



# Bureaucracy breeds corruption

Publication date: Thursday, 4th March, 2010

**Tom Walugembe**

The high level of bureaucracy in state institutions in Uganda and Africa is appalling.

Services that would ordinarily be given in a couple of days are deliberately made to entail complicated, lengthy and totally unjustifiable procedures that usually drag on for months and in some cases years.

Most civil servants in Africa do not show any commitment or dedication to the work they do. While this could be blamed on low and delayed wages, it is also clear that many civil servants do not have a single iota of patriotism.

Many state offices in Africa open late and close earlier than the scheduled time. Long lunch breaks normally bring business to a standstill. There is also the lousy excuse that 'the person in charge is on leave'.

Delegation of powers is only inevitable in an efficient administration. Access to state services is usually characterised by long lines and scenarios where one officer is expected to serve thousands of people.

In the end the process breeds frustration and desperation and the only way around it is through bribery and corruption. Institutionalised bureaucracy is thus the 'mother' of corruption.

Institutionalised bureaucracy in Africa was passed on by colonialists and inherited by the African nationalist leaders who took over after the colonial era.

Institutionalised bureaucracy derails the economic development of individuals and a nation. In this era of globalisation, African leaders should embrace information technology that the West has used to totally cut out state bureaucracy. For example, the new vice-chancellor of Makerere University, Prof. Vernasius Baryamureeba, has ensured that students get their transcripts the day of graduation, something that was impossible in the past. This is a clear illustration that with political will, bureaucratic tendencies can be done away with.

There is an urgent need to transform the nature of the African state machine from one that is simply there to administer to one that represents the wishes and aspirations of the people.

This can only be achieved by a new breed of patriotic and nationalist leaders because Africa's current leaders have clearly betrayed the continent.

*The writer is a mobiliser with the Pan African Movement*

This article can be found on-line at: <http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/459/711868>

© Copyright 2000-2010 The New Vision. All rights reserved.