



International Boundary Study

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Tanzania – Uganda Boundary

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TANZANIA - UGANDA BOUNDARY

I. BOUNDARY BRIEF

The Tanzania - Uganda boundary has a length of about 260 miles. Eastward from the Rwanda tripoint at the junction of the thalweg of the Kakitumba (Kagitumba) and the midstream of the Kagera, it follows the thalweg of the Kagera for 28 miles and then the parallel of one degree south latitude for 232 miles. The part of the boundary formed by the parallel consists of a land sector 69 miles in length demarcated by pillars between the Kagera and Lake Victoria and a lake sector to the Kenya tripoint. The tripoint in Lake Victoria is located at approximately 33° 56' E. longitude.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1886 the British and German spheres of influence in East Africa were located to the north and south, respectively, of a line which began at the Indian Ocean near Vanga, diverted to include Mt. Kilimanjaro in German territory, and extended to the intersection of the parallel of 1° south with the eastern shore of Lake Victoria, at a point immediately north of the present port of Shirati. An Anglo - German treaty in 1890 reiterated the 1886 line between the Indian Ocean and the eastern shore of Lake Victoria and delimited spheres of influence between the two states inland from the eastern shore to the Congo Free State (presently Democratic Republic of the Congo) as follows:

...; thence [from the parallel of one degree south latitude with the eastern shore of Lake Victoria], crossing the lake on that parallel, it follows the parallel to the frontier of the Congo Free State, where it terminates.

Prior to the treaty of 1890, the United Kingdom had claimed an area south of Lake Victoria extending to Lake Tanganyika, and Germany had claimed a boundary that would have extended northwestward from the eastern shore of Lake Victoria bisecting the Kingdom of Buganda, presently a part of Uganda. The latter claim would have placed western Buganda and an access route to the Nile valley within the German sphere.

An Anglo - German Agreement signed at Brussels on May 14, 1910, modified part of the boundary between British and German territories initially established as the parallel of one degree south latitude by the treaty of 1890. Modified were the sectors between the Congo tripoint and the junction of the Kakitumba and Kagera, comprising the present Rwanda - Uganda boundary¹, and between the junction and the second crossing of the parallel of one degree south latitude by the Kagera, comprising the western segment of the present Tanzania - Uganda boundary.

¹ Details of the final delimitation and demarcation of the Rwanda - Uganda boundary between the Congo tripoint of Sabinio and the southwestern branch (Lubirizi) of the Tshinzinga (Muvogero) are given in an Anglo-German protocol signed at Kamwezi on October 30, 1911.

Between 1885 and World War I, Tanganyika was a part of German East Africa along with Ruanda - Urundi. Following World War I Tanganyika became a British mandate and Ruanda - Urundi a Belgian mandate, and after World War II both were made trust territories. Tanganyika was granted independence on December 9, 1961. The United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar was constituted by a merger on April 27, 1964, and the name of the state was changed to the United Republic of Tanzania on October 29, 1964.

Although a somewhat vaguely defined area, Uganda was declared to be within the British sphere of influence by the Anglo - German Agreement of July 1, 1890. In 1902 an Order in Council proclaimed Uganda a protectorate, the limits of which have been changed a number of times. The United Kingdom terminated the protectorate in 1962 and Uganda became an independent state.

III. POLITICO-GEOGRAPHIC SETTING

The Tanzania - Uganda boundary traverses the Central Plateau of East Africa including Lake Victoria. In effect the plateau is a large basin between the eastern and western branches of the Great Rift valley and adjacent uplands. Eastward from the Rwanda tripoint the land slopes gradually to Lake Victoria and is characterized by numerous low hills. The Kagera is navigable by small vessels for only a short distance in its lower course. The river is the principal tributary of Lake Victoria, but the chief source of water supply for the lake is rainfall.

The boundary extends across Lake Victoria for 163 miles. With an area of 26,828 square miles, the lake is second in size only to Lake Superior among the fresh-water bodies of the world. It is about 3,717 feet above sea level and the greatest known depth is 270 feet. Lake Victoria is about 250 miles from north to south and 200 miles from east to west. Evaporation accounts for as much as 80% of the total water supply received by the lake from precipitation and streams. The lake is drained northward from an outlet near Jinja, Uganda by the Victoria Nile. The level of the lake is maintained partly by the Owens Falls Dam on the river, which raises the level of the lake about three to four feet. Lake steamers serve Jinja, Entebbe, and Port Bell in Uganda; Bukoba, Mwanza, and Musoma in Tanzania; and Kisumu in Kenya.

The boundary area has a tropical savanna type of climate characterized by hot summers and warm winters. Annual precipitation increases eastward along the boundary from 20 - 30 inches to an estimated 80 - 90 inches near the center of Lake Victoria, and then decreases gradually to the Kenya tripoint. The typical vegetation west of Lake Victoria consists of grasslands.

The international boundary is not an exact line of separation between the peoples of Tanzania and Uganda. Use of the parallel of 1° south as part of the boundary resulted in

placing 15 square miles of Haya land (on the southern side of the Kagera, at the outlet of the river and the extremity of Rubabu point in Lake Victoria) to the north of the parallel in Uganda. Whereas, an area traditionally part of Ankole and Buganda, which lies south of the parallel, is included in Tanzania. Most of the people along the boundary are engaged in rudimentary sedentary farming. There are some areas of relatively intensive agriculture such as practiced adjacent to Lake Victoria. Population densities are moderately high, the highest being near the lake. A number of roads cross the boundary between the two states.

IV. BOUNDARY ALIGNMENT

The Anglo - German agreement of 1910 and an Anglo - Belgian protocol of 1924 locate the Rwanda² tripoint at the junction of the thalweg of the Kakitumba and the midstream of the Kagera.

The Anglo - German agreement of 1910 states:

From the confluence of the Rivers Chizinga (Kissinga) [Muvogero or Tshinzinga] and Kachwamba-Kikitumba [Kakitumba] the boundary follows the thalweg of the River Kachwamba-Kakitumba to the confluence of the Rivers Kachwamba-Kakitumba and Kagera.

Paragraph 50 of the Anglo - Belgian protocol of 1924 states:

50. From this point [the junction of the thalweg of the Mwibu and the midstream of the Kagera] down the Kagera River to the Uganda Frontier the two Governments agree that the midstream of this latter river shall be accepted as the boundary between the Tanganyika Territory and Ruanda.

The Anglo - German agreement of 1910 also determined the alignment of the boundary from the Rwanda tripoint to Lake Victoria as follows:

From the confluence of the Rivers Kachwamba-Kakitumba [Kakitumba] and Kagera the boundary follows the thalweg of the River Kagera as far as the second crossing of the parallel of 1° south by the River Kagera between boundary pillars numbered 26 and 27.

The boundary then follows the line of boundary pillars already erected along the 1° south as far as the intersection of this line with the western shore of Lake Victoria.

The Kenya³ tripoint is located in Lake Victoria on the parallel of one degree south

² Both Rwanda, formerly Ruanda, and Burundi, formerly Urundi, became independent on July 1, 1962.

³ The United Kingdom obtained control of the Kenya area in 1888 through the British East Africa Company. In 1895 it was transferred to the Crown, becoming the East Africa Protectorate. From 1920 to

latitude and approximately 33° 56' E. longitude. A schedule annexed to a British Order in Council⁴ dated February 1, 1926, affords the following information on the Kenya - Uganda boundary at the tripoint:

Commencing in the waters of Lake Victoria on a parallel 1° south latitude, at a point due south of the westernmost point of Pyramid Island; thence the boundary follows a straight line due north to that point; ...

V. PRESENT SITUATION

There are no known disputes relative to the alignment of the Tanzania - Uganda boundary.

independence on December 12, 1963, Kenya had the two fold status of Colony and Protectorate. The protectorate was limited to a ten mile strip along the coast south of the north branch of the Tana river.

⁴ The present part of Kenya adjacent to Lake Victoria was transferred actually in 1902 to the East Africa Protectorate (Kenya) in accordance with a Uganda Order in Council.

APPENDIX

DOCUMENTS

1. Agreement between the British and German Governments, respecting Africa and Heligoland, Berlin, July 1, 1890. Edward Hertslet, The Map of Africa by Treaty, 3v., 3rd ed. (London: Harrison and Sons, 1909) Vol. 3, pp. 889 - 906.
2. Agreement between Great Britain and Germany Settling the Boundary between Uganda and German East Africa, Brussels, May 14, 1910. British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 107, Part I, 1914, pp. 394 - 397.
3. British Order in Council, for regulating Her Majesty's Jurisdiction in the East Africa Protectorate. Windsor, July 7, 1897. Ibid., Vol. 89, 1896 - 97, pp. 357 - 380.
4. British Order in Council, establishing Jurisdiction in the Uganda Protectorate. London, August 11, 1902. Ibid., Vol. 95, 1901 - 02, pp. 636 - 696.
5. British Order in Council defining the Territories comprised in the Colony and Protectorate of Kenya. London, June 27, 1921. Ibid., Vol. 114, 1921, pp. 64 - 66.
6. Order in Council annexing to His Majesty's Dominions and including in Kenya Colony certain Territories in Uganda Protectorate. London, February 1, 1926. Ibid., Vol. 123, Part I, 1926, pp. 123 - 125.
7. Protocol between the United Kingdom and Belgium respecting the Boundary between Tanganyika Territory and the Belgian Mandated Territory of Ruanda - Urundi. Kigoma, August 5, 1924. Ibid., Vol. 123, Part I, 1926, pp. 462 - 463.
8. Protocol respecting the Boundary between Tanganyika Territory and the Belgian Mandated Territory of Ruanda - Urundi, Kigoma, August 5, 1924; and Notes Exchanged between the British and Belgian Governments, Brussels, May 17, 1926. United Kingdom Treaty Series No. 6 (1927), Command 2812 (three boundary maps included).
9. Atlas of Uganda, Department of Lands and Surveys, Uganda, First Edition, 1962.

MAPS

1. Uganda: scale 1:50,000; published 1958 - 64 by Lands and Surveys Department, Uganda; series Y 732; sheets 94/11, 86/111, 96/IV, 87/3, 87/4, and 88/111.
2. East Africa: scale 1:250,000; published 1959 - 64 by Lands and Surveys Department, Uganda; series Y 503; sheets SA-36-5, SA-36-1, SA-36-2, and SA-36-3.

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