGHTS OF THE BATWA IN UGANDA

I Background

We the Batwa, the original inhabitants of the Equatorial Forest in the Great Lakes Region comprising of Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo are a hunter-gatherer community that derived our livelihood and practised our culture in the Forest.

In Uganda, we lived in the forests on the Mufumbira Mountains in the South West. In the 1930s our ancestral lands were declared forest reserves by the British Colonial Government. This interfered with our access to the forest to the extent that we could only use the land for livelihood purposes and to practice our culture. However in 1991, these forest reserves were designated as The Mgahinga and Bwindi National Parks and Echuya Central Forest Reserve respectively, thus banning us from the traditional forest activities and displacing us from our indigenous homesteads.

Consequently, we are homeless, landless and one of the poorest and most marginalised communities in Uganda. Because we are destitute, we depend on casual labour for survival and erect temporary shelter on land belonging to other communities around us. We are denied an opportunity to live a dignified life and contribute to national development like other citizens of Uganda contrary to International Human Rights Standards and the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

National Objective and Directive Principles of State Policy 23 among other Constitutional provisions obligates Government to institute an effective machinery to deal with any hazard or situation resulting in general displacement of people or serious disruption of their livelihood. There have been attempts by the Government of Uganda, working with Non Government Organisations to resettle us, but this has not been achieved as no Mutwa has land title or certificate of ownership to their name. Many of the Batwa are still completely landless.

II Preamble

Conscious that all human beings are equal and entitled to all rights and freedoms without distinction of any kind all human beings deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

Concerned that Government evicted us from our ancestral land and we have not been given secure alternative land.





Considering that for cultural, political, social and economic reasons, we like any other Ugandans are entitled to enjoying rights and opportunities and access to education, health services, clean and safe water, work, decent shelter, and food security.

Realizing that we are a marginalised community, illiterate, discriminated against, landless, homeless and denied a livelihood.






Recognizing the need to demand a home, land and a decent life, in addition to enjoyment of rights like all other Ugandan citizens;

We the undersigned Batwa Community Representatives from Kisoro, Kabale, Kanungu, Mbarara and Masaka hereby state as follows;

1. That our indigenous home has since been transformed into the Bwindi, Mgahinga National Parks and Echuya Central Forest Reserve by the Government of Uganda.
2. That we are homeless and landless and this has denied us a source of livelihood and decent living.
3. That we have a fundamental right to our ancestral lands.
4. That we are entitled to preferential access to sustainable resources and derive revenue from our ancestral lands under current Government programs.
5. That pending the resolution of our land claims the government should provide alternative land for our resettlement.
6. That since the forest forms the basis of our cultural and spiritual heritage; the Government should allow us access the forest for purposes of preserving our cultural values.
7. That since we have been marginalised, in terms of accessing national services and opportunities for development programs, Government should give affirmatively provide us with education and health services as well as programs like National Agricultural Advisory Services and Prosperity for All (BONA BAGAGAWALE).

NAME	SEX	ADDRESS	DISTRICT	SIGNATURE/ THUMB PRINT
1. NIJIRAKANYANGE JOVANIS	F	MUKONGU	KISORO	JQ VAMASI
2. KAGOTE EPHRAIMU	M	NIEKO	KISORO	KAGOTE
3. BABERAHU JACKLINE	F	LYABITUKURU/ IAGABIRO	KISORO	
4. NAIUKUNDA LYDIA	F	RUSHANGA	KISORO	
5. SEMBAGARE FRACIS	M	BIRARA	KISORO	
6. AJINGAMIRE VACTINA	F	RYARUHUKU	KISORO	

7. MATUREGE JULIATE	F	RUGESI	KISORO	
8. ZIMBETHIRE RICHARD.	M	BIRIZI	KISORO	RICODI
9. NYIRAHABI- MANA. AUBERIA.	F	KAMUGEM ANYI	KYAB KISORO	
10. JEREMIYA DUSABE	M	GATERA.	KISORO	Dusabe jeremia
11. BAGWA. JACKSON.	M	KAGANO	KISORO	BAGWA
12. RUKONGI James	M	GITEBE	KISORO	RUKONGI
13. RUKWAGO KAROTI	M	KAMUGOSI	KISORO	RKWAGO
14. KIDUMA TOPHA	M	RUSHEKE	KISORO	KIDUMA
15. SERUTORE STEVEN	M	RUKTERI	KISORO	SERUTORE
16. NYIRANGANO JANNE	AF	MUSASA	KISORO	
17. RWAMAPTA TOPHA	M	KONDABUKUNGO -	KISORO	
18. NIKEZI DARE KAGGO	M	MPERWA	KISORO	
19. KIDUMA James	M	KERITAMU-C	KISORO	KIDUMA

20. Ndirabakunzi James	F	Kabahenda	Kisiro	MR. JAMES
21. Gasumba Abel	M	Kisenzi	Kabale	ABEL
22. Habdarimana ELIAS	M	Murubindi	Kabale	ELIAS
23. Ndirakwaso marinda beraza	F	Kinyarushenge	Kabale	
24. Ntamusore Patura	M	Ntakabungo	Kabale	TAMUSORE
25. Nkamashakira Keleni	F	Karengeri	Kabale	
26. Nteziyire Kasente	M	Bwamuhanga	Kabale	KASETE
27. Ntamakiriro ROD	F	Kara	Kabale	
28. Karimunda Benon	M	Kihembe	Kanungu	BENONI
29. Mahano Jature	M	Cibiriro	Kanungu	MHANO
30. Kabwana Elphas	M	Buhoma	Kanungu	ELIPHAS
31. Rizaberi Nayizi	F	B-lumba	Kanungu	
32. K-omukama Jackson	M	Katehe	Kanungu	

NAME	SEX	ADDRESS	DISTRICT	SIGNATURE/ THUMB PRINT
33. RUGUZABA	M	BUHAMBWA	KANUNGU	RUGU.
34. ASABIMANA	M	MUKONGORO	KANUNGU	RAUBEN.
35. Justus Kamara	M	KITAHURIMU	KANUNGU	Kamara
36. NYINAKIIZA Cristina	F	BIKUTO	KANUNGU	NyinaKiiza
37. GEOFFREY MAHANO	M	Kebiremu	Kanungu	MAHANO
38. Niyonzima MICHEAL	M	KATOVIC	MASHAKA-D	N. Michael.
39. NYAKARINDILI EMMANUEL	M	NYAKAYOJO	MBARARA.	MANWERI
40. Musabyi Allen	F	Nyakabande	Kisoro	Musabyi
41. Rwubaka John	M	Kisoro Tow	Kisoro	Rwubaka