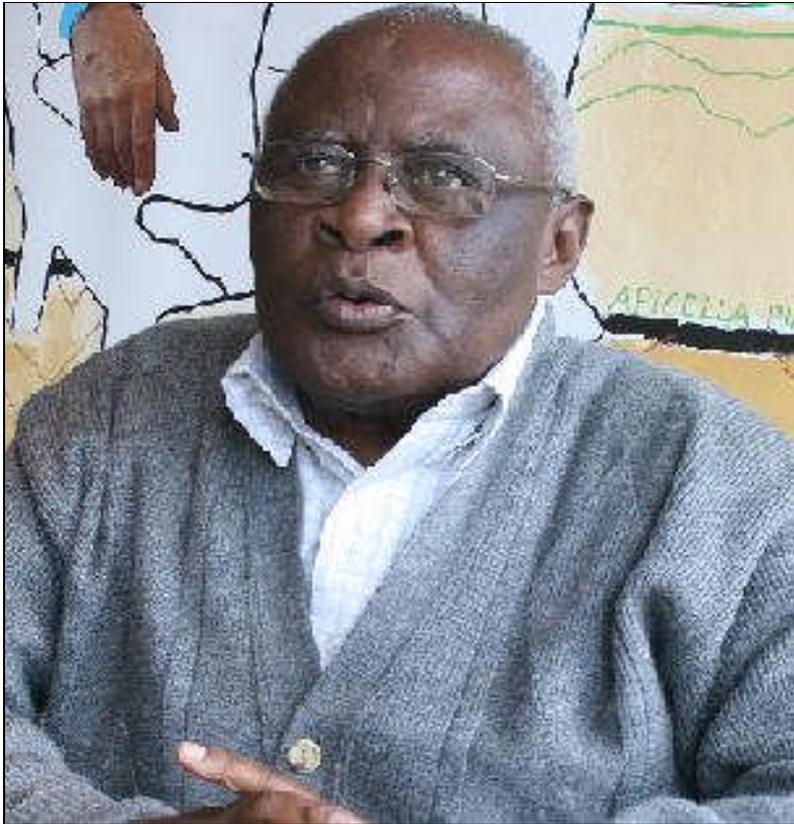


Face to face with Shikuku



By Shad Bulimo, August 3, 2009

Where in the world do you start writing a story spanning 56 years? In the beginning there was Joseph Martin Olukhanya but his father Johana Oyondi called him simply Shikuku. He started life as a seminarian at St Peter's Seminary in Mukumu, Kakamega. His teacher, the late Mwalimu Matayo Shiundu Mukenya from Mumias described him as "a clever and naughty boy." It was a trait that was to catapult Shikuku into national limelight when at the age of 20 he quit the calling of serving the Lord to embrace the urgent need to emancipate his people from the yoke of colonialism.

But not before he tried to find a career that would earn him a living. His first job was a laboratory assistant at Magadi Soda. Although he liked his job, Magadi Soda was located in a remote outpost it did not suit a gregarious individual like Shikuku who got a kick by being closer to crowds. Consequently, he quit the chemical firm and found work as a train guard in Nairobi, the first African to hold that post.

Work in the Railways was considered a posh job in those days and Shikuku used the position to poise himself strategically. Although he had become politically aware aged only six in 1939 and was active since 1952 when Mau Mau fronted struggle for *uhuru*, it was not until 1960 that Shikuku was elected by

Kadu¹ as the national youth leader. Now well positioned to put his debating skills to good use, his first most important task was to travel to London as part of a delegation that was to negotiate the constitution of independent Kenya at Lancaster House, London.

The rest as they say is history. Shikuku has for five decades been at the centre of politics in Kenya. He is one of the few politicians recognisable across the land. He never made allegations in Parliament which he could not substantiate; a feat few politicians can boast of. Similarly he could not be bought or corrupted. When the powers that be felt he had gone overboard and was snooping too closely on their vested interests, at best they threw him into detention.

Across the land, mothers named their children after him and while his singular campaign against the bourgeoisie earned him the epithet "People's Watchman," the story of Shikuku is larger than the man himself. Although his physique took a thorough beating in detention, his spirit is unbroken and at 76, he is still eloquent and the fire in the man undiminished. It is therefore befitting that the story of this courageous individual from Butere, Western Province, is told by Joseph Martin Shikuku (son of Oyondi) himself.

Detention by Kenyatta in 1975:

I was making a contribution to a motion on the JM Kariuki Murder Inquiry in Parliament when Clement Lubembe (then MP for Shinyalu) challenged me and I said "You want to kill this motion the way Kanu was killed." At which point, Lubembe rose on a point of order that I should substantiate. "There is no need to substantiate the obvious," came the famous rebuttal from Jean Marie Seroney², who was in the Speaker's seat. Kenyatta who was given to listening to parliamentary debates on his "kameme" (radio link) at State House, immediately dispatched special branch officers who arrested me and Seroney inside the precincts of parliament.

I was detained at all of Kenya's four maximum security prisons - Manyani, Kamiti, Shimo la Tewa and Naivasha. Detention is supposed to kill you. If you have never been to detention in Kenya, here is a glimpse. As a detainee, you live in a block of cells within the prison fortified with a 25 ft wall. The cells are 7 ft by 13 ft and a ventilation of 4 by 4 inches with two four inch steel bar. You have a bucket for a toilet. You do not see anyone or hear anything. Food is passed to you like a dog through a small opening. I was not allowed to read anything. I was given the Bible only after two years. For beddings, I slept on cold cement floor rolled up in only one blanket. My legs suffered.

¹ Kadu is an abbreviation of Kenya African Democratic Party. It was formed in 1960 at Ngong shortly after Kanu (Kenya National African Union) was formed in Limuru. The two parties were to merge shortly after independence. For forty years Kanu ruled with an iron hand; first under Jomo Kenyatta then upon his death, Daniel arap Moi. Kanu was finally vanquished in 2002 when opposition parties united under the umbrella National Alliance Rainbow Coalition (Narc) and fielded one candidate, Mwai Emilio Kibaki.

² The late Jean Marie Seroney was then the MP for Tinderet in Rift Valley. Kanu had never held elections since independence and Kenyatta had run the party as a personal fiefdom.

I hear that Kenyatta died:

I am tempted to believe that Kenyatta was son of Satan. He was a very harsh leader even Ian Smith gave better treatment to Zimbabwean detainees. Colonialists allowed Kenyatta his conjugal rights with Mama Ngina even as he was in detention. But when my mother died, I was not informed nor given the telegram sent by my brother informing me of her demise in August 1978. I only knew about my mother's death four months after her death on 12 December 1978 when I was released by Moi. It was then that I also heard Kenyatta had died³. I emerged from detention on crutches, physically weakened but spiritually unbroken. One of the serious blows I suffered in detention was the loss of my diaries. They confiscated all my diaries which contained personal memoirs and contacts. That is irreplaceable. They also took away my fire arm and up to today it has never been returned to me.

Luhya unity:

One of the problems facing Luhya unity is the fact that we did not come from the same father and mother unlike say, the Kikuyu or Luo. Each Luhya sub tribe was a nation by itself. One way forward is to forge unity in blocks starting with those tribes that are closely related geographically and linguistically. This may take the form of Marama, Tsotso, Wanga, Shisha (Kisa), Nyore, Idakho, Isukha, Manyala (Ndombi), Kabras (Abalasi) Maragoli, Tiriki forming one block; and Bukusu, Tachoni forming another block with the third block consisting of Busia tribes of Manyala, Samia, Bakhayo and Marachi.

Organisations like Abeingo Community Network can play a crucial role in uniting the Luhya. But also the youth are more enlightened and cosmopolitan and therefore have a better chance of driving this initiative which is crucial for our economic empowerment and pride as a people.

Luhya heroes:

Musa Amalemba: Moses (Musa) Amalemba (immortalised by an estate bearing his name in Kakamega) pioneered initial steps at forging Luhya unity. Before independence Amalemba from Idakho formed Buluhya Political Union (BPU) as the voice of the Luhya in the political dispensation emerging in Kenya at the time. When he had a position in Kenya Airways, he was not ashamed to employ Luhya.

Canon Jeremiah Musungu Awori: I am a great admirer of Canon Awori for his contribution to the intellectual stock in Luhyaland. He sired 18 children from one wife – a record – all of whom have gone on to achieve great things. Some are scientists while others are doctors, politicians and businessmen. Some of the notable Aworis include the former vice president, Moody Awori, former chairman of Nation Media, Hannington Awori, the late Prof Nelson Awori carried out the first kidney transplant in East Africa while in Uganda, Aggrey Awori once challenged Yoweri Museveni to Ugandan presidency.

³ Shikuku says he cannot legally confirm Kenyatta died because he was not a witness. At the time of Kenyatta's death in August 1978, he had no access to any form of communication.

Moses Mudavadi: Mudavadi had Luhyaism in him. When he was in a position to help, he would help Luhya people first. For instance, when he was minister for local government, City Hall was like a Luhya village. And when he was minister for education, it is open secret that the majority of untrained Luhya teachers got employed by his direct intervention. Politically we did not see eye to eye as he was part of an oppressive system of Moi dictatorship which I was fighting. He rigged me out during the 1989 by after the death of Jesse Eshikhati Opembe. He used the vast provincial administration machinery to declare John Okwara the winner in the mulolongo⁴ elections although Okwara had polled 2,000 votes and I had over 5,000. When Okwara refused he was told he was being given leadership because he was Kanu and Shikuku was in opposition. Okwara's supporters swamped his home to celebrate but conscientious Okwara told them to go away as he was not the winner and therefore could not celebrate.

Silas Jirongo: Unlike his contemporaries, I find that Jirongo is not afraid to take the bull by the horns. At least he tries to reach out to the community or involve himself in things that matter to the community. He has been chairman of AFC Leopards and was instrumental in setting up the Luhya Council of Elders which he funded. Ibrahim Ambwere was chairman with Burudi Nabwera and me as the other committee members. However, he seems to be interested in these initiatives for short term gain and when we refused to endorse him for president, he abandoned us.

Youthful leaders from Luhyaland:

People like Dr Bonny Khalwale (MP for Shinyalu) and Ababu Namwamba (MP for Budalang'i) have the potential to bypass Mudavadi in national leadership. However politics is a long haul undertaking and already Namwamba is limping after blundering with the maize scandal in parliament. If you live in a glass house, you should be the last to throw stones at anyone. And if the target is big like the First Family, make sure you use boulders. But the moment you come to the House breathing fire, drag the name of the first lady in the maize scandal only to apologise the following day, you are finished. I never made any statement in the House which I could not substantiate nor did I ever withdraw any statement. That is my legacy. And while Khalwale is gaining inroads into Luhyaland and challenging Mudavadi, he needs to begin spreading his wings beyond western to have any serious chance of bidding for the presidency.

Kenneth Marende:

As House Speaker, I feel he has done a great job so far. I was pleased with his historic ruling when he defied the executive's appointment of Kalonzo Musyoka, the vice president as leader of government business. That ruling defused tension that was threatening to tear the country apart again. I am glad he is emphasising standing orders and bringing discipline to parliament.

⁴ Mulolongo literary means queue. It was a system of electing leaders by queuing behind candidates of your choice. Unlike secret ballot, the system was meant to be open and transparent ostensibly to avoid rigging but ended up being chaotic and disastrous as candidates who had shorter queues were declared winners in one of the most blatant open rigging by the Moi government ever witnessed.

Other Kenyan personalities:

Jaramogi Oginga Odinga:

My relationship with Odinga was never hostile. I warned him in 1960 against his faith in the Kikuyu. In 1962, the colonial government asked Odinga to form a government but true to his nationalist credentials, he declined to be part of any independent dispensation until Kenyatta was released from jail⁵. It is a decision that came to haunt him. Soon after Kenyatta became prime minister then president, the two began falling apart on matters of political ideology. Their rift peaked in 1966 when Kenyatta diluted Odinga's position by creating eight regional power blocks in Limuru. Angry Odinga resigned, quit Kanu and formed Kenya People's Union which was proscribed three years later and with that began Odinga's long journey in political wilderness. My warning came to pass.

History was to repeat itself between Odinga's son, Raila and Mwai Kibaki when the former endorsed the latter for president and signed a memorandum of understanding that would give Odinga the premiership in a unity government but no sooner did Kibaki take the oath of office as president and commander in chief of the armed forces, than he consigned the memorandum to the dustbin; never to see light of day again.

Kikuyu language has no THANK YOU. My own experience with Kenneth Matiba in Ford⁶ was no different. In 1992 I campaigned hard for him in Western Province where he defeated Moi but when I stood for president in 1997, Matiba neither campaigned for me anywhere nor did I get any support from Central Province.

Josiah Mwangi Kariuki:

When JM Kariuki went missing in 1975, there was heightened tension in the country. I was friends with him. I introduced him to the Hilton Hotel sauna. I knew his body well. While Moi was busy misleading the House that JM safe, George Giithi, editor of Nation was misleading Kenyans that JM was on a business trip to Zambia. I smelt a rat because the Hilton workers told me they had seen JM leave Hilton in Ben Gethi's⁷ white Mercedes Benz. It later transpired that he was taken to Ngong Forest where he

⁵ In 1988, Oginga Odinga told this writer that Kenyatta was his political hero in an interview published in the Nation during Kenya's 25th anniversary of independence.

⁶ Forum for the Restoration of Democracy; a movement formed in 1990 by Oginga Odinga, Martin Shikuku, Masinde Muliro, Salim Ahmed Bamahriz and Charles Rubia that forced President Daniel arap Moi to return Kenya to a multiparty democracy.

⁷ Ben Gethi was the General Service Unit commandant. A parliamentary team of inquiry into JM Kariuki's death chaired by the late Elijah Mwangale, MP for Kimilili recommended that Gethi be a subject of further investigation to establish what role he played in JM's disappearance and murder. The recommendations were never followed through. Gethi is now deceased.

was shot dead and left to be devoured by hyenas. Luckily some Masai herdsmen discovered an unidentified body which was subsequently removed to the mortuary.

JM's wife called me to say she understands the body found in Ngong was JM's. I quickly organised a party of individuals including his family to rush to City Mortuary. When we arrived, one body was lying on the table ready for collection by a group of "Luo" men. After failing to find JM's body in the compartments, something told me to check the body on the table. And behold; I saw the marks that I had seen in our many sessions in the sauna and winked to JM's wife. She verified them. At which point, we shouted this is JM. The "Luo" men sitting on the bench just disappeared. Following Tom Mboya's assassination, I told JM to second a motion I was planning to table in Parliament to probe the death of Mboya. JM refused. I told him today it is Mboya, tomorrow it is you or me. It came to pass.

Charles Mugane Njonjo:

When the *msaliti* (traitor) issue cropped up, I called Njonjo in the presence of witnesses and told him that I had evidence he was the *msaliti*; courtesy of his financial dealings in Britain, America and South Africa. I told him that if he resigned from his job as minister for constitutional affairs, there the matter would end and I would not table the documents. Arrogant Njonjo just walked away. Few politicians dared cross his path. Just ask Peter Kibisu (Sabatia), Mark Mwithaga (Nakuru), Waruru Kanja (Nyeri). He used to keep files on everyone and woe unto you if you had any skeletons in the cupboard. When it suited him or his masters, Njonjo would pass your file to the prosecutor marked urgent. Luckily for me, I never had any such fears. I tabled the documents during the morning session. In the afternoon, Njonjo rose and said he had had a good look at the documents and ... (prolonged pose) "they were correct." He resigned with immediate effect.

Margaret Thatcher:

In 1986, I gave a speech at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) conference in London and accused the British government of double standards. I pointed out that Margaret Thatcher was the prime minister of UK because her Conservative had won majority seats at Westminster so why do minority white regime in South Africa govern the majority blacks in South Africa and yet UK is mum about this glaring anomaly. Apparently that speech was so eloquent and factual word got to Thatcher who immediately sought a private audience with me. Among other things, I told her countries like Angola and Mozambique are not communist; they only turned East because they are neglected by the West. Shortly afterwards, Angola and Mozambique were invited to join the Commonwealth. When Thatcher came to Mumias, she sent me a private invitation to join her for lunch. Moi was shocked to see me seated on the second row at the luncheon.

Wisdom from my father, Johana Oyondi:

My father was a wise man. He taught me that I should not encourage borrowing or lending for this causes feuds and schisms. However if you must lend, he cautioned, do so only as a last resort; but you must immediately write off the loan in your mind. And should your debtor repay you, give thanks to God

and take 10% to Church as an offering. If your debtor has reneged on repayment, do not go for him. Instead make a conscious effort to avoid him; for his guilt may drive him to kill you.

Second Liberation – Fight for multipartyism



From left Martin Shikuku, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga and Masinde Muliro. Second frame from right: Ngala Mwendwa and Shikuku – only two remaining attendees of the first Lancaster Conference in London that negotiated independent Kenya’s constitution.

We formed Ford in 1990 because Moi’s tyranny had reached epic proportions. Like a cat pushed to the wall, we felt we had nowhere to run to but fight back. When we sought a license to hold a rally at Kamukunji on November 16 1991 and it was refused, we announced that the rally will go on with or without a license. Thousands came but were beaten or killed by police among them, a 24-year old young man called Amakhumba from Kisa, Kakamega. I remember playing hide and seek with police in the streets of Nairobi until we outmanoeuvred them. Riding on top of a pick up with Masinde Muliro (now deceased) and James Orengo (now minister for lands and MP for Ugenya), we dodged bullets as we drove to Kamukunji. And although the rally did not take place, the message was loud and clear. A year later, Moi yielded to local and international pressure and scrapped the notorious Section 2a of the constitution to allow multiparty politics.



Fighting for second liberation: Shikuku with a microphone, Masinde Muliro (2nd left) and James Orengo (right) on top of a pick up driving to Kamukunji on November 16 1991 to hold a rally which Moi's government thwarted with fatal consequences.

2012 Presidential Candidates:

Consider the current line up of Raila Odinga, Musalia Mudavadi, Kalonzo Musyoka, William Ruto and Uhuru Kenyatta. Of the five, Uhuru has no vision other than to perpetuate the status quo which is the only thing he knows. Musyoka, on the other hand is stuck with the traitor label and will struggle to get votes outside his Kamba community. Ruto is ambitious but outside the North Rift, I doubt he commands a national following as yet. As for Mudavadi, he is struggling even within his own community, let alone other parts of Kenya. That leaves Raila as the only candidate with any serious chance of bagging the 2012 presidential elections as far as I can see.

Luhya presidency:

I am the only Luhya to have stood for president of the republic of Kenya. That was in 1997. A Luhya may yet become the president of Kenya but presidential elections require tonnes of money. However, majority of Luhya people are straight and don't have money on a scale you see in central province. Am afraid, unless we unite and get rich, we will continue to play second fiddle. Nonetheless, the Luhya remain the most democratic tribe in Kenya with representation across the political divide.

Politicians should be celibate:

I strongly believe a good politician should be celibate. If you want to work in the service of people, do not get married. A married person must compromise for the sake of his family and must call white yellow to save his job because his family relies on it. I have always called a spade a spade; not a big spoon and paid for it. When my mother, Lucia Andeché heard a rumour that I had died in detention, she travelled to Nairobi to find out if it was true. At Kamiti, she was told I was alive and fine but when she demanded to see me, she was rebuffed and so she returned to Butere broken hearted believing I was dead. She lost her appetite and died shortly afterwards of hunger. All my wives and children have also suffered a great deal only because they are a Shikuku. To me politics is a calling and that's why I am still

politicking. If I had joined politics to make money or become powerful, I would have quit a long time ago. I shall die a Politician, the people's Watchman.

People's watchman:

I was called people's watchman because throughout my career I have always fought the corner of poor people. I am not saying that am poor. A doctor does not have to have gonorrhoea to treat a patient with the disease. It is just that my faith and conscience cannot be compromised. That is why to this day, I can speak my mind without fear or favour. And because I have always been consistent and honest, I gained the trust of common mwananchi during my time in parliament. A lot of the documents I tabled in the House were passed to me by wananchi.

Ugali at State House:

I want to set the record straight with regards to the ugali issue. Moi and I come a long way. We both belonged to KADU and despite political differences we're still friends and talk often. When I was accused of betraying the cause of Ford by allegedly being bribed ugali, I want to state the following. True Moi invited me to his residence at Kabarnet Gardens in Nairobi. Accompanying me was Japheth Shamalla, the lawyer and former MP for Shinyalu. Over a meal of ugali and chicken, I took the opportunity to tell Moi to stop his police from killing innocent people. I told him Kanu will not win the 1992 elections. I told him, he won't get a single MP from either Central or Nyanza provinces and in Western, he'll be lucky to get 35%. All this came to pass. I campaigned for Kenneth Matiba and he got 62% of the total votes in Western province which I had predicted. Since when does eating with a friend become a bribe? How can I be bribed and still fight against my alleged corrupter and win?

Paper citizens:

The question of Asians has been at the centre of Kenya's political and economic dispensation since independence. The Asians have never been my friends. When I want a shirt, I go to an Asian shop buy one and go. I don't like them because they taught Moi corruption and I don't like that. At independence, they had a choice of citizenship. Majority chose Kenyan citizenship yet they continued to siphon money out of Kenya. Citizens must demonstrate patriotism but if you live in Kenya yet your heart is elsewhere, then you are a "paper citizen" that is to say a citizen in paper only.

I'll give you two examples. There was an Asian MP in Kisumu who was also an assistant minister for tourism in Kenyatta's government. While abroad on official duties, he wrote to Kenyatta resigning. He never returned to Kenya. Then there was Joginder Singh, the rally driver dubbed, "Simba wa Kenya". He fled Kenya under circumstances known only to him after selling his prestigious office block in Nairobi to the Libyans and money paid overseas. Someone like Kamlesh Pattni is very *clever*. Look how he exploited greed among our people to bleed the country dry using an elaborate scam known as Goldenberg? Pattni made sure he ensnared all the big wigs in both the ruling Kanu and opposition. When he asked to meet me, I refused. No community can be 100% good or bad but I wish I could meet a good Asian.

Grave digger:

I got stick from Bukusu traditionalists and some Christians for digging my own grave in Kimilili Settlement Plot Number 259 in Bungoma where I live but I tell you preparing your final resting place is not unchristian as some people would have you believe. Jesus of Nazareth was buried in a grave that belonged to Joseph of Arimathea. It was a common practice to prepare your final resting place and that is the tradition that I am following. That is my answer to my Christian critics. As for Bukusu traditionalists, I told them that I am not a Bukusu and therefore not in breach of their traditions.

I have done all this so that I do not become a burden to anybody when I die. In fact at any one time, I keep four bags of maize and four bullocks to feed mourners. In my funeral, I do not want speeches from politicians or church service from priests. I do not want people shedding crocodile tears in my funeral. The only thing I want is eshiremba⁸, a Luhya funeral rite where cattle are driven past the dead person while men sing war songs and engage in mock fight (equivalent of the 21-gun salute).

Regrets:

My biggest regret is fighting colonialism. It pains me to see children dying of hunger and disease and yet we fought colonial rule primarily so that we can provide basic needs of housing, health, education and food for all our people. But since Kenyatta took over, as a country Kenya has become a private club of a few billionaires while millions of poverty-stricken families roam the land in empty search of livelihood. Moi continued this trend through “fuata nyayo” philosophy⁹ and Kibaki for all his talk of zero tolerance has actually become the biggest apologist for looters and thieves. So I am quite disappointed and ashamed that for millions of Kenyans, the struggle for uhuru has not yielded fruits of independence and many recall the days of colonialism with nostalgia.

Foreign travel:

I have travelled widely in my capacity as member and African representative of CPA and Chairman of Kenya Arab Friendship Society, secretary general of Kadu and Ford. I have been to all countries of Africa except Chad and Gabon to all European countries. I have made several trips to the Middle East as the chairman of the Kenya Arab Friendship Society. I have also been to several states in the United States and Canada as well as South America and Asia. The only countries I have not been to are Australia, New Zealand and the south pacific islands. These travels have expanded my horizons and enriched my

⁸ Eshiremba is a Luhya funeral rite where cattle is driven past the coffin of the deceased, especially if he was a prominent person or owned cattle. It is often accompanied by war songs, a mock fight and ‘destruction’ of crops on the farm.

⁹ Fuata Nyayo literally means “follow the footsteps”. When Moi ascended to power upon Kenyatta’s death in 1978, he promised to follow Kenyatta’s footsteps which many interpreted to mean a policy of continued expropriation of national resources by a few individuals.

understanding of different politico-economic systems immensely. I only wish Kenya leaders seek positions to serve the country rather than themselves. There is plenty to learn out there.

Invitation by Angolan Parliament:

Being an expert in commonwealth parliamentary etiquette, the Angolan Parliament invited me to Luanda to give a speech. I educated Angolan MPs on how to make their contribution effective and keep government on its knees. When they started implementing these procedures, Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos wondered what had happened. He was told a certain man by the name of Shikuku from Kenya had been in town to talk to MPs. He demanded that I should be invited to talk to his ministers as well.

Future of Kenya:

If we do not address the question of historical injustices and resource distribution, what you saw happen during the post election violence of 2007-08 will come to pass as a rehearsal to a bloodier proletariat revolution. The symptoms are everywhere. Anyone who cares deeply about our country can see where we are going. We must act now to forestall bloodletting. There seems to be a deliberate attempt by the ruling class to wish away Agenda Four of National Accord¹⁰. However history shows that you cannot oppress all the people all the time. I can see people saying enough is enough and what is their life worth anyway. I mean the world is dotted with examples of people-driven revolutions.

For 20 years we have been fighting to have a new constitution that will do away with imperial powers of the presidency. I am only one of two remaining individuals who attended the first Lancaster House Conference – the other one being Ngala Mwendwa. I was there in the beginning and will push to be there in the end so long as I shall live. That is why issues to do with the constitution touch my heart. That is why I have kept this issue alive through my “Katiba Watch” campaigns when others are wont to maintaining the status quo. In the end it is not what Shikuku thinks that matters. It is what the will of the people desires that will ultimately prevail.

Family:

Children: Shikuku has eight sons and eight daughters. Sons – Michael Majimbo, Sylvano Madanji, Emmanuel, Timothy Oyondi (UK), Abraham Andayi, Jacob Andeche, Stephen Ashiemi and Joseph Martin Shikuku Junior (deceased). Girls – Omusirikwa (married), Serila (deceased), Lucia, Maende (married), Martha Olenyo (married), Julia, Ayuka and Amunga (married).

¹⁰ Agenda Four is part of the National Accord that ushered in a coalition government. It was negotiated under the chairmanship of Kofi Annan, the former United Nations Secretary General. It brought to an end the civil war that erupted shortly after Mwai Kibaki was declared winner in an election that observers said was rigged against the favourite, Raila Odinga.

Wives: Shikuku married four wives. Joska Indeche (deceased), Dolly Achieng from Alego (former Kenya Broadcasting Corporation announcer - deceased), Beverley Ongecha from Ebusakami, Bunyore (sister to William Ngah, the former Fifa referee – deceased) and Frida Nafuna from Mwibale, Bungoma.

Siblings: Silvanos Madanji (deceased), Domtilla Aloyo Oyondi, Wilfrida Alwang'a Oyondi, Ambrose Oluchiri Oyondi, Dr Lwali Oyondi (former MP for Nakuru), Peter Leo Murunga (former head of Hansard) and Victoria Obanda.

Mother: Lucia Andeche daughter of Olukhanya from Abashirotsa clan in Kisa (deceased).

Father: Johanna Oyondi son of Madanji. Madanji married Maende from Ebusiekwe Ebukolo, Bunyore (daughter of Nganyi, the famous rainmaker). Oyondi had one sister, Otenyo and three brothers: Atita, Titus Olendo and Alfred Ombunga.

Clan ancestry: I am from the Aberecheya clan whose earliest known ancestor is Abuti. From Abuti is descendent Ashibambo who was one of the elders seating on Nabongo's council. A famous trait of Aberecheya is that they will never attack you from the back.



Shikuku and Shad Bulimo, the editor of Abeingo Community Network

Interviewer: Shad Bulimo, editor of www.abeingo.org, an online portal of the Luhya community. Interview conducted in Cambridge, England where Shikuku is a fellow of the Wolfson College, University of Cambridge writing his memoirs.