

Uganda: New Regime Aims At Unity

[AN] Two weeks after seizing power in a coup, the new Ugandan military council under Gen. Tito Okello has reported a breakthrough in its efforts to form what it terms a "government of national unity," naming two Cabinet ministers, including former parliamentary opposition leader Paul Ssemogerere, who now becomes interior minister.

Some observers view Ssemogerere's appointment as ushering in a new era of national reconciliation in a nation torn by civil strife. A member of the Baganda, the country's largest and possibly most influential ethnic group, and leader of the main opposition Democratic Party (DP), Ssemogerere has been an outspoken critic of former President A. Milton Obote's human rights record. The DP chief has often charged that Ugandan society in the 1980s was more repressive than it had been under former dictator Idi Amin, in the 1970s.

Ssemogerere's new job is to head the ministry he so persistently accused of violating human and

civil rights. Most of the victims of these alleged violations came from the area known as the Luwero Triangle, just north of Kampala and covering much of the Buganda region, the stronghold of Ssemogerere's party. Observers in Kampala said his appointment may signal early freedom for many political detainees.

Also named to the Cabinet was Gard Wilson Toko, a retired air force colonel who was serving as head of Uganda Airlines. As defense minister, his first task is to restore discipline in the army that has been accused repeatedly of wanton killings.

While news of the July 29 military coup was initially well-received inside the country, some Ugandans have since raised questions about the composition of the new regime, which is apparently dominated by Acholi officers and by political figures close to Obote. The new prime minister is Paulo Muwanga, Obote's vice president; and the key figures in the ruling military council are head of state Gen. Tito Okello, a former army com-

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The speeches are over but the challenges remain ahead after the close of the United Nations Nairobi conference on women. See page 8.