

MUK hostel case: Land probe roots for mediation

BY TOM MALABA
tmalaba@ug.nationmedia.com

KAMPALA. The Commission investigating land matters has pledged to mediate between the family of Mr Ephraim Lubega and Mr Lawrence Mukasa, the man who purchased the former's family hostel in Makerere-Kinoni without approval from Ms Eva Lubega Birabwa, his wife.

Ms Lubega, 62, reported her husband, Mr Lubega and their two sons, Mr Timothy Muwonge and Mr Enoch Matovu, to the land probe accusing them of selling their three-storeyed hostel building without her consent.

"It is complicated, there is need to find a middle ground. We are going to set up teams to help you negotiate," Justice Catherine Bamugemereire said. The chairperson pledged to help

members of Mr Lubega's family come together and also meet Mr Mukasa.

On Wednesday, Mr Lubega admitted he did not consult his wife and they are seeking the commission's hand to recover the hostel.

The property sale has constrained the relationship between the family. The commission wants the parties to talk and resolve the matter amicably.

"This is not our usual land case. You need a mediator and the commission can help with the mediation," Justice Bamugemereire said.

"Hope you will be willing to talk it through. Have you ever wondered why your mother is not willing to let that building go?" she asked Mr Matovu during his testimony.

Mr Matovu said the hostel was the only reward of their parents' hard work and that's why they were

reluctant to let it go despite authorising the sale.

Mr Matovu said they sold off the hostel at Shs500m to pay off a Housing Finance Bank loan.

Justice Bamugemereire described Ms Lubega's situation as dangerous.

"I hope it does not develop into homelessness. We live in a capitalist society. It's not difficult for Ms



Justice Catherine Bamugemereire

Lubega to end up on the street and she would be happy being on the street than lose her property. People become homeless because they are adamant," she said.

Mr Matovu told the commission that they want to reconcile as a family even without the hostel but the mother thinks otherwise.

He said they can build another hostel as the matter gets settled.

However, Ms Lubega said the family can only reconcile if the hostel is returned.

She said she was willing to refund Mr Mukasa's Shs500m plus 25 per cent interest as per the sale agreement.

However, Mr Mukasa, who is yet to record a statement before the commission, is demanding Shs1b.

Earlier mediation attempts through courts of law between Lubega family and Mukasa failed.