

Key stakeholders across government, religious institutions, development partners, professional bodies and opposition political parties have sharply differed on the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026. Below are verbatim excerpts from key institutions.

BY FRANKLIN DRAKU

**Bank of Uganda**  
 "...The potential of this Bill to destabilise Uganda's balance of payments is our primary concern as a central bank. For example, last financial year the overall balance of payment surplus was USD 1.5 billion. That's how we were able to increase our reserve coverage by USD 1.5 billion. Today as we speak our reserves are close to USD 6 billion. Why? Because these inflows have been coming in. The moment you tamper with these inflows here, we risk running down our reserves, and that is economic disaster for a country," Governor Dr Michael Atingi-Ego said.

#### Buganda Kingdom

"The damage likely to be done caused by the ripple effect of this legislation may outstrip the benefits of concerns sought to be protected. This law will not protect the sovereignty and interests of Uganda, but on the contrary, doom our economy and increase the cost of doing business in Uganda and give the country a low rating globally as an investment destination.

Beyond deterring prospective investors, the Bill as currently drafted poses a serious risk of capital flight from Uganda's existing investment base. Institutions and individual investors routinely assess the regulatory environment of recipient countries before committing or maintaining capital flows.

Uganda doesn't exist in an econom-

# What key stakeholders said on Sovereignty Bill



Dr Michael Atingi-Ego, BoU Governor

ic vacuum. She competes for investment, diaspora remittances, and development financing with neighbouring East African Community states, each of which maintains comparatively lighter regulatory burdens on cross-border transactions.

In effect, there is a real danger that, should the Bill be enacted in its current form, capital flows that would otherwise be directed into Uganda will be redirected to these competing economies."

#### World Bank

"By classifying international organisations as 'foreigners' without qualification, the Bill subjects them... to all of its substantive restrictions, registration requirements, financial reporting obligations, and criminal penalties," the World Bank said.

#### Uganda Law Society

"We are renaming this Bill what it really is: the Anti-Sovereignty Bill. It does not protect Uganda's sovereignty. It de-



Christopher Bwanika, Buganda Attorney General

#### IRCU POSITION

"The Inter Religious Council of Uganda and its inter faith legal partners including the Muslim Centre for Justice and Law, Uganda Catholic Lawyers' Association, the Uganda Christian Lawyers' Fraternity, the Muslim Lawyers' Association reject the Bill in its current form due to the possible constitutional violations, including the possibility of shrinking civic space, endangering both civil and political rights while creating legal conflicts with existing financial regulations. It is our considered opinion as IRCU that Parliament should revise vague and overly broad definitions like the meaning of a foreign agent, a foreigner, interests of a foreigner,..."



Anthony Asimwe, ULS Vice President

stroys the sovereignty—the people's right to self-determination—that belongs to Ugandans under Article 1 of the Constitution and hands all power to the Executive instead.

The Constitution is crystal clear: any law which tries to change the most basic rules of how Uganda is governed—especially who holds power and how the people's rights are protected—must be approved by the people in a national referendum. That is the mandatory requirement in Article 260(2)(b). Every Ugandan must be allowed to vote yes or no. This Bill completely ignores that rule.

It makes massive changes to the foundation of our Constitution without ever asking the people. It wipes out the words 'all power belongs to the people' and replaces them with 'all power belongs to Government.' It takes away your right to be governed only through your own will and consent. It gives the Minister and a new secret Department of Peace and Security unchecked power to decide 'Government interests' and

punish anyone who disagrees.

Worse still, the Bill is designed to crush free speech. It turns ordinary criticism of Government policy into the crime of 'economic sabotage'..."

#### Civil Society Organisations

"The Bill as drafted is unconstitutional, disproportionate, and unnecessary. It does not complement Uganda's existing legal framework. It contradicts and duplicates it, while posing a direct and existential threat to civil society and to the most vulnerable Ugandans. We strongly urge this Honourable Joint Committee to recommend the complete withdrawal of the Protection of Sovereignty Bill, 2026.

Uganda's existing framework is sufficient to address genuine threats to national sovereignty. Should Parliament consider further legislative action necessary, the appropriate path is the targeted, consultative, and constitutionally compliant strengthening of existing law, not a sweeping new statute that will suppress civil society, endanger vulnerable Ugandans, and undermine Uganda's international standing."

#### National Unity Platform (NUP)

"...Its alleged objective of protecting Uganda's sovereignty is not only undermined by the existence of adequate legislation already in Uganda's statute books, but is also directly contradicted by the Bill's operative provisions which systematically dismantle civic, political, and associational rights through which Ugandans exercise sovereignty.

The Bill concentrates unchecked executive power in the Minister of Internal Affairs and criminalises ordinary democratic participation. It imposes penalties too severe to be considered merely regulatory, and defines 'foreigner' in such an absurd and expansive manner that renders every substantive provision constitutionally defective..."