



JOINT JLOS GOU-DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS' ANNUAL REVIEW,

04TH OCTOBER 2018

LAW DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Opening Remarks of the

Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs,

Maj. Gen (RTD) Kahinda Otafire

**The 23rd Joint Government of Uganda- Development partners' Annual
Review of the Justice Law and Order Sector, 2018.**

Welcome Remarks

The Honourable Chief Justice of Uganda

The Honourable Deputy Chief Justice of Uganda

Honourable Ministers

The Honourable Principal Judge

My Lords, Justices and Judges of the Courts of Judicature

Your Excellency, the Head of delegation of the European Union

Chairperson of the JLOS Development Partners Group

Your Excellences, Heads of Diplomatic Missions to Uganda

Honourable Members of Parliament Present,

Heads of JLOS and other Government Institutions,

Members of the JLOS Steering and Technical Committees

Members of the JLOS Coordination Committees

Distinguished invited guests in your respective capacities

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour to welcome you all, in your various capacities to the 23rd Joint Government of Uganda - Development Partners' Annual Review of the Justice Law and Order Sector, 2018.

On behalf of the Justice Law and Order Sector, and on behalf of the JLOS Leadership Committee, I would like to thank each and every one of you for responding so graciously to our invitation to be part of the Annual Review for the Financial Year 2017/2018. We are delighted to receive you at this apex event on the JLOS calendar.

Once again we convene to celebrate our achievements, analyse the challenges we are faced with, and reflect on the strategic direction for further development of justice and the rule of law that the Government of Uganda, with support from its Development Partners, has mapped out for the people of Uganda.

This annual review is the first under the Fourth Sector Development Plan (SDP IV), and I am glad to inform you that we have started on a good footing, sustaining positive progress under the three JLOS thematic areas of focus that include;

1. Enhancing infrastructure and access to JLOS services.
2. Promoting the observance of human rights and fight corruption.
3. Strengthening the commercial justice and the environment for competitiveness.

This strategic focus underpins the pivotal role of the JLOS Sector in creating and ensuring an enabling environment for not only good governance and the rule of law, but more importantly the economic growth and development of Uganda.

The JLOS reforms and developments are geared toward guaranteeing a safe and secure environment for business and investment, ensuring timely resolutions of commercial disputes, streamlining business establishments and management, enabling fast movement of labour across borders, and promoting a stable modern regime of commercial laws. Indeed this is the foundation on which Uganda's economic development is anchored, and therefore our success is a boost to economic growth and development as we aspire for a middle income status.

As you will learn from the presentation of the 2017/2018 JLOS Annual Performance Report that will be presented today, we as a Sector remain committed to deliver on these three strategic undertakings as enshrined under the Fourth Sector Development Plan, in line with the Second National Development Plan (NDP II), the Uganda Vision 2040, and the National Resistance Movement Manifesto.

To demonstrate this commitment, the macro performance of the JLOS Sector in the preceding year has been impressive and we owe this to the support from the Government of Uganda, the JLOS Development Partners, Civil Society Organisations, and the people of Uganda.

Specifically, the Sector registered positive progress on all its four macro performance indicators that include;

1. Increase in public satisfaction with JLOS services from 72% in 2016/17 to 76% in 2017/18.
2. Increase in Public trust in the Justice system from 49% in 2016/17 to 59% in 2017/18

3. Increase in the Index of Judicial Independence from 3.41 in 2016 to 3.42 in 2017, on a scale of 1 to 5.
4. Maintenance by the Uganda Human Rights Commission of its “A” status accreditation that is granted to effective and independent national human rights institutions.

I must also note that at Cabinet level, we have made strides in considering the key JLOS serving policies and legislations such as the Transitional Justice Policy among others, and these shall be finalised at an appropriate time.

The details of the JLOS performance will be presented to us in the course of today’s deliberations.

Therefore, I would like to thank the JLOS heads of institutions, departmental heads, the JLOS Secretariat, and indeed all JLOS staff for the visible and demonstrable achievements that we have realised over the years, and particularly in the previous financial year. Collectively we have stayed true to the promise and responsibility of the National Resistance Movement, as reflected in Vision 2040 and the NDP II, to ensure justice for all without any discrimination while at the same time foster the development of our country. We must always stay alive to the fact that our efforts in ensuring justice for all have a direct bearing on not only the good governance and human rights consensus, but more importantly to the economic development and prosperity of all people of Uganda.

While we celebrate our collective achievements, we must not forget the challenges that require our sustained partnership and collective effort to overcome. Central among these include;

1. Inadequate infrastructure development to ensure appropriate premises from which to serve the public. Some of the critical areas of focus include the high rent bill paid to commercial landlords and the limited operational spaces such as the low holding capacity of prisons resulting in untenable congestion.
2. Incomplete national coverage of JLOS services. Some people in Uganda still travel long distances to access JLOS services, many of whom include poor and vulnerable sections of the population.
3. Understaffing of many key JLOS institutions. Currently, only the Judicial Service Commission has a fully staffed structure. This challenge is largely a result of financial limitations and has a direct negative impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of our service delivery.

These challenges and many others notwithstanding, implementation of the JLOS Sector Development Plan is on course with over 75% of the set targets on track.

Once again, I welcome you to this year's annual review. I must note that while in the past we have converged in hotels and other commercial premises around Kampala, I am delighted to welcome you to the Law Development Centre and indeed we do not have pay an bills for the venue. This cost saving approach is a product of our collaboration, and a demonstration of the Sector's commitment towards self-sufficiency. Such

savings should be channelled to expand access to JLOS services for especially the poor and vulnerable people in the different corners of the country.

I would like to thank the Government of Uganda, and particularly His Excellence the President of the Republic of Uganda for ensuring that JLOS receives funding to sustain this course of development. These achievements are a celebration of the Government's commitment to justice and the rule of law, and many of which have come to bear with the generous support of the various JLOS Development Partners, and other non-state actors. As a Sector, we remain committed to *Empowering the people of Uganda – Building public trust in our institutions – Upholding human rights and the rule of law.*

Finally, with these few remarks, I once again welcome you to the 23rd Joint Government of Uganda- Development partners' Annual Review of the Justice Law and Order Sector, 2018.

Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs

Maj. Gen (RTD) Kahinda Otafire