# Ugandan judge sentenced for six years over modern slavery in UK domestic worker case



A prominent Ugandan judge has been sentenced to six years and four months in prison after being found guilty of modern slavery offences linked to the exploitation of a domestic worker in the UK. Lydia Mugambe, who served as a judge for the United Nations Criminal Tribunal and was pursuing a PhD at the University of Oxford, was convicted at Oxford Crown Court for multiple charges, including "requiring a person to perform forced or compulsory labour."

The case came to light when Thames Valley Police received a report on February 10, 2023, concerning the victim being held as a slave at Mugambe's residence in Kidlington, Oxfordshire. Further investigations revealed that Mugambe had fraudulently secured a visa for the victim, who had been led to believe she would work at the Ugandan Embassy in London for the then-Deputy High Commissioner, John Mugerwa. Instead, upon her arrival in the UK, the victim was coerced into working as a domestic maid and nanny without pay.

In a harrowing account, the victim expressed feelings of worthlessness, stating, “My existence to Lydia was not important... It made me feel unhappy, as I couldn’t speak to her as I feared her.” She recounted instances of intimidation, including threats to destroy her passport and bank card, which prevented her from seeking help. “I was fearful and worried. I was asking for God to help me,” she added. The court also granted her lifetime anonymity and awarded her £12,160 in damages.

The prosecution unveiled a troubling connection between Mugambe and Mugerwa, alleging that the latter had facilitated the victim's visa under questionable circumstances, linked to Mugambe's assistance in a court case back in Uganda. A conspiracy charge was prepared against Mugerwa, but he could not be prosecuted due to diplomatic immunity, which the Ugandan Government opted not to waive.

Mugambe's 2023 indictment and subsequent sentencing highlight significant issues related to modern slavery and immigration fraud, raising concerns about the protections in place for vulnerable individuals in the UK. Alongside her prison term, the court imposed a restraining order against her, limiting her interactions with the victim.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/mar/13/un-judge-exploited-and-abused-woman-she-forced-into-slavery-court-rules> - This article reports on Lydia Mugambe's conviction for modern slavery offences, including forcing a young woman to work as a slave and exploiting her lack of understanding of her rights.
2. <https://allafrica.com/stories/202503140057.html> - This source details the charges against Lydia Mugambe, including conspiring to facilitate a breach of UK immigration law and requiring a person to perform forced labour.
3. <https://www.pmldaily.com/news/2025/03/uganda-mulls-appeal-for-judge-convicted-in-uk-human-trafficking-case.html> - This article discusses the Ugandan government's consideration of an appeal against Judge Lydia Mugambe's conviction in the UK for human trafficking.
4. <https://www.newvision.co.ug/articledetails/206829> - This report covers the court's findings that Judge Mugambe forced the victim to work as her maid and provide childcare without pay, leading to her conviction under the UK's Modern Slavery Act.
5. <https://saharareporters.com/2025/03/14/un-judge-convicted-forcing-young-woman-slavery-uk-awaits-sentencing> - This article provides details on Lydia Mugambe's conviction for breaching UK immigration law, facilitating travel for exploitation, forced labour, and conspiracy to intimidate a witness.
6. <https://www.banburyguardian.co.uk/news/crime/video-shows-the-moment-police-arrest-shocked-ugandan-high-court-judge-for-modern-slavery-offences-in-oxfordshire-5033067> - This source includes a video showing the moment Thames Valley Police arrested Judge Lydia Mugambe in Oxfordshire for modern slavery offences.
7. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2050783/ugandan-judge-kept-slave-uk-lydia-mugambe> - Please view link - unable to able to access data