

The fallen Uganda People Defence Force (UPDF) soldiers who were gunned down by Al-Shabaab militants in Somalia a week ago will be flown home this week.

54 Ugandan peacekeepers died in an attack by al-Shabab on a base housing African Union peacekeepers in Somalia, Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni said during a meeting with members of his governing National Resistance Movement party on Sunday, June 4, 2023.

Museveni's statement comes a week after al-Shabab fighters stormed the base in Bulamarer, 130 kilometers (80 miles) southwest of the Somali capital, Mogadishu.

"We discovered the lifeless bodies of 54 fallen soldiers, including a commander," Museveni said in a Twitter post late Saturday.

President Museveni offered his condolences to the families of the soldiers killed, implicitly conceding that there had been casualties, and added that "all the facts" would be "made public".

The President also said that a mistake was made by two commanders who panicked by the attack by "800 terrorists" and ordered the soldiers to retreat, allowing the fighters to overrun the base.

These officers "did not react as expected and panicked, which disorganized them, and the Shebab took advantage of this to invade the base and destroy some of the equipment", said President Museveni, adding that the two men would be court-martialed for their actions.

Despite this, "our soldiers showed remarkable resilience and reorganized themselves, which enabled them to retake the base," he said.

Al-Shabab claimed responsibility for the attack and also claimed to have carried out suicide bomb attacks that killed 137 soldiers.