

Uganda

Uganda Veterans Assistance Board Act Chapter 212

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Uganda Veterans Assistance Board Act

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An Act to establish a board to provide assistance to veterans of the National Resistance Army; to provide for the objects and functions of the board; to provide for its composition, administration and finances and for other related matters.

Part I – Interpretation

1. Interpretation

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—

- (a) **"board"** means the body corporate established by [section 2](#);
- (b) **"district veterans committee"** means a committee appointed under [section 10](#);
- (c) **"district veterans office"** means a district veterans office within the meaning of [section 4](#);
- (d) **"district veterans officer"** means a district veterans officer appointed under [section 13](#);
- (e) **"executive secretary"** means the executive secretary appointed under [section 12](#);
- (f) **"Minister"** means the Prime Minister;
- (g) **"secretary"** means the secretary to the board within the meaning of [section 6](#); and
- (h) **"veteran"** means a person who ceased to be a member of the former National Resistance Army as a result of the reduction in force of the former National Resistance Army.

Part II – Establishment, objects and functions of the board

2. Establishment of the board

- (1) There is established a board to be known as the Uganda Veterans Assistance Board.
- (2) The board is a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal and may sue or be sued in its corporate name.
- (3) The board may, for and in connection with its objects and functions under this Act, purchase, hold, manage and dispose of any property whether movable or immovable; and may enter into any contract and other transactions as may be expedient; and may do any other act or thing that in law may be done by a body corporate, subject to this Act.

3. Objects and functions of the board

- (1) The objects of the board are—
 - (a) to formulate policy and coordinate all activities for the implementation of the Government's programme for assistance to veterans;
 - (b) and to take all necessary steps to promote the smooth transition of veterans into productive civilian life.
- (2) Without prejudice to the general effect of subsection (1), the board shall, under that subsection, have the following functions—
 - (a) to review the policy on the veterans assistance programme;
 - (b) to provide all necessary guidance to all concerned in the implementation of the veterans assistance programme and promote effective coordination among Ministries and Government departments in all matters relating to the veterans assistance programme;
 - (c) to identify any special transitional problems affecting the veterans and ensure that the problems are tackled expeditiously and effectively and that all planned programmes and projects are properly administered;
 - (d) to take such steps as may be necessary to minimise frustration on the part of veterans;
 - (e) to ensure that the financial and other arrangements provided under the veterans assistance programme are administered in such a manner as would ensure that veterans enjoy a reasonable life;
 - (f) to supervise and monitor any special schemes of assistance to veterans which may be placed by the Minister under the direct management of the board;
 - (g) to supervise and monitor the work and the performance of the district veterans assistance committees; and
 - (h) to carry out such other activities as may be conducive or incidental to the attainment of the objects of the board.

4. Decentralisation of operations

- (1) So far as practicable, the operations of the board shall be decentralised so as to ensure that the services provided by the board are brought as close as possible to the intended beneficiaries; and to this end the board shall, whenever feasible, establish district veterans offices of the board.
- (2) The board may, depending on the concentration or the pattern of settlement of veterans or both, establish one district veterans office for more than one administrative district.

5. Meetings of the board, etc.

The provisions of the Schedule to this Act shall have effect with respect to meetings of the board and other matters to which they relate.

Part III – Composition of the board and tenure of office and remuneration of members

6. Composition of the board

- (1) The board shall consist of—
 - (a) a chairperson;

- (b) the executive secretary appointed under [section 12](#);
 - (c) the secretary for defence *ex officio*; and
 - (d) five other persons.
- (2) The members of the board other than the executive secretary shall be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Minister.
- (3) The executive secretary shall, in addition to being a member of the board, act as secretary to the board at its meetings.

7. Tenure of office of members

- (1) The members of the board other than the executive secretary shall hold office for two years but, on ceasing to hold office, shall be eligible for reappointment.
- (2) Any member to whom subsection (1) applies may, at any time, resign his or her membership or may be removed by the President or by the Minister—
 - (a) for inability to perform the functions of his or her office on grounds of infirmity of body or mind or any other cause; or
 - (b) for misbehaviour.

8. Remuneration of members

Members of the board and persons co-opted to any meeting of the board may be paid such sitting, subsistence or other allowances, if any, and at such rates as the Minister may, after consultation with the Minister responsible for finance, determine.

Part IV – Committees of the board

9. Committees

- (1) The board may, for the efficient discharge of its objects and functions under this Act, appoint committees comprising members of the board or nonmembers or both.
- (2) The board may assign to a committee appointed under subsection (1) such functions subject to such limitations and conditions as the board may determine.
- (3) The board may determine the procedure of committees appointed by it under this section.

10. District veterans committees

- (1) The board shall establish a district veterans committee in any area where it maintains a district office.
- (2) A district veterans committee shall consist of the following members—
 - (a) the chief administrative officer, who shall be chairperson of the committee;
 - (b) the district chairperson;
 - (c) the district veterans officer, who shall be secretary to the committee;
 - (d) the district council secretary for defence;
 - (e) the district national executive committee member;
 - (f) the district internal security officer (ISO);

- (g) the district executive secretary (DES); and
 - (h) a representative of the veterans in the district.
- (3) A district veterans committee may co-opt to the committee any public officer or other person resident in the area concerned whose participation appears to the committee to be essential to the work of the committee, except that a co-opted person shall have no vote.
- (4) A district veterans committee may be established to cover more than one administrative district as may be convenient for the efficient administration of the veterans assistance programme.

11. Functions of a district veterans committee

The functions of a district veterans committee are—

- (a) to evaluate and report to the board on the performance of the district veterans office;
- (b) to assess and report to the board on the quality of the implementation of the veterans assistance programme in the area covered by the committee;
- (c) to advise the board on any weaknesses and shortcomings in the implementation of the programme and to make proposals for rectifying them; and
- (d) to perform such other functions relating to the veterans assistance programme as the board may, from time to time, direct.

Part V – Staff of the board

12. Executive secretary

- (1) The board shall have an officer to be designated the executive secretary.
- (2) The executive secretary shall be appointed by the board from among persons of high standards of integrity and maturity and who have substantial qualifications or experience in administration or any other area relevant to the objects and functions of the board.
- (3) The executive secretary shall hold office upon such terms and conditions as may be specified in the instrument of appointment.
- (4) The executive secretary shall, subject to this Act, and subject, in particular, to the directions of the board on matters of policy, be responsible for the day-to-day management of the affairs of the board and the implementation of the policy decisions of the board and for the control of the staff of the board.
- (5) If the executive secretary is incapacitated by absence or illness or other cause from performing the functions of his or her office or if the office of the executive secretary is vacant, the board may appoint another officer of the board qualified in terms of subsection (2) to act in the office of executive secretary for the duration of the incapacity or, as the case may be, until the vacancy is filled.

13. Other senior officers of the board

- (1) The board shall have other senior officers to be designated administrative secretary, inspector of operations and accountant, respectively.
- (2) The board shall appoint a district veterans officer for each area for which it has a district veterans office.
- (3) The officers to which this section relates shall have such qualifications as the board may determine, and shall be appointed by the board upon such terms and conditions and shall be charged with such responsibilities as the board shall prescribe.

- (4) For the avoidance of doubt, the officers referred to in this section shall be responsible to the executive secretary for the discharge of their functions, subject to the powers of the board.

14. Other staff

The board may appoint such other officers and employees as may be necessary for the efficient discharge of the objects and functions of the board under this Act.

15. General provisions relating to staff

- (1) The board may, subject to such conditions and restrictions as it may impose, delegate any of its powers of appointment and discipline to the executive secretary or any committee of the board or to any other officer of the board.
- (2) The board may, with the approval of the Minister, make rules regulating the mode of appointment or prescribing the terms and conditions and discipline of the officers and employees of the board.

Part VI – Finance

16. Funds

The funds of the board shall consist of—

- (a) monies approved by Parliament;
- (b) monies derived from donor assistance;
- (c) monies borrowed by the board under this Act; and
- (d) monies derived from any other source approved by the Minister.

17. Annual budget of the board

- (1) The executive secretary shall, not less than three months before the commencement of each financial year, prepare and submit to the board for its approval estimates of income and expenditure of the board for that financial year.
- (2) The executive secretary may also, at any time before the end of any financial year, prepare and submit to the board for approval any estimates supplementary to the estimates required by subsection (1).
- (3) If the board approves any estimates under this section, the estimates shall be submitted by the board to the Minister for his or her approval.
- (4) The Minister may, in consultation with the Minister responsible for finance, approve the estimates.
- (5) Expenditure out of the funds of the board shall not be made unless the estimates in respect of the expenditure have been approved in the manner provided by this section.
- (6) Monies received by the board shall be deposited in such bank account as the Minister may approve.

18. Investment of surplus funds

Any monies of the board not needed for the time being for carrying out the objects and functions of the board under this Act may be invested by the board in such manner as the Minister may approve.

19. Borrowing powers

The board may, with the approval of the Minister given in consultation with the Minister responsible for finance, borrow sums of money from any source as may be required for meeting any of its obligations or for the discharge of its objects and functions under this Act.

20. Financial year of the board

The financial year of the board shall be the same as that of the Government.

21. Accounts and audit

- (1) The board shall keep accounts of income and expenditure and proper books in relation to them.
- (2) The accounts of the board shall be maintained in such form as the Minister responsible for finance may approve.
- (3) The board shall, within four months after the end of each financial year, cause to be prepared and submitted to the Auditor General for auditing by the Auditor General or by an auditor nominated by him or her, a statement of account of the board in a form approved by the Minister responsible for finance.
- (4) The Auditor General shall, within two months after receiving the accounts of the board under subsection (3), cause them to be audited; and he or she shall deliver to the board and the Minister a copy of the audited accounts together with his or her report on the audit.

Part VII – General

22. Annual report

The board shall, in each year, at such time as the Minister may direct, submit to the Minister a statement on its activities in the preceding financial year indicating any particular problems experienced by it in that year in carrying out its objects and functions and making recommendations for solving those problems and containing such other information as the Minister may request.

23. Submission of reports to Parliament

The Minister may, as soon as possible after receiving them, lay before Parliament the Auditor General's report submitted to him or her under [section 21](#) and the annual report of the board submitted to him or her under [section 22](#).

24. Minister's directions and information

- (1) The Minister may, by writing, give to the board such directions as he or she may think appropriate on matters of general policy, and the board is obliged to give effect to those directions.
- (2) The board shall, from time to time, provide to the Minister such information concerning the operations of the board as the Minister may, by writing, request.

25. Common seal and contracts and other instruments of the board

- (1) The common seal of the board shall be kept in the custody of the executive secretary and shall not be affixed to any document except by order of the board.
- (2) The common seal of the board shall be authenticated by the signatures of the executive secretary and two other members of the board.

- (3) Any instrument or contract which if executed or entered into by a person other than a body corporate would not be required to be under seal may be executed or entered into on behalf of the board by the executive secretary, or by any member of the board or any other person if the member of the board or other person has been duly authorised by resolution of the board to execute or enter into the instrument or contract, as the case may be.
- (4) Every document purporting to be an instrument or contract executed or issued by or on behalf of the board in accordance with this section shall be deemed to be so executed or issued until the contrary is proved.

26. Protection of members and staff of the board

- (1) A member of the board or of a committee of the board is not personally liable for any action taken by him or her in good faith without negligence for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this Act.
- (2) An officer or employee of the board or other person acting on behalf of the board is not liable for any act done by him or her in good faith for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this Act.

27. Regulations

The Minister may, by statutory instrument, make regulations for carrying this Act into full effect.

Schedule (Section 5)

Meetings of the board and other miscellaneous matters

1. Meetings of board

- (1) The board shall meet for the discharge of business at least once in every three months or upon request in writing to the chairperson by at least three members of the board, and at such time and place as the chairperson may appoint.
- (2) A meeting of the board shall be convened by a notice to each member issued and signed by the secretary to the board at least fourteen days before the meeting; except that in an emergency a shorter notice may be given.
- (3) The chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the board; and in his or her absence, a member elected by the members present shall preside.
- (4) The quorum of the board at any meeting shall be four.
- (5) A decision at a meeting of the board may be determined by a simple majority of the members present; and in the case of an equality of votes, the chairperson or other person presiding at the meeting shall have a casting vote.
- (6) The board may invite any person not being a member of the board to assist at any meeting of the board, but that person shall not have a right to vote at that meeting.
- (7) Subject to this Act, the board may regulate its own procedure.

2. Minutes of board meetings

- (1) The secretary to the board shall cause to be recorded and kept minutes of all meetings of the board in the form approved by the board.
- (2) The minutes recorded under this paragraph shall be submitted to the board for confirmation at its next meeting following that to which the minutes relate and when so confirmed shall be signed by the chairperson and the secretary in the presence of other members present at the latter meeting.

3. Decision by circulation of papers

- (1) Subject to subparagraph (2) of this paragraph, the decision of the board may be made by circulation of the relevant papers among members of the board and the expression of their views in writing; except that any member is entitled to require that the decision be deferred until the subject matter has been considered at a meeting of the board.
- (2) A decision made by circulation of the relevant papers to the board under this paragraph is not valid unless supported by not less than four members of the board.

4. Validity of proceedings not affected by vacancy, etc.

The validity of any proceedings of the board shall not be affected by any vacancy among its members or by any defect in the appointment of any of them or by reason of the fact that any person not entitled to attend or vote at any meeting attended or voted at that meeting.

5. Disclosure of interest

- (1) If a person is present at a meeting of the board at which a matter is the subject of consideration and in which he or she or his or her spouse or nominee is interested in a private capacity, he or she shall, as soon as practicable after the commencement of the meeting, disclose that interest and shall not, unless the board directs otherwise, take part in any consideration or discussion or vote on any question relating to the matter.
- (2) A disclosure of interest made under this paragraph shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which it is made.

6. Service of notice and other documents

Any notice or other document may be served on the board by it being delivered to the office of the executive secretary or by it being sent by prepaid registered post addressed to the executive secretary.