

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has confirmed his intention to run in next year's presidential election, a move that could extend his nearly 40-year rule to almost half a century.

In a post on the social media platform X late Saturday, Museveni announced that he had "expressed [his] interest in running for... the position of presidential flag bearer" for the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party.

The 80-year-old has been ruler of Uganda since 1986 when he seized power after leading a five-year guerrilla war.

The ruling party has amended the constitution twice in the past to allow Museveni to extend his time in power. Rights activists have accused him of using security forces and patronage networks to maintain his grip on the country—allegations he firmly denies.

Museveni said he is seeking reelection to grow the country's GDP to a "\$500 billion economy in the next five years." Uganda's GDP currently stands at about \$66 billion, according to the finance ministry.

The country is scheduled to hold its presidential election in January 2026, during which voters will also elect members of parliament. Museveni's closest challenger is expected to be pop star-turned-politician Bobi Wine, who came second in the 2021 presidential election and has already confirmed his intention to run.

Bobi Wine, whose real name is Robert Kyagulanyi, rejected the outcome of the 2021 vote, alleging that his victory was stolen through ballot stuffing, security force intimidation, and other irregularities.

There's talk of a united front. NUP, ANT, and PFF are exploring a coalition to challenge the NRM in 2026, and Bobi Wine has affirmed he is "ready for coalition of the willing"

The opposition field appears broad—spanning seasoned veterans, fresh faces, religious leaders, and activists—making this one of Uganda's most competitive elections yet.