





4th February 2020

**MINISTRY OF LANDS, HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

**PRESS BRIEFING ON**

**REFORMS TO IMPROVE URBAN CENTRES IN UGANDA**

Uganda is urbanising at a fast rate of 5.2% per annum with several growth centres coming up every day.

This urbanisation is often unplanned resulting into cluttered growth centres.

This is mainly due to the following reasons:

1. Absence or inadequacy of statutory Physical Plans as required and envisaged by the Physical Planning Act (2020).
2. Limited or no capacity to enforce the Physical Planning Law
3. Lack of appropriate staff in the local authorities due to financial limitations.
4. Failure by Local Governments to consider physical planning as a priority
5. Absence of capacity to process physical planning applications
6. Lack of up to date planning information for example topographic maps cadastral maps etc.
7. The tying of permit processing to land registration. While about 90% of the developments take place on unregistered land.
8. The complexity of land ownership, whereby those with rights of occupancy and sub tenants increase the time and money needed to implement planned infrastructure.
9. Resistance from land owners and land users who often are unaware of the physical plan at the preparation stage.
10. Lack of delineation of proposed roads, hence illegal construction in the road reserves.
11. Inadequate coordination between institutions and offices involved in physical planning for example, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Lands Housing and Urban Development, the Physical Planning Board, the District/Municipalities, the Local Governments, etc. hence the need for coordination and harmonisation.
12. Failure by local political leaders to appreciate the need for Physical Planning and therefore not supporting it which results in absence of respect for the plans.
13. Few of the members of the public understand the physical plan and so do not appreciate the benefit therefrom but rather see them as imposing restrictions to use their land, thereby necessitating sensitization. Political interference, where politicians and some government officials ignore the approved plans and re-classify land use irregularly.
14. The District Land Boards often allocate land without due regard to the existing Physical Development Plans, focussing more on land ownership at the expense of land use.

The purpose of the amendments is to address those challenges.

The amendments seek to strengthen the current National Physical Planning Board by granting it Executive Powers.

The amendments also seek to join the function of Physical Planning and the related function of Urban Development together to form a body corporate to be known as the “Physical Planning Board”.

Unlike the former National Physical Planning Board which was merely a unit in the Ministry serviced by the Director of Physical Planning, the proposed Commission will have an Executive Director, who will be its Accounting Officer.

This Board will pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution to oversee Urban Development.

It will also provide supervision, enforcement, etc.

In fulfilling this Constitutional directive, the Board now has power to do the following.

1. Recruit Staff
2. Undertake dissemination, supervision, guidance and renewal of the planning process and urban areas of Uganda.
3. Make National Physical Plans for orderly development in Uganda, and coordinate plans made by Local Governments.

The Board will be charged with setting up professional standards for Physical Planners, facilitate planning with expertise and personnel as well as set enforce and supervise national Physical Planning and building standards.

The Board will ensure enforcement of the plans either through Local Governments or directly.

In enforcing compliance in Physical Planning, that the Board now has powers to direct or cause demolition of any structures illegally constructed in a road

reserve or a planned area without compensation and at the cost of the developer. The Board, working with the Local Government is to ensure the following;

1. That each building structure has an architectural design consistent with set plans as approved by the Physical Planning Board.
2. That the Local authorities ensure that housing developments are painted, paved, greened, have litter bins, road and named plot numbers etc.
3. Impose a fine of Shs. 2,000,000/= (Two Million Shillings) or imprisonment or both if not complied with.
4. Obligate Chief Administrative Officers and Town Clerks or Sub-county and Parish Chiefs to ensure the area under their jurisdiction are painted, greened, plated, etc.
5. The amendment also proposes to make it easy to seek court redress where necessary.

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**MINISTER OF STATE FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

February 4, 2020