

The High Court in Kabale officially handed over Kaharo High School to the Diocese of Kigezi, following a ruling delivered on May 13, 2025.

On Tuesday, May 28, 2025, the High Court in Kabale officially handed over Kaharo High School to the Diocese of Kigezi, marking the conclusion of a legal battle over the school's ownership.

The handover was in favor of the Diocese of Kigezi, in partnership with the Registered Trustees of the Province of the Church of Uganda and concerned Christians from Kaharo Church of Uganda in Kizinga Archdeaconry. This followed a civil suit filed by the Diocese against Ronald Hector Serikare, the school's former head teacher and founder of Harambee Fellowship Limited, along with the Harambee Educational Fund and the school's Board of Governors. The suit arose from a longstanding ownership dispute which mediation efforts failed to resolve.



The conflict, which began in 2023, escalated in February 2024 when Kabale District authorities, led by RDC Godfrey Nyakahuma, ordered the closure of the school due to mounting tensions. Serikare had

controversially claimed sole ownership of the school's property, including its 9.8870-hectare land in Hamuremere Village (Block 199, Plot 17), located about 14 kilometers from Kabale town along the Kabale–Mbarara highway. Local Christians strongly contested these claims, and rising tensions included reports of threats of violence.

The school, formerly known as Hamuremere High School, was founded in 1997 by the late Hector Sutherland, a Scottish national who aimed to provide education for underprivileged and orphaned children through his Harambee Educational Fund (HEF). Before returning to Scotland in 2020, Sutherland transferred the school's management to Kaharo Archdeaconry

under the Diocese and appointed Serikare as Chairman of the Board of Governors. Sutherland passed away in 2021.

In Civil Suit No. 035 of 2023, the Diocese—represented by James Akampumuza Rutanga (Akampumuza & Co. Advocates) and Henry Rwaganika (Rwaganika & Baku Co. Advocates)—requested the court to nullify Serikare’s ownership claims, resume school operations under the Church, and permanently ban Serikare from accessing the premises.

During court proceedings that started in January 2025, the Diocese presented 33 witnesses, while Serikare, represented by Devis Tayebwa (M/S Lautons Advocates), presented five. After reviewing the evidence, The Kabale High Court dismissed all of Serikare’s claims due to insufficient proof and ruled that the school should revert to its former name, Kaharo High School.

The court commended the stakeholders for their patience and stressed that due legal procedures had been followed. He confirmed that both parties had initially agreed to a consent judgment, which guided the final ruling. He also emphasized reconciliation, urging forgiveness and unity, especially since all parties had signed the agreement.

Following the ruling, both parties’ lawyers visited the Lands Office in Kabale, which confirmed that the land legally belongs to the Church, and no dispute existed regarding land ownership.

The court warned that any attempts to incite violence or disrupt the school's operations would result in arrest, as security agencies have been fully briefed to ensure peace and enforcement of the court’s decision.