

A BOU TRIBUTE

TO PROF. EMMANUEL TUMUSIIME-MUTEBILE

PART 2

PROF. TUMUSIIME-MUTEBILE;
THE MAGNANIMOUS GOVERNOR



PROF. EMMANUEL TUMUSIIME-MUTEBILE

GOVERNOR, BANK OF UGANDA | 2001 - 2022

Rest in Peace



1949 - 2022

Prof. Tumusiime-Mutebile was described as a magnanimous boss who anyone would have loved to work for because he was consistent and dependable.

"Governor" was loved for promoting staff welfare and staff development. He encouraged staff training, supported the pursuit of postgraduate studies, and approved short-term courses and work-related attachments to relevant organizations like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

He is also accredited for his very decisive nature, which according to many staff, is derived from his roots in the highlands of Kigezi, as well as his training and wide exposure.

Indeed, Prof. Tumusiime-Mutebile delegated effectively and once sound, evidence-based policy positions were arrived at, he championed them assertively; never fearing to tell truth to power.

In this second part of the BoU tribute to Prof. Emmanuel Tumusiime-Mutebile, we articulate a first-hand account of his compassionate yet firm persona, as narrated by select BoU staff who worked closely with him. We also feature staffs' memorable moments of working and interacting with Governor.

Prof. Mutebile was a very kind and generous person who respected everyone no matter their station in life.

Governor's character would prompt you to serve him unceasingly because he was a patient man who gave everyone a chance to do their work.

John Baptist Balinda (Governor's Chauffeur)

Prof. Tumusiime-Mutebile was a very humble, kind, highly disciplined, honest, and hardworking gentleman who commanded a lot of respect. The Governor cared for and treasured all of us as his children. He commanded a fatherly figure towards staff at all ranks. He was a father to us all. The Governor was a man of very few words who barely made phone calls, but often answered in-coming calls with very brief and simple replies; 'yes', 'okay', or 'sorry'. For resolute callers, the answer was always a big "No!" In all our travels around the country, Prof. Tumusiime-Mutebile did not display any tribal or religious discrimination. "May the Almighty rest his soul in eternal peace."



William Osire

(Office Attendant, Governor's Office)

Prof. Tumusiime-Mutebile was a gentleman with a large heart. On my first day of work in the Governor's office, Prof. Mutebile said hello to me, asked what my name was and told me that I was welcome. I could barely comprehend how the Governor of the central bank was personally welcoming me. His words were always 'Good Morning', 'Thank you', and 'Good night'. One evening, when he was done for the day, the Governor walked to the elevator but walked back after a short while. When I asked him if he had forgotten something, the Governor said to me; "Yes, I forgot to say thank you for opening the door for me." I will miss so many things but most of all, his humility.

Herbert Bandese

(Catering Staff, Governor's Office)

Prof. Mutebile was a people-person who respected everybody. At his rank, you would assume that the Governor would be too busy to talk but that was not entirely true. On Monday mornings, the Governor often asked how the weekend was. After a memorable day for example Father's Day, he would take time to ask how the special day was. Governor's character would prompt you to serve him unceasingly because he was a patient man who gave everyone a chance to do their work. He also always sought the opinion of staff in their different capacities. I will miss Governor's thankfulness. There is a famous quote that goes, "the only time a non-believer is thankful is when there is no one to thank". Governor was clearly a believer because he was always thankful.

After a memorable day for example Father's Day, he would take time to ask how the special day was.

Jackie Rose Nankumba

(Receptionist, Governor's Office)

The fallen Governor was a unique man with a pure soul. I will always remember the Governor for his 'huge' heart and his willingness to help everyone in need and at any time. His kindness was unmatched. He was an exemplary leader, generous, had a good sense of humor, and he respected all irrespective of rank. My most fond memory of Prof. Mutebile is from over 20 years ago at his welcoming party. Many staff were worried that the late Governor Kikonyogo was leaving but Prof. Mutebile's words were re-assuring. "I will care for you," he declared. Indeed, the Governor has cared for his staff

Lilian Nyanzi

(Former Administrative Assistant Governor's office)

He has been a true friend! He was a man who always appreciated anything you did for him. He was also a people person who cared for his staff and encouraged their advancement. Governor was also as God fearing as he was humorous. One day, two reverends attempted to visit his office without an appointment. When I asked Governor if he was free to meet them, he quickly answered, "Nyanzi, who am I to refuse the men of God to see me?" I will miss the fact that he always went an extra mile to help those in need.

Dr. Musa Waiswa

(Director Medical Department-BoU)

Prof. Mutebile was a very kind and generous person who respected everyone no matter their station in life. In his last days, the Governor mentioned that he was at peace since he had no known enemy on this planet. I learnt from Prof. Mutebile to love the work that I am engaged in, and to think before you speak. Even when he was unwell, the Governor worried more about missing work than his own ill health. I can confidently assert that the Governor successfully carried a "message to Garcia" as a great economist.

The late Governor was a true gentleman, a very honest man, and an extremely kindhearted man.

Akura Mugenyi

(Personal Assistant to the Deputy Governor)

Governor was an amazing communicator who often read speeches off script. He did not mind being approached randomly by people at the numerous events he attended. He liked being around people. Governor respected everyone's work. He enjoyed a good debate even when he was not speaking. Prof. Mutebile was unusually comfortable with silence; probably because he was often the smartest man in the room. I will miss him not least because of the fact that 'there is only one Prof. Tumusiime-Mutebile'. I am not sure that there is somebody playing the unique role that he played i.e., personally inspiring economic confidence, thereby containing the national risk premium at levels that investors were comfortable with, simply by his presence at the helm of economic management.

Dr. Gyavira Makanga

(Deputy Director, Medical Department-BoU)

The late Governor was a true gentleman, a very honest man, and an extremely kindhearted man who exhibited the highest level of empathy that I had ever seen in a person holding a very senior position. His sense of humor was unmatched and will be missed. On most of our travels abroad, the Governor would encourage me to read some of the technical material that had been prepared for the economic and financial forums. He even urged me, a medical doctor, to consider pursuing a course in economics.

Christine Alupo

(Director, Currency Department)

The Governor was a refined gentleman who enjoyed a good laugh, and was a pure joy to serve. Through my varied roles, I gained the closest insight into Prof. Tumusiime-Mutebile the man, his character, his personality, how he expressed what he stood for, and how he treated people while dispensing his duties. The Governor liked his messages bold, courageous, and unambiguous; true to his nature. He wanted his truth to be heard clearly, and he strongly defended it wherever and whenever he had to. It is said that being candid and blunt in speech is wired into the DNA of the people from Kigezi. Occasionally, we joked that some particular speeches had actually been delivered in *Rukiga* but the audiences had heard them in English.

The real value of this clarity was that the central bank's policies, positions, intentions, and guidance on important things reached the industry and other stakeholders quickly and clearly. What I observed and took away from Prof. Mutebile was that as a leader, it is very important to communicate what needs to be said, when it needs to be said, to whom it needs to be said, and while it may be uncomfortable in the moment, truths eventually and inevitably must be confronted. It will happen sooner or later, and it is better sooner than later.

Let us cherish the memories of the Governor we knew. Fare thee well Governor. It was a singular honor to be in your service. Your candle has burnt out, but your legend will live on for a very long time. May the Almighty God grant you the gift of eternal life.

I salute Prof. Mutebile for serving with distinction as evidenced in many achievements that the BoU registered under his leadership. I will miss his integrity and his smile.

Solomon Oketcho

(Executive Director, Risk and Strategy Management (EDRSM))

Prof. Tumusiime-Mutebile was the 'Lion of Bank of Uganda', but more specifically, he was the 'Lion of staff Welfare'. The philosophy of central banks across the world is that long term loyalty, commitment, performance, and integrity of staff hangs on security of tenor and golden handcuffs. I recognize, without any fear of contradiction, that the 'Lion of Staff Welfare' understood this philosophy very well. Between 2006 and 2011, many staff left Bank of Uganda at all levels to join other organizations. The Governor, working with management and his colleagues at the Board reviewed salaries and benefits to a competitive level and staff who had left returned to knock on BoU doors. Many of them are still serving the Bank today. There was also a review and strengthening of medical policy and services. To date, it is the best in the region.

Joyce Okello

(Personal Assistant to the Governor)

The late Governor was a man of the people regardless of rank! The Governor's tough outlook notwithstanding, he was a very humble man. Indeed, his humility was reflected in the way that he spoke, which made everyone comfortable and at ease. He was also a very consistent man. His "No" was "No", and his "Yes" was "Yes". I learnt several things from the Governor but most of all, I will always remember his leadership skills, his decisive nature, and that fact that he inspired and empowered people to do what is right. I salute Prof. Mutebile for serving with distinction as evidenced in many achievements that the BoU registered under his leadership.

I will miss his integrity and his smile. The Governor's smile would light an entire room and cheer one up if they were feeling low. I remember walking into his office on several occasions and he would look up from his computer and greet me with a wide smile.

Dr. Twinemanzi Tumubweinee (Executive Director, Supervision (EDS))

Prof. Mutebile was 'firm and decisive', yet pragmatic at the same time. He was accommodative to ideas and concepts - however different or unusual - and this put him in the category of not just a boss but rather a leader. He was specifically a leader who appreciated that the future is to be won on ideas and our willingness to adapt to the change associated with them. I will remember and miss Prof. Mutebile's depth of institutional knowledge, both about BoU and the Ugandan economy; and yet he was never a braggard. He was never dogmatic nor married to any economic school of thought, if logical arguments or clear facts demonstrated otherwise. He abhorred tardiness, had an incredible sense of humor, was very proud of his heritage as a *Mukiga w'omusigi*, and these are just some of things I will remember and miss about him.

Dr. Adam Mugume (Executive Director, Research (EDR))

Governor was an incredibly gifted person that anyone would have loved to have as a boss. In the 11 years I worked with him as EDR, Prof. Mutebile always agreed to policy proposals from the Research team that I led. He had cognitive empathy and encouraged strategic thinking and action. He was always quick to apologize if his position in a debate was not sound. I will remember many things about the Governor but most crucially, his hate for policy reversal. In 2011/12 and in 2015/16 when the exchange rate was unstable, there were sharp policy differences on whether to manage the exchange rate rather than leaving it to market forces. The Governor was resolute in not allowing policy reversal. He even offered to resign if policy reversal was adopted. Similarly, when a cross section of people agitated for interest rate fixing, Governor was unequivocally opposed to this because it tantamounted to policy reversal and would have been detrimental to the economy.

Dr. Charles Abuka (Executive Director, Operations (EDO))

Prof. Mutebile was compassionate but firm. He understood staff's problems but did not encourage misbehavior. He didn't generalize and he handled each issue on a case-by-case basis. He also allowed staff to excel irrespective of background, ethnicity, or ranks. Prof. Mutebile always recognized and appreciated good work. I learnt several things about the person that Governor was, and I will mostly remember his commitment to fiscal discipline, his belief in sound financial management, as well as tax reforms.

Executive Director, Petroleum Investment Fund (EDPIF)

Prof. Mutebile was a parent who ensured that we all walked the right path. He was very respectful; he never directed but always requested. I will miss the Governor's patience, his unique way of looking at things, his ability to read people by assessing their strengths and weakness thus ensuring that he does not put a person in a place where they were bound to struggle. I will also remember the Governor for permitting his Executive Directors to manage their areas of expertise without imposing or micro-managing them. Prof. Mutebile's fairness in policy application especially when it related to staff welfare, and how he always bent backwards for his staff, especially regarding assistance with medical issues will also be missed.

Dr. William Kalema (Member of the Bank of Uganda Board of Directors)

Prof. Tumusiime-Mutebile was an excellent decision maker who was also very systematic. He would consult widely among all the Board members and then make a decision that would summarize the Board's overall view on the subject in hand. He normally economized his words.

Susan Kanyemibwa (Bank Secretary)

The late Governor was a very good chairman who earned respect from Senior Management and the board members. I remember him for being thorough and meticulous. His presence in the boardroom would be felt. He listened to all board members' opinions, and the majority took the day. Despite his high position, the Governor appreciated advice and relied on his Executive Directors for expert opinion. He took keen interest in staff welfare and gave staff matters priority on the agenda. He will be missed for his empathy and the way he impacted staff in a special way, irrespective of rank.

The best way to secure the Governor's legacy will be to continue upholding the values that he treasured, along with maintaining his achievements of price stability and financial system soundness, today and in the future.



Michael Atingi-Ego (Deputy Governor)

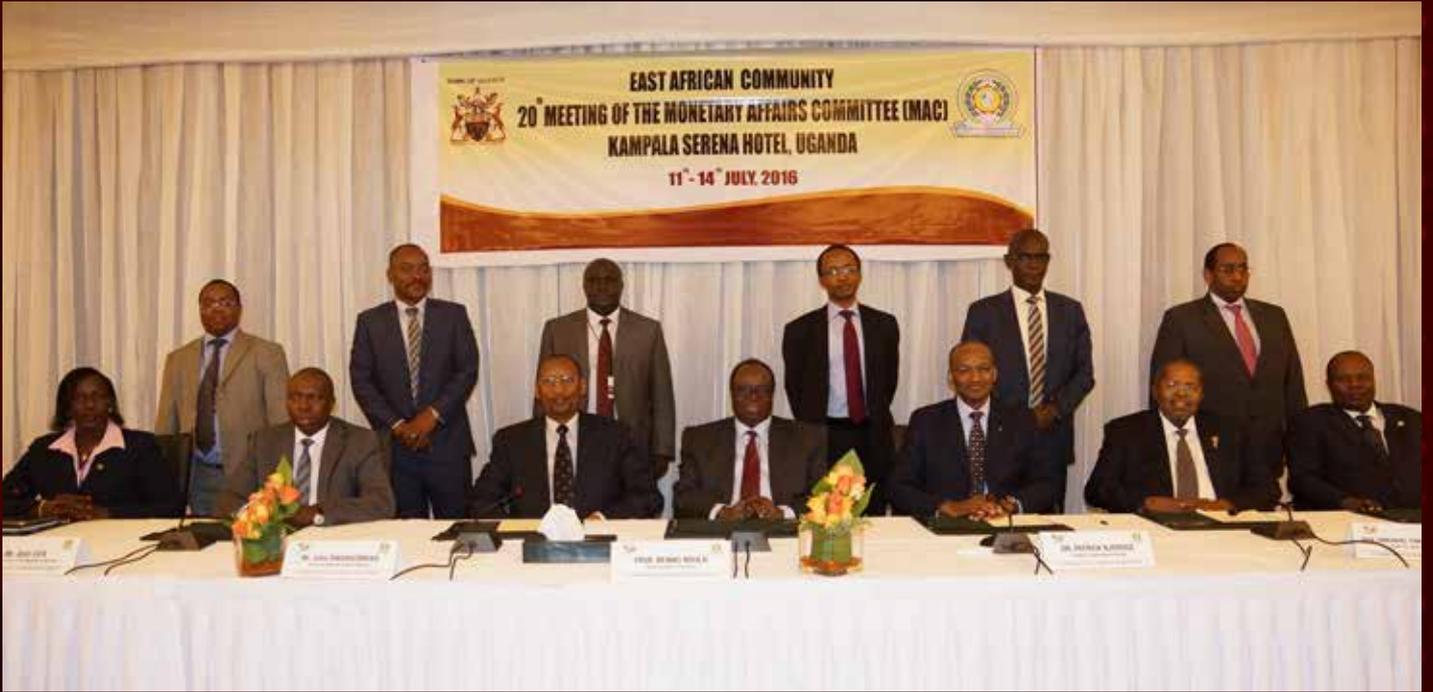
Having worked very closely with the Governor since my appointment as Deputy Governor, Prof. Mutebile was not a boss, but rather an inspirational leader and father figure who aimed to bring out the very best in everyone. Unquestionably, staff have been left with a void in their hearts because of the Governor's passing. Prior to the hospitalization of the Governor, he and I met every Sunday for lunch, brief work discussions, and fellowship; with Prof. Mutebile selecting and leading the praise and worship songs. This was always summed up with a prayer for the Bank.

I learnt several things from the fallen Governor and top of my list is 'to avoid being perfect bureaucrats who make no decisions and escape all responsibility', as stated in Prof. Mutebile's first speech as Governor in March 2001. Prof. Mutebile's mentorship, intellectual fire power, ability to listen and understand a person's point of view, in addition to his love for his staff and their welfare will be missed the most. The best way to secure the Governor's legacy will be to continue upholding the values that he treasured, along with maintaining his achievements of price stability and financial system soundness, today and in the future.

I am grateful to Prof. Mutebile for putting in place systems that facilitate continuity of work. This has enabled me oversee operations in the Governor's office while performing tasks in my substantive position at the same time, until a new Governor is appointed. Similarly, I applaud the Governor for emphasizing the need to have time consistent policies in place. The principles he cherished have made us mindful of emerging issues such as, cyber security and FinTech, climate change, implications of technological revolution on data, and ensuring that price and financial sector stability support the growth and socio-economic transformation of the country.

As staff of Bank of Uganda, we pledge to continue paying homage to Prof. Tumusiime-Mutebile, by emulating values that we each learnt from his contribution and his character.

In the next and final part of this BoU tribute to Prof. Emmanuel Tumusiime-Mutebile, we will share with you Prof. Tumusiime-Mutebile - the humanitarian. TO BE CONTINUED...





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