

# Fifty years of the Tanzania-Uganda 1° 00'S terrestrial border peace mediation: an insider-outsider's perspective

Switbert R. Kamazima

Behavioral Sciences Department, School of Public Health and Social Sciences,  
Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences,  
P. O. Box 65015, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

## Abstract

Findings from qualitative studies conducted in the Tanzania-Uganda borderlands showed intertwined factors sustain the Tanzania-Uganda border dispute that started in the early 1970s. The establishment of the African Union Border Program and availability of technical and financial support from development partners have facilitated delimitation and demarcation of many African borders. The Mission is “The prevention and resolution of border-related disputes and the promotion of regional and continental integration, which constitutes a tool in the structural prevention of conflicts in Africa.” I demonstrate and argue delimitation and demarcation of African borders that ignore borderlanders' history, voices, needs, fears, expectations, capacities, initiatives and potentials are important but insufficient eliminating border hostilities in Africa. I conclude governments' failure to abide to Pan Africanism and Mogadishu Agreement, political instabilities in Uganda after the Liberation War, disagreements on some border issues, lack of funds to meet survey costs, poor technology, limited political will, reliance on foreign intervention and difficulty accessing colonial territorial maps, agreements and treaties are drugging border dispute mediation. I recommend further multi-disciplinary research to capture the intended and unexpected consequences of delimiting and demarcating borders in contemporary Africa.

**Keywords:** *Tanzania-Uganda border, border peace mediation, qualitative study, Tanzania*

## 1. Introduction

Border disputes are situations where “two or more governments do not agree on the location of the border between their territories” (Wikipedia.org, 2018) and are as old as border history. Some scholars and policymakers informed by border theories rather than borderlands theories, regard borders “common sources of political instability and military conflict around the globe, both in the present day and throughout history” (Brunet-Jailly, 2015). Since the inception of nation-state borders in Africa, there have been numerous cases of disputes between and among colonial powers and independent nation states. In East Africa, for example, in the struggle to stop the British from ‘trespassing’ into Tanganyika, the Germans established a military post near Kakuto (about 15 km [9 miles] north of the 1°00'S (Gray, 1960; McEwen, 1971). The British government inferred German's assault as a military invasion of the British Empire in East Africa. To settle this dispute, the two powers agreed to establish a British-led joint commission to physically demarcate the border between 1902 and 1904 (Gray, 1960; McEwen, 1971; Delmée-Radcliffe, 1905; Rodgers, 2001).

Over the past 53 years, at least each independent African state has had a border dispute with its neighbors (Okumu, 2010). Some disputes have been resolved, pending or resurfaced (the Tanzania-Malawi dispute, 1967); some have been resolved between/among involved states, at the regional level or at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague (the Cameroon-Nigeria Bakassi peninsular

dispute, 1994). Other disputes have culminated in wars (the Tanzania-Uganda war 1978-79; the Somalia-Ethiopia war of 1978 and the Ethiopia-Eritrea border war of 1998–2000). Yet other disputes are likely to erupt as new resources are discovered or rumored existing in the borderlands (Okumu, 2010; Kamazima, 2003; Kamazima, 2017) like the latent Tanzania-Mozambique shared Ruvuma valley rumored potential for the exploitation of hydrocarbons (Okumu, 2010) and the 2009 Kenya-Uganda dispute over Migingo island's sovereignty in Lake Victoria (Kisiangani, 2011).

In this paper, I present a case of the Tanzania-Uganda border dispute that started in the early 1970s and has persisted to date. A combination of factors has sustained the dispute's persistence. I demonstrate and argue that the delimitation and demarcation of African borders per se, that ignore the borderlanders' history, voices, needs, fears, expectations, capacities, initiatives and potentials are important but insufficient eliminating border disputed in Africa. I further argue that reliance on foreign intervention, from the former colonizers under the 'development partnership' cover or the International Court of Justice (ICJ), is not an efficacious strategy to resolve disputes in Africa. Data analyzed for this paper come from two qualitative studies I conducted in the Tanzania-Uganda borderlands using a combination of methods (in-depth interviewing, participant observation, life stories and documentation) in 2002 and 2017/2018. I am a Kagera Region-born and raised Tanzanian, recognizing myself as an insider-outsider Tanzania-Uganda borderlands researcher.

## 2. The definition of the Tanzania-Uganda 1°00'S terrestrial border

The Tanzania-Uganda border stems from the Anglo-Germany delimitations of spheres of influence of November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1886, 1890 and 1893, with modifications by an Agreement of May 14, 1910 (McEwen, 1971; Brownlie, 1979). The 1°00'S Tanzania-Uganda border is defined by border points (BPs) number 27 located at Kagaga on the east bank of the Kagera river as it 'crosses' the 1°00'S from Uganda into Tanzania and BP number 41 located in Kashenye on the western shore of Lake Victoria in the present Missenyi district, with a few beacons in-between. The Anglo-Germany Agreement of May 14, 1910 is unspecific on the definition of the border over

Lake Victoria and on the Rubafu Peninsula (McEwen, 1971). As a result, there is no BP on Rubafu Peninsula or in Lake Victoria east or west of the peninsula.

However, the unsigned may be due to the outbreak of World War One (WWI), a draft of the Anglo-Germany Agreement of 1914, concluded that the whole of Rubafu Peninsula was entirely in German East Africa. Article 2 of the draft of the Agreement stipulates as follows,

Across Lake Victoria, the boundary continues to follow latitude south 1°, as shown in Maps 2 and 3 annexed to this Agreement to a point 1½ kilom. west of the coast of Rubabu [Rubafu] Peninsula, whence it runs parallel to and a distance of 1½ kilom. from the west coast line around the northern extremity of the peninsula until it again meets latitude south 1°. Thence, along that parallel of latitude... (Delméé-Radcliffe, 1905).

This quotation suggests three key points. One, the two colonial powers had 'agreed' that for smooth administration, the whole of Rubafu Peninsula was in German-Tanganyika and the border follows 1°00'S over Lake Victoria, until the Tanganyika-Uganda-Kenya tripoint. Two, it explains in part, why there is no BP on Rubafu Peninsula and in Lake Victoria; hence the unfinished colonialism's work that independent state governments have neglected or assumed could not lead to border disagreements or disputes. Finally, it explains, in part, one of the sources for the 1999-2004 latent disagreement over Rubafu Peninsula shoreline (Malehe) between Tanzanians and Ugandans engaged in fishing at this point and in Lake Victoria.

## 3. The Tanzania-Uganda border dispute

Idi Amin Dada ousted Uganda Peoples' Congress (UPC)-led government via a *coup d'état* on January 25, 1971. At that time the president, Dr. Apollo Milton Obote was attending an important Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) meeting in Singapore, which opposed the British Government selling arms to the apartheid regime in South Africa. For eight years under Amin, Uganda became notorious following killings based on tribalism, education and

wealth wanted by Amin's men (Gergorian, 1980; Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 1998). In addition, Amin claimed several parts of neighboring countries Tanzania (the Kagera Salient and a stretch to Tanga port); Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC) and Sudan belonged to Uganda (Mathews & Mushi, 1981). Tanzania publicly opposed and protested against Amin's crimes in Uganda and his claims over parts of neighboring countries.

Dr. Obote sought political asylum in Tanzania, which led to numerous skirmishes and border incidents. Several times, Amin claimed Tanzania was preparing to invade Uganda as was reported in the British Newspapers in February 1971, March 1973, August 1975 and February 1977. *The World Press* reported that Tanzania had invaded Uganda in July 1971; July 1974, September 1975, and early October 1978. In addition, Amin threatened to attack Tanzania in April and August 1972 and March 1975. Amin's soldiers invaded Tanzania in Minziro and Kakunyu areas in 1971 and 1972 (Mathews & Mushi, 1981).

On August 24, 1971, Amin's soldiers attacked Tanzania in Mutukula meeting unprepared policemen and unarmed civilians (Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 1998). The then Ziwa Magharibi (now Kagera) Regional Police Commander, Hans Poppe, was on an official trip in Mutukula got killed in this attack. Amin's soldiers took Hans Poppe's body to Kampala. Ignorant of the existence of Tanzanians of mixed race, Amin quickly ordered Ugandan media to announce he had evidence that the Chinese were supporting Tanzania to overthrow his government. He also instructed Mulago Hospital to preserve Poppe's body as a witness for his claim. Certainly, this propaganda irritated Tanzania government but it never counter-attacked. In October 1971, Amin's planes attacked again and severely damaged Minziro sawmill. In 1972, Amin's planes bombed Bukoba and Mwanza towns (Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 1998). In early 1973, Radio Uganda and Uganda Television aired several announcements that a combined force of Tanzanian soldiers and about 100,000 Ugandans in exile were preparing to invade Uganda through Mutukula. Undoubtedly, these events worsened relations between Nyerere's Tanzania and Amin's Uganda.

#### 4. Foreign arbitration

According to Lubega (2016), Amin sought military cum mediation support from his allies namely Sudan and Libya. At the same time, the Organization for African Unity (OAU) started diplomatic negotiations to prevent the conflict from escalating into a full-blown war. The OAU's secretary general, Nzo Ekwangaki and the Somalia government were charged to lead the mission for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Ekwangaki first approached the then Kenyan president Jomo Kenyatta to mediate. According to Kenyan Newspaper Daily Nation of September 22, 1972, [the] then Kenyan minister for power and communication, Ronald Ngala announced, "We are friendly to both nations. Whatever is going on between them, Kenya will not get involved."

As Kenya refused to mediate, three heads of state, Emperor Haile Selassie (Ethiopia), President Sekou Toure (Guinea) and President Houari Boumediene (Algeria) articulated willingness to participate in the mediation. The then Tanzania Foreign Minister, John Malecela, met the then Egyptian president Anwar Sadat "requesting him to send a diplomatic delegation to Uganda to seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict" (Lubega, 2016). The Kenyan media reported presidents Nyerere and Amin had agreed to an interim cease-fire, where Uganda promised stopping bombing Tanzanian towns and Tanzania withdrawing her military from the disputed area. Lubega (2016) further reported,

[The] then Somali President Siad Barre drafted a five-point peace plan which was presented to the two presidents by the [then] Somali Foreign Minister Omar Arteh Ghalib. American newspaper New York Times of September 24, 1972, reported that the plan had the following questions, 'Would Uganda halt its bombing and land attacks if it were assured by Tanzania that it would not be attacked by Tanzanian troops or pro-Obote guerrillas? Would Tanzania, given an assurance that the Ugandan Army would not attack it, undertake not to attack Uganda? If so, would Tanzania withdraw its troops from the frontier? Would Tanzania also withdraw the pro-Obote fighters from the border? Would Tanzania oppose subversive activities threatening a neighboring state?' After receiving the draft

plan, Amin warned the guerrillas in the border towns of Mutukula and Kikagati to withdraw. Despite agreeing on the peace plan, the threat and accusation of aggression against each other persisted.

However, two days after Amin had agreed on the peace plan, he accused Zambia, Tanzania and India of planning to attack Uganda following presidents Kenneth Kaunda's (Zambia) and Varahagiri Venkata Giri's (India) visit to Tanzania. The Indian government spokesperson responded it's "involvement is a mischievous and fantastic rumor without any foundation whatsoever" (The Cape Times Newspaper, South Africa, September 28, 1972). On September 28, 1972, again Amin accused Tanzania of executing another incursion in which a number of attackers were arrested in Mutukula including the former Ugandan Minister of Information and Broadcasting Alex Ojera. On "[t]he following day, Ojera was paraded before diplomats, including OAU Secretary General, Ekangaki who had come to Kampala on a peace mission" (Lubega, 2016).

### 5. Mogadishu peace agreement

According to Lubega (2016), peace negotiations in Mogadishu (Somalia) involving the then Foreign Ministers for Tanzania (John Malecela), Uganda (Wanume Kibedi) and Somalia (Omar Arteh Ghalib) and the OAU Secretary General (Nzo Ekanganki), among many others were scheduled to start on September 27 but were delayed until October 2, 1972. However, the foreign ministers met "the Somali President who told them that the conflict between their two countries was nothing but a colonialist conspiracy aimed at weakening African unity." On October 5, 1972, after two days of talks, Kibedi, Malecela and Arteh in the presence of Ekangaki, signed an agreement which was published simultaneously in Dar-es-Salaam, Kampala and Mogadishu on October 7, 1972. Lubega (2016) added,

President Siad Barre had paid a visit to Dar-es-Salaam on October 6, 1972, and Kampala the following day. During the visit to Uganda, Amin named a road after Siad Barre in honor of his efforts to end the conflict between Uganda and Tanzania. The peace agreement required the two countries

to withdraw their forces at least six miles away from their border. This was supposed to come into effect by October 9, 1972. A team of Somali peace observers would be deployed on the borders of the two countries to observe the withdrawal. The peace accord also required both countries to stop harboring subversive elements on their areas that cross into the other's territory and to end all hostilities. Both countries were also required to return all the properties they captured from each other during the conflict. On October 11, 1972, Amin announced that his troops had withdrawn six miles from the border and that fighting had ceased. A day later the Tanzanian Defense Minister Edward Sokoine announced the withdrawal of the TPDF [Tanzania People's Defense Force] from the border area. The Obote loyalists who had participated in the invasion were relocated deep inside northern Tanzania.

### 6. The Tanzania-Uganda (Kagera/Liberation) War, 1978-1979

By mid-1978 tensions between the two countries boiled over. According to *The East African* (April 8, 2002), on October 30, 1978, Amin's soldiers under Brigadier Juma Butabika advanced into Tanzania taking by surprise the few ill-equipped Tanzanian troops stationed at Minziro and Mutukula, who fled the area. Brigadier Butabika rang Amin claiming Tanzanian troops had made an incursion into Uganda prompting him to take command at the border guard in order to repulse the invaders. Amin hurriedly sanctioned Butabika to march southward to the Kyaka Bridge through Kassambya to seal off the entire Kagera Salient. On November 1, 1978, Amin announced he had annexed Kagera Salient. The ballistic experts from Kilembe Mines blew up the Kyaka Bridge sparking off wild celebrations, gang rape, murder and looting of all manner of goods and household property. Komba (1979) a reporter for *Africa* observed, "What Amin's troops did on the northern side of the Kagera River during the days of occupation amounts to the genocide." According to Mytton (1978) "The Ugandans looted and plundered. No-one could tell how many Tanzanian villagers had been killed, but survivors told of widespread murder and rape."

On November 2, 1978, the Tanzanian President and Commander-in-Chief, Nyerere, declared war against Amin saying, “*Uwezo wa kumpiga tunao, sababu ya kumpiga tunayo, na nia ya kumpiga tunayo*” or we have the capacity, the reason and determination to go to war with Amin. By December 1978, the TPDF had crossed Kagera River into Missenyi, where it met and pushed off Ugandan troops. TPDF troops had no permission to cross the border; hence, they pushed the Ugandan troops to the hills overlooking the border and withdrew (Mathews & Mushi, 1981). With support from the Ugandan citizens, the TPDF overthrew Amin on April 11, 1979. Amin fled by air first to Libya and later to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (Rowe, 1990) where he lived until his death in August 2003.

Following the victory over Amin or the Tanzania-Uganda war (1978 to 1979) popularly known as Kagera War in Tanzania and Liberation War in Uganda, the ruling party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) Central Committee christened *Mkoa wa Ziwa Magharibi*, Kagera Region. On its one day meeting in Arusha, on Monday, May 18, 1980, the National Executive Committee (CCM) denounced the party membership of 17 people, including the then Bukoba Rural District (that included the current Bukoba Rural and Missenyi districts) Member of Parliament (MP) the late Mr. Leopold Kintu and the Bukoba Urban Party (CCM) Secretary, *Al-hajj* Mohammoud E. Sadick. The two politicians were alleged betraying the nation during the war with Amin. *Bahaya* (Kagera residents) who have the tradition (since 1959) of naming the calendar year in memory of their experiences, circumstances observed in the past year and reflecting their expectations, hopes and fears in the coming year, named 1979 “*TIKILIWA IGAMBA*.” Meaning stories and memories of mixed feelings about the Tanzania-Uganda war will be told and passed over generations for ever (Rumuli, 1978). The border dispute, however, remained unresolved. The question becomes, why has it taken about 50 years of peace mediation without resolving the Tanzania-Uganda border dispute?

Several answers have been generated to this question. First, an official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC) interviewed on May 2, 2002 in Dar-es-Salaam observed that economic constraints after the war and the political

instability in Uganda were key factors to this situation. The Tanzania-Uganda (Kagera) war took about eight months after which both countries faced economic hardships, drought and (animal and human) disease outbreaks, including HIV and AIDS. Rehabilitating Uganda and the Kagera Salient and providing essential services to the citizens were priorities to both countries rather than re-identifying the border. At the same time, Tanzania had to concentrate on the liberation movement in southern Africa (Gergorian, 1980).

According to Kamazima (2003), The Uganda Dept Network (1999) reported that Uganda’s war debt was more than US\$200 million: Tanzania demanded up to \$67 million it claims its army spent in 1979 to help Ugandans in the fight to oust Amin and Libya demanded \$100 million for the support it extended to Amin’s army (The Monitor, 1999). The Guardian (September 19, 2002) added that Yugoslavia was owed \$33 million for supplying equipment to Amin’s army. By January 2002, Tanzania had received a compensation of \$9.6 million from Uganda (TORMIC News, 2000; New Vision, 2002). Certainly, under such economic constraints, Tanzania and Uganda could not embark on border re-demarcation project immediately after the war.

Concurrently, Uganda experienced a series of coups after the overthrow of Amin in 1979 that destabilized the country socially, politically and economically (Gergorian, 1980). According to *The New Vision*, (April 11, 2002; October 13, 2002), President Yusuf Lule succeeded Amin and was in power for 68 days (April 13 – June 20, 1979). Godfrey Lukongwa Binaisa deposed Lule remaining in office between June 20, 1979 and May 12, 1980. Paul Muwanga ousted Binaisa becoming the sixth president of Uganda but resigned after 11 days in office (May 12-22, 1980). The Presidential Commission led the country for almost seven months (May 22-December 15, 1980). Dr. M. Obote took power after winning the December 10, 1980 general and presidential elections. He remained in power between December 17, 1980 and July 27, 1985. General Bazilio Olara-Okelo led a coup against Obote’s government and declared he was the president. He resigned after three days (July 27-29, 1985).

General Tito Okello Lutwa took power from Okello becoming the eighth president. He remained in power

for six months (July 29, 1985 to January 26, 1986). Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the ninth president and the longest-serving president took power on January 26, 1986 to date. According to this official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC) interviewed on May 2, 2002, it was under President Museveni that the two countries could embark on the border issues (IIs, 2002). The process to find a permanent solution began in 1999 and the re-identification of the border took place in 2001.

Second, two officials in the Ministry of Lands and Urban Development interviewed in Dar-es-Salaam (Kamazima, 2003) reported it was during the regular annual survey of the Tanzania-Uganda border in 1999 that the technical team established some border points/beacons were either missing or destroyed. The team reported to responsible ministry, the MFAIC that presented the issue at the diplomatic meetings between the two countries aimed at finding solutions. Unfortunately, the officials did not disclose which border points were missing or destroyed, where the meeting(s) took place and when; whether the borderlanders were involved or excluded during the discussions or what the two countries agreed upon and why.

Third, the borderlanders provided a different perspective of why it took 21 years to resolve the Tanzania-Uganda border dispute. A mid-aged villager and a leader interviewed in Byamutemba who witnessed the Mutukula meeting and participated in Operation *Walalo* in Kamwema sub-village in 2000 reported that the district and regional officials only visited the border when 'something unusual' happened. In 1999, he recalled, Ugandan police killed a Tanzanian at the border in Mutukula. In the same year, the government declared *Walalo* illegal immigrants; some of whom had been in the country before independence. In the course of dealing with *Walalo*, the team recognized Ugandan top leaders had built houses in Kamwema sub-village. The team also observed there was a military camp within 200 to 300 meters from the border. A team of grassroots leaders reported these events to the ward, and division leadership, which reported the same to the district leaders.

After a week, the Bukoba District Commissioner (DC) visited Misenyi division to witness what was

reported from Kamwema sub-village. The Ugandans (in Kamwema) fired to scare the DC's delegation; none was hurt or killed. Three days later, the Regional Commissioner (RC) with seven Rand-Lovers full of Field Force Unit (FFU) soldiers came to Kamwema. The *Walalo* had fled. The RC did not temper with the Ugandans' property but ordered the grassroots leadership to ensure no *Mlalo* returned. Similarly, they had to report any person or behavior considered abnormal in their area. A few months later, the media reported unknown people had destroyed BP No. 27 in Kakunyu. In the view of this participant, the Kamwema event sparked negotiations between the two countries that led to the re-identification of the border as a strategy to expel *Walalo*, the refugees and other Rwandese and Ugandan 'illegal' immigrants from Kagera region (Kamazima, 2018).

Finally, the Kagera Regional Surveyor interviewed in Bukoba (June 24, 2002) ascertained that Tanzania never conducted annual border surveys as claimed by the officials at the Ministry of Land and Urban Development. However, the regional and district surveyors visited the border areas on 'fire brigade'-basis. That is, only when border problems are reported to the district or regional officials. In 1986, a team of surveyors from the region and district offices conducted a village mapping in the Kagera Salient. The village leaders reported to the team that some border points were missing or destroyed by unknown people alleged to be the Rwandese or Ugandan illegal immigrants. Since then, border surveillance became the region's priority. The team reported this issue to the Bukoba District Peace and Security Committee, which reported the same to the Regional Peace and Security Committee, which, in turn, reported to the Ministry of Land and Urban Development and the MFAIC in Dar-es-Salaam.

The two ministries communicated with their counterparts in Uganda and decided to hold meetings to discuss the problem. The first meeting took place at the Arusha International Conference Center (AICC), Arusha, in February 1999 with several follow up meetings. The implementation of the border agreement was set in three phases: *re-identification* (identifying and replacing destroyed or missing beacons); *observation* (establishment of a buffer zone or no man's land) and *intensification* (reducing distance between border points by adding

more beacons). The actual re-identification of the border took place in May 1999. The main activity was identifying and replacing destroyed or removed border points. According to this official, the border points replaced were Nos. 33, 34, 35, 36 and 37.

However, the two countries failed to implement the second and third phases partly because; “Efforts by the two countries’ officials to resolve the dispute were frustrated when a technical committee appointed to remap [the border] aborted in June 2000. Tanzania was unhappy with some of the issues raised at the meeting between the two sides at Mutukula, Tanzania. At the same time, Uganda claimed the border passed 300m inside its territory” (Kamazima, 2018).

Similarly, according to Kagera Regional Surveyor interviewed in Bukoba (June 24, 2002) Tanzania and Uganda failed to implement phase two of the Arusha agreement because they differed on which country would be responsible for paying compensation to borderlanders whose property lay within 100 meters each side of the border. Tanzania was prepared to compensate its citizens whose property would be destroyed due to the establishment of the buffer zone. An official in the Ministry of Land and Urban Development interviewed in Dar-es-Salaam (December 27, 2001) observed, “Ugandan top officials had bought land and established themselves on the Tanzanian territory that is why they were reluctantly implementing the second phase of the border agreement” (Kamazima, 2018).

Data from the 2017/18 study indicate, however, that technical and financial support and the push from the African Union (AU) via its African Union Border Program (AUBP, 2007) Unit have given impetus to the delimitation and demarcation of African borders including what was observed on the Tanzania-Uganda border (IIs, 2017-2018). The AUBP is pushing the governments through the Regional Economic communities (RECs) to complete this task before the end of 2017, a goal set back in 2007. Tanzania, for example, has worked on her terrestrial borders with Uganda, Kenya, Burundi and Rwanda. Delimitation and demarcation on other borders and maritime borders are underway.

## **7. *Re-identification, Observation and intensification of the Tanzania-Uganda terrestrial border, 2003 to 2017***

According to the 2017/18 study participants interviewed in Missenyi district, the observation (creation of the buffer zone or no man’s land) and the intensification (reducing distance between BPs by adding more beacons) of the Tanzania-Uganda border took place between 2003 and 2009. Grassroots leaders were informed of when the observation was going to take place in their areas so that they could mobilize their residents’ availability during this process. Starting at Mutukula, the team of experts from both countries formed three sub-groups where the first remained at Mutukula, the second headed west and the third headed east. Residents found within the buffer zone were given options to decide which country they wanted to identify with. Depending on the position of the border, residents chose to be either Tanzanians or Ugandans and were facilitated to settle and acquire identification of the respective country they chose (IIs, 2017-2018).

Majority of the study participants reported the Tanzania government adequately compensated residents whose properties were destroyed in favor of the buffer zone. However, a few considered the compensation too low compared to the value of the property and comfort lost. A borderlander interviewed at Mutukula, for example, reported the compensation was too low and that Ugandans who decided to become Tanzanian citizens faced problem to complete the naturalization process (IIs, 2017-2018).

Observations conducted at Kashenye, Minziro, Mutukula and Kakunyu indicated the buffer zone is 100 m wide (50 m on each side). The added BPs are so tiny compared to those put up by the colonialists! Since the implementation of phase two and three of the Arusha border agreement, the two countries have occasionally accused each other of destructing the BPs. In July 2017, for example, Tanzania and Uganda representatives met in Bukoba, Kagera Region to discuss and plan for the re-identification of the border. The meeting was ‘so urgent’ because both countries reported many beacons (BPs) added during the 2003-2009 observation cum intensification of the border were missing along the 1°00’S terrestrial border (the Missenyi-Rakai) borderlands. Each

country suspected the other responsible for this destruction. An aged male borderlander interviewed in Mutukula observed, “The use of grassroots respected persons who have immense influence among the borderlanders, could have facilitated combating this problem” (IIs, 2017-2018).

## 8. Discussion

Indeed, Amin’s seize of power in Uganda on January 25, 1971 put a stain on the Tanzania-Uganda political relations. Amin’s eight years’ of notorious killings in Uganda based on tribalism, education and wealth wanted by his men (Gergorian, 1980; Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 1998), his claims that several parts of neighboring countries Tanzania (the Kagera Salient and a stretch to Tanga port), Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire and Sudan belonged to Uganda (Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 1998) and finally invading and seizing the Kagera Salient on November 1, 1978, further angered the Tanzanian government escalating into war of 1978/1979. With support from the Ugandan citizens, the Tanzania military forces liberated Uganda on April 11, 1979. Since Amin’s defeat and the liberation of Uganda in April 1979, both governments have, at some point, accused each other of trespassing into the other’s territory, establishing military posts or residence close to the border, destroying the BPs or failing to control pastoralists’ movements and illegal migration between the two countries. Destructed or missing border points and the movement of people, goods and capital across the border have been the sources of skirmish border relations between Tanzania and Uganda as reported in 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2017. In my view, as long as the two governments continue evaluating borderlanders’ cross-border initiatives subversive and embracing and recognizing border delimitation and demarcation the sole resolutions, border disputes along the Tanzania-Uganda border will persist contrary to the AUBP’s Vision and Mission.

Data from two qualitative studies I conducted in the Tanzania-Uganda borderlands in 2002 and 2017/2018 suggest two plausible explanations for why it has taken over 50 years mediating this dispute. First, the border dispute, and later the Kagera/Liberation War (1978/1979), resulted from ideological differences between Dar-es-Salaam and Kampala beginning in 1971 when Amin overthrew Obote’s government; not from the border, the borderlands or the borderlanders.

The war had severe impact to cross-border cooperation, borderlanders’ livelihoods, border peace and security and social and economic relationships between the borderlanders on both sides of the border and the borderlanders compared to the political elite in Dar-es-Salaam and Kampala. Hence, a majority of borderlanders interviewed observed, the delimitation and demarcation of the border *per se*, are not (perceived) efficacious solutions to the border dispute. In their view, amicable and stable diplomatic relations between the two states and their governments’ willingness and readiness key to this goal. If Amin had not seized power and invaded the Kagera Salient (assurance of good political relations between Dar-es-Salaam and Kampala), the border dispute would have not erupted or could have taken a different course.

Study findings showed, for example, that the borderlanders were excluded from the entire process of re-identifying, observing and intensifying the border! Since then, Tanzania and Uganda have continued accusing each other of destroying added border points (Kamazima, 2018). The use of borderlanders’ border conflict resolving experience rather than forcing them to police the beacons, perhaps, could have reduced this problem. Elders have been, and still are, instrumental in resolving conflict in many African states like Rwanda, Botswana, South Africa, Uganda, Ethiopia and Kenya (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2012). In Rwanda, *Gacaca* Courts were adapted in 2001 to bring justice in the country after the 1994 genocide where 800,000 are estimated to have been killed, tortured and or raped (Haskell, 2011; *BBC News Africa*, 2012). In South Africa, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), a court-like restorative justice body was assembled to handle gross human rights violation cases after the end of the apartheid.

Similarly, elders and villagers in the two villages affected by the demarcation of the Burkina Faso-Mali border, Ouarokuy and Wanian respectively and affected municipal leadership successfully ended the border dispute between the two countries that persisted for more than 50 years (Yameogo, 2016). In all cases, elders have shown high capacity and adequacy in resolving conflicts in the contexts they occur and “the resilience of African justice systems across the African States, illustrates that they still occupy a central place in the world of dispute



resolution in Africa” (Kariuki, 2015). The implication is that in order to achieve soft border management in Africa, borderlanders’ history, voices, needs, fears, expectations, capacities, initiatives and potentials must be cardinal to border regions programs and policy across the continent.

Long social, economic and political history, relationships, connectedness and cooperation between and among societies split by imposed borders in African are so complex to be reduced to subversive activities across borders. The borderlanders, therefore, cross order on daily, weekly and monthly basis for various reasons: seeking healthcare services, visiting families, friends and other relatives, religious services, business and or taking opportunities available across the border compared to home. The arbitrary African borders imposed by the European powers after the Berlin Conference (November 15, 1884 to February 26, 1885), separate different African societies (40-45%) across two or more nation states. According to Michalopoulos & Papaioannou (2012), Africa had about 834 societies at the time of the partition. Imposed nation-state borders made 10% and 20% of 231 and 164 societies’ homeland respectively, falling in more than one country. For example, in the Tanzania-Uganda case study, the Baganda and Baziba are split between Tanzania and Uganda. Other societies split include the Maasai split between Kenya (62%) and Tanzania (38%), the Chewa between Mozambique (50%), Malawi (34%), and Zimbabwe (16%) and the Anyi split between Ghana (58%) and the Ivory Coast (42%). The Ndembu are split between Angola, Zaire, and Zambia and the Nukwe, are split between Angola, Namibia, Zambia, and Botswana.

The Malinke or Mandika (of the former Mali Empire from the 13<sup>th</sup> century) now live in Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sierra Leone (Jordan, 2015; Pruitt, 2016). The Afar of Ethiopia are split amongst Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti, and the Anyuaa and Nuer are split between Ethiopia and South Sudan (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2012). Other societies include the Tabwa split equally between DRC and Zambia, the Luo and Kurya split between Kenya and Tanzania and the Somali split among Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti. The message is that deep-rooted and

historical ties characterizing societies split between/among states are cardinal to their livelihoods that society members individually or in groups would do anything to safeguard and sustain, therefore, prioritized over citizenship and patriotism, challenging traditional ways of thinking about state sovereignty and autonomous, citizenship and borders as limits and barriers confining citizenry in notion state territories. Soft border management initiatives should go beyond delimitation and demarcation of borders to addressing cross-border issues informed by borderlanders’ history, voices, needs, fears, expectations, capacities, initiatives, potentials and the African context that are cardinal programs and policy targeting border regions across the continent.

Second, as the study participants reported, a combination of some sort of factors like political instabilities, government representatives’ failure to agree on some border issues, lack of funds to meet costs involved, poor technology, limited governments’ political will, reliance on foreign mediation usually from or funded by former masters and lack of access to colonial agreements and treaties drugged the border dispute mediation. For example, the two countries “failed to implement the second and third phases of the Arusha accord of February 1999 because Tanzania was frustrated of Uganda’s new claims that the border passed 300 m inside her territory” (IIs, 2002; Kamazima, 2018). At another point, the two countries “differed on which country would be responsible for paying compensation to borderlanders whose property lay within 100 meters each side of the border” (IIs, 2017-2018; Kamazima, 2018). Tanzania was prepared to compensate its citizens whose property would be destroyed due to the establishment of the buffer zone. Similarly, the two countries lacked technology and finance to demarcate the maritime border over Lake Victoria and the Kagera River.

Data from the 2017/18 study indicated, however, that technical and financial support and the push from the AU’s AUBP Unit have given impetus to the delimitation and demarcation of African borders including what was observed in 2017/2018 along the 1° 00’S terrestrial Tanzania-Uganda border (IIs, 2017-2018). In January 2007, the Heads of States and Governments established the AUBP and the Ministers in charge of border issues adopted the Declaration on the AUBP and its Implementation

Modalities in June 2007 (AU, 2007). The AUBP's vision is "A united and integrated Africa with peaceful, open and prosperous borders" and a Mission "The prevention and resolution of border-related disputes and the promotion of regional and continental integration, which constitutes a tool in the structural prevention of conflicts in Africa."

One of the AUBP's aims is to "address the problems posed by the lack of border delimitation and demarcation, which gives rise to 'undefined zones', within which the application of national sovereignty poses problems, and constitutes a real obstacle to the deepening of the integration process. The AUBP's Strategic Objectives 1 is "Facilitating and supporting the delimitation and demarcation of African boundaries where such exercise has not yet taken place." According to the AUBP implementation strategy, nation states are the main actors in the process of reaffirming borders. As a response, some countries have established joint or independent National Boundary Commissions, manned by representatives from ministries involved including lands, immigration, internal affairs, finance and defense like the The Liptako-Gourma Integrated Development Authority (LGIDA), a borderlands development agency established in 1970 that has successfully resolved long-standing border problems among Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso (AU, 2007). The AUBP co-ordinates, supports and monitors all border delimitation and demarcation efforts and activities.

The RECs play a vital role in facilitating exchange and easing border demarcation experiences among member states and RECs. International development partners are contributing at different levels to the AUBP. Germany, for example, through its implementing agency, GIZ, has substantially supported the AUBP in financial and technical terms since 2008. Under this support, exchange with the UN Cartographic Section as well as the UN Mine Action Service is taking place in case of need. The United Kingdom funded the re-affirmation of the Sudan-South Sudan border (AU, 2007). The UABP's set target is to have all African borders demarcated by 2017.

Study findings further indicated African States seek and heavily rely on foreign peace mediation mainly from former colonial powers or the ICJ to resolve

their disputes, which serve to push disputes underground but potential of resurfacing when conditions ripen (Kamazima, 2017). The Cameroon-Nigeria Bakassi peninsular dispute, 1994 that the ICJ ruled in favor of Cameroon is a vivid example. To date, the Nigerian government and the citizens oppose the ruling. To avoid this situation, African state governments should be willing to resolve border disputes as they happen and still manageable via Africa-centered approaches (Kamazima, 2017).

## 9. Conclusion and Recommendations

Studying the Tanzania-Uganda border dispute case was important because it is the only one in East Africa that escalated into a military confrontation, the Kagera/Liberation war of 1978-1979 and over which governments have spent about fifty years of peace negotiation but relatively in vain. A combination of some sort of factors like Tanzania and Ugandan governments' failure to abide to Pan Africanism (that propagated for the rejection of colonial borders that divide Africa and its people for the creation of a United Africa) and the Mogadishu Peace Agreement and political instabilities in Uganda after the Kagera/Liberation War (1978-1979) have contributed to this situation. Other factors are government representatives' failure to agree on some border issues like the actual positioning of the border on the ground and compensating citizens affected by the 'new' border, lack of funds to meet costs involved, poor technology for the border survey, limited governments' political will, reliance on foreign intervention and lack of access to colonial territorial maps, agreements and treaties are drugging border dispute mediation. However, the establishment of the AUBP Unit of the AU in 2007, access to colonial evidence (territorial maps/modifications, agreements and treaties) and the availability of technical and financial support from international development partners have facilitated delimitation and demarcation of many African borders, though fall below the 2017 target set by the African leaders in 2007.

I recommended that in order to sustain benefits envisioned in AUBP's strategic objective 1, simultaneous implementation of the other specific objects (2-5) is mandatory for improved borderlanders' livelihoods, border peace, security and a united and integrated Africa. In addition, cross-border interventions implementers ought to involve

the borderlanders at all stages of the projects and programs intended for border communities (Yameogo, 2016). In turn, this approach would facilitate planning, implementing and evaluation of border regions-centered and efficacious cross-border projects and programs. State governments should negotiate and push for bottom-up development proposals as opposed to top-down and often donor-imposed ones. Finally, I recommend further multi-disciplinary research to capture intended and unexpected consequences (including human rights violation and border peace and security disruption) of delimiting and demarcating nation-state borders in contemporary Africa.

### Acknowledgements

The author acknowledges financial support for fieldwork in the four border districts on the Tanzania-Uganda border from the Rwechungura and Kwesigabo families, Kagera, Tanzania; cooperation from the borderlanders, study participants; village, ward, division, district, and region authorities and Dr. M. R. Kazaura, Dr. M. J. Ezekiel, Dr. A. F. Ngowi, N. P. Kwesigabo and J. T. Joram for reading and commenting on earlier versions of this paper.

### References

- [1] Africa Union: Declaration on the African Union Border Programme and the Modalities for the Pursuit and Acceleration of its Implementation. Addis Ababa. (2007).
- [2] BBC News Africa. "Rwanda 'gacaca' genocide courts finish work." June 18. (2012)
- [3] Brownlie, I. African Boundaries. A Legal and Diplomatic Encyclopedia. Berkeley. University of California Press. (1979).
- [4] Brunet-Jailly, E. (ed.). Border Disputes. A Global Encyclopedia. University of Victoria. ABC-CLO. (2015).
- [5] Daily Nation Kenyan Newspaper of September 22. 1972. Quote by Lubega, H. "Somalia saves Uganda and Tanzania from going to war." The Daily Monitor. December 9. (2016).
- [6] Delmée-Radcliffe, C. "Surveys and studies in Uganda." The Geographical Journal. 26(5):481-497; 616-632. (1905).
- [7] Gashaw, T. Colonial Borders in Africa: Improper Design and its Impact on African Borderland Communities. Southern Voices. Friday, November 17. (2017).
- [8] Gergorian, H. "Plowshares into Swords: The frontier State and the 1978-1979 War," In Christian P. Patholm and Richard A. Fredland (eds.). Integration and Disintegration in East Africa. University Press of America. Chapter III. pp. 167-191. (1980).
- [9] Gray, J. "Anglo-Germany relations in Uganda, 1890-1892." JAH. 1:281-297. (1960).
- [10] Haskell, L. Justice Compromised: The Legacy of Rwanda's Community-Based Gacaca Courts. Human Rights Watch. (2011).
- [11] In-depth interviews and observations. Kagera Region, Tanzania. (2002).
- [12] In-depth interviews and observations. Kagera Region, Tanzania. (2017-2018).
- [13] Jordan, S. Five things to Know About Mandinka. Alpha Omega Translations. (2015).
- [14] Kamazima, S. R. "Nothing for Us Without Us": Tanzania-Uganda Borderlanders' Desired Soft Border Management for Improved Livelihoods, Border Peace, Security and A United and Integrated Africa. *IJARSM*. 3(6):208-220. (2018).
- [15] Kamazima, S. R. Borders, Boundaries, Peoples and States: A Comparative Analysis of Post-independence Tanzania-Uganda border Regions. PhD Thesis. University of Minnesota. (2003).
- [16] Kamazima, S. R. Today's Border Disagreements, Tomorrow's Border Disputes: A Case of Rubafu Peninsula on the 1°00'S Tanzania-Uganda Border. *IJARSM*. 2(10):41-48. (2017).
- [17] Kariuki, F. Conflict Resolution by Elders in Africa: Success, Challenges and Opportunities. (2015).
- [18] Kisiangani, E. Dispute Over Misingo Escalates. *ISS* Pretoria Office. (2011).
- [19] Komba, M. "Amin's Pillage in the Kagera." Africa. January. pp. 12-17. (1979).
- [20] Lubega, H. Somalia saves Uganda and Tanzania from going to war. The Daily Monitor. December 9. (2016).
- [21] Mathews, K. and Mushi, S. S. (eds). Foreign Policy of Tanzania, 1961-1981: A Reader. Dar-es-Salaam. East African Publishing House. (1981).
- [22] McEwen, A. C. International Boundaries of East Africa. Oxford. At the Clarendon Press. (1971).

- [23] Michalopoulos, S. and Papaioannou, E. The Long-run Effects of the Scramble for Africa. (2012).
- [24] Mytton, G. 1978. The conflict with Uganda. *Tanzanian Affairs*. December 1. (accessed July 5, 2018).
- [25] New Vision. "Liberation Time-Line." Kampala. April 11. (2002).
- [26] New Vision. "Uganda's Presidents since Independence." Kampala. October 13. (2002).
- [27] Okumu, W. Border conflicts. Resources and border disputes in Eastern Africa. *Journal of Eastern African Studies* Vol. 4 (Issue 2). 279-297. (2010).
- [28] Pruitt, S. Who are the Mandinka? *History Stories*. history.com (2016).
- [29] Rodgers, A., Nabanyumya, R. and Salehe, J. "Beyond Boundaries: Transboundary Resources Management in the Minziro-Sango Bay Forest Ecosystem." <http://www.bsponline.org>. (2001).
- [30] Rowe, J. A. "Historical Setting". In Byrnes Rita M. *Uganda. A Country Study*. Federal Research Division. Library of Congress. Area handbook series. Chapter 1. pp. 1-37. (1990).
- [31] Rumuli. "Omwaka Oguhya ni TIKILIWA IGAMBA." Bunena. Dec. (1979).
- [32] The Cape Times Newspaper, South Africa, September 28, 1972). Quote by Lubega, H. (2016).
- [33] The East African. Tanzania-Uganda War. April 8. (2002).
- [34] The Monitor. "Uganda's war debt at \$200 million." Kampala. January 4. (1999).
- [35] TORMIC News. "Uganda Compensates Tanzania for Anti-Amin war." Dar-es-Salaam. (2000).
- [36] Turyahikayo-Rugyema, B. Iddi Amin Speaks: An annotated Selection of His Speeches. African studies Program. University of Wisconsin-Madison. (1998).
- [37] Wikipedia.org. Territorial dispute. The free Encyclopedia. (2018).
- [38] Yameogo, L. Villagers resolved border dispute. (2016).