

**REMARKS DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE HIV AND AIDS LEGAL
ENVIRONMENT ASSESSMENT REPORT AT SERENA HOTEL 27TH MAY
2022**

- ❖ Her Excellency United State Ambassadors
- ❖ Hon. Minister of Health
- ❖ Hon Members of Parliament
- ❖ Board Chairman Uganda AIDS Commission
- ❖ Chairperson of Uganda Human Rights Commission
- ❖ Director General of Uganda AIDS Commission and your team
- ❖ President of Uganda Law Society
- ❖ Development Partners
- ❖ Heads of Agencies and Representatives from Government Ministries, Department and Agencies
- ❖ Civil Society Present

1. It is my privilege and honour to come and preside over this event. I was indeed happy when I received the brief about the work that has been going on and ultimately this report being launched today
2. I take this chance to congratulate the United States Government for the Partnership and support to Uganda part of which is reflected in what we are witnessing today. This report is evidence of close collaboration that has resulted in deep analysis of different laws, policies and guidelines that may hinder adequate access and utilization of prevention, care and treatment of HIV services in Uganda.
3. Historically, Uganda has progressive laws, policies and regulations that has enabled the socio-economic

transformation of the country. Further Uganda is signatory to several International treaties that have been domesticated. However, as this report shows, there are areas that need improvement.

4. Progressive Laws and policies serve as good public health tools that make vital contributions to major public health achievements of the 20th century. Examples include school immunization laws that helped reduce the rates of infectious disease and tobacco control laws that helped reduce the rates of chronic disease all over the world.
5. Furthermore, in relationship to HIV management, Uganda has put numerous laws, policies and regulations to manage the HIV and AIDS Pandemic. The Constitution of Uganda, HIV Prevention and Control Act 2014, the Penal Code, etc.
6. The laws, policies and guidelines should serve as a safe-guard and protect the rights and responsibilities of each and every citizen in the country. This report articulates the progress made and highlights some of the shortcomings in these laws and policies. Recommendations have been made on how to address the gaps. We shall support efforts address documented gaps that hinder access to quality services.
7. I have followed the progress made over the last 40 years in the management of HIV and AIDS in Uganda especially the leadership provided by H.E the President since the 1980s. The country managed to bring down the HIV epidemic from an average of 18% to 5.5% today. I thank all stakeholders who have contributed to these tremendous achievements.

8. H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni has provided exemplary leadership in the fight against HIV and AIDS. Those of us who know how the HIV situation in the country was in the late 1980's and early 1990s can attest to this. However new challenges have emerged that we need to address.
9. Dear participants, the last Performance Report under the Fourth Sector Development Plan (SDPIV) for the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLSO) 2020/21 highlights efforts the Sector made towards empowering the people, building trust and upholding rights which was the theme of the Plan. As per the promise, there is growing public trust, people centred service delivery and commitment to a human rights based approach within the sector. I invite you all to read and internalize this report.
10. In the 3rd National Development plan 2020/21-2024/25, HIV and AIDS is reflected as a crosscutting issue in all different programmes and will be implemented by all sectors. In line with these, the responsibilities with all the stakeholders and implementers is to ensure that services reach all the people irrespective of their status, either man or woman, children or adult and inclusive of people living with HIV and AIDS in the country,
11. HIV and AIDS continue to present a serious development threat to our country and therefore will partly be addressed using the multi-sectorial approach and inclusiveness of all stakeholders, empowering and conducting general awareness within the community to understand and utilize their rights.

12. Our national HIV and AIDS response moved from being a medically and health sector driven response to a multi-sectoral response in 1992, after recognising that the HIV epidemic was not a mere health problem but a crosscutting developmental challenge with implications for every sector of our society.
13. I also believe without a doubt that ending AIDS as a public Health threat by 2030 is achievable, but that is only if every countryman and woman wakes, joins hands with our leaders, makes their contribution within their means as individuals, families, communities as well as institutions towards reducing new HIV infections, ending AIDS related deaths as well as HIV/AIDS related stigma and discrimination.
14. Ending the AIDS epidemic brings many benefits for the whole of society and mankind, but the most immediate removing the associated morbidity and mortality and the resultant developmental growth
15. Policy makers weigh many factors as they consider adopting and promoting new laws. A central question—especially in this time of emphasis on evidence-based practice and policy—is whether there is sound evidence that a given law is effective or counterproductive.
16. I wish to congratulate the Uganda AIDS Commission Leadership and our development partners for conducting this assessment that shades light on the impact of our laws and policies on the HIV response which should provide policy makers with the evidence they need to legislate and develop

policies and laws that ensure the government does no default on its commitment to end the AIDS epidemic.

17. I wish to reiterate the NRM Government commitment to ending all forms of suffering of our citizens, including a commitment to end AIDS as a public Health threat by 2030.
18. The report I launch today should be availed to all sectors, but especially the Judiciary, Law and Order Sector as well as the enforcement agencies.
19. I recommend this report to all stakeholders, especially those identified as first responders to the various recommend actions to study and implement the recommendations to improve the gaps identified for us to meet the global targets under the SDG 3 and Vision 2040.
20. I take this opportunity to formally launch this report and call upon all Ugandans to embrace agreed recommendations for attainment of a better Uganda

For God and My country

Hon Muruli Mukasa

Ag. Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs