

## **MPS AGREE TO SUPPORT ELECTION CAMPAIGN FINANCING PRIVATE MEMBERS BILL**

A team of 38 Members of Parliament have expressed their support for campaign finance reforms and the effort by Hon. Alex Ruhunda (MP Fort Portal Municipality) to produce on the floor of Parliament, a Private Members' Bill on Election Campaign Financing. This was after Ruhunda made the political case for enactment of Election Campaign Finance Law. The MP leads the informal group of MPs in the 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament that is pushing the agenda on campaign finance reforms.

The development happened during a meeting of Members of the 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament organised by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) at Golf Course Hotel in Kampala on December 14, 2016. The meeting aimed at soliciting allies and support for campaign finance reforms so that when the Private Members' Bill is introduced on the floor of parliament, and the lead MP seeks leave of parliament, there are is a critical mass of MPs in support of the motion.



***Caption:** Hon. Alex Ruhunda (MP Fort Portal Municipality) address fellow MPs during the meeting on Campaign Finance Reforms in Kampala.*

The MPs are benefiting from internal and external support as momentum builds for Campaign Finance reforms. Internal support comes from the Legal Department of Parliament while external support is offered by NDI and Alliance for Finance Monitoring (ACFIM).

ACFIM kicked off the process by developing a Draft Private Members' Bill that the Parliamentary Legal Department has now improved upon and owned. The Bill was availed to

all the 38 MPs attending the meeting. Whereas a few of them had reservations on how some of the provisions were going to be enforced in the political context of Uganda, it was agreed in principle that campaign finance reforms are necessary to curb commercialisation of politics and electoral processes in the country.

“Commercialisation of politics is already hurting us honourable members and legislating on campaign financing is one way of protecting us and other political leaders that will come long after us”, said Ruhunda.

The National Coordinator ACFIM, Henry Muguzi, urged MPs to support the motion once the Bill is tabled on the floor of parliament. He informed MPs that enactment of the Campaign Finance Law will ease the work of civil society in monitoring campaign income and spending. He further noted that ACFIM is already conducting grassroots public dialogues on commercialisation of politics and campaign finance reforms. He revealed plans to roll out robust civic education campaign at village level to aiming to reverse the culture of commercialised politics in Uganda.

The Country Director, NDI, Simon Osborn Private Members’ Bill on Election Campaign Financing in meeting that was organised by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) urged MPs to stay focussed and pledged support towards this noble effort.



***Caption:*** ACFIM National Coordinator, Henry making a submission as NDI Country Director Simon Osborn (right) and MPs (left) listen in. This was during the meeting of Members of Parliament on campaign finance reforms organised by NDI in Kampala on December 13, 2016.