



PRESS STATEMENT WITH A CALL TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS TO STEP UP EFFORTS IN CURBING CORRUPTION FOR IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY.

8th December, 2021

Media Centre, Kampala.

As Uganda joins the rest of the world to commemorate the International Anti-Corruption Day, which is marked on 9th December, 2021, **Uganda Local Governments Association**, commends the Government of Uganda under the Leadership its Patron, HE the President of Uganda, Yoweri Tibuhabura Kaaguta Museveni, for acknowledging corruption as a major hindrance to socio-economic transformation and the provision of quality service delivery to the people of Uganda.

We as Local Governments of Uganda, applaud the tremendous efforts exhibited by both the Government and the Local Governments in curbing corruption through the Legal Anti-Corruption Framework including the Anti-Corruption Act 2019, the Penal Code Act, the Inspectorate of Government Act 2002, the Public Finance Management Act, 2002, the Leadership Act and

several anti-corruption institutions including the Inspectorate of Government being the lead anti-corruption agency, the Directorate of Ethics and Integrity, the Auditor General, the District Integrity Promotion Forums at Local Government level, as well as the efforts of the Civil Society and other actors in the fight against corruption.

However, despite the opportunities presented by the aforementioned Government Legal Anti-Corruption framework, and the various strides taken to curb corruption by respective actors at all levels, we realize that the drastic increase in magnitude of Corruption in Uganda over the years, as well as the persistent poor performance of the country's anti-corruption drive, which are characterized by bribery, embezzlement, making financial loss, false accounting among others as informed by studies from the Afro Barometer, the World Governance Index, Transparency International as well as Uganda's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) and ranking for 2019 where Uganda scored **28** out of 100 and in 2020, **27** out of 100. Similarly, Uganda was ranked **137** out of the **180** Countries and in 2020, it was ranked **142 out of 180** respectively.

As Local Governments, who are at the forefront of service delivery to the public, we also continue to notice the high cost of corruption across a number of Sectors, where billions of shillings are lost due to corruptive tendencies in Uganda. Examples of this have been amplified by the Inspectorate of Government (IG) Survey on the Cost

of Corruption 2020/21, where for instance under the Taxation Sector, there was an estimated loss of **131.2 billion shillings** to corruption. In addition, due to absenteeism in Public sector (Health and Education), the estimated loss to corruption was **2,054.1 Billion shillings**, and under Health Care and Education provision, it was **451.1 Billion**. In the Procurement and Budgeting areas, **590.4 Billion shillings** was the reported estimated loss to corruption among others. This kind of performance negatively impacts on the citizens who are as a result denied of quality services which is their basic right.

We as the Leaders of the Association, are also alive to the ongoing finding of the current Economic Monitoring exercise spearheaded by the Minister in charge of Economic Monitoring, Hon Peter Ogwang, which we strongly condemn and put to task our counterparts and colleagues at Local government to stand up and make account of this disarming poor performance attributed to abuse of office and mismanagement of public funds. We there remind ourselves and recall the provisions of the ULGA Charter of Accountability and Ethical Code of Conduct demands that we remain of outstanding Leadership and Integrity in the execution of our respective mandates and roles as Local Government Officials, both Political and Technical levels, and stand to serve in line with the commitments we make to our respective electorates.

Uganda Local Governments Association therefore now joins the rest of the World to Commemorate the International Anti-Corruption Day

And add our voice to that of our National Level Government in calling for concerted effort from the Local Government Leaders and the general public in the fight against this deplorable act and behaviour, which affects the efficient and effective delivery quality of services to the Wananchi. This call comes with the following key recommendations that will remain convinced shall contribute greatly to stepping up the fight against corruption in both Local Governments and the respective Ministries, Departments and Agencies mandated to deliver services to the people of Uganda.

KEY ULGA RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION FOR IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY:

1. We call upon all the Local Government Leaders in your respective Districts, Cities, and Lower Local Governments to design a plan of action in the fight against corruption, including mobilizing your constituents to join the war to eliminate Corruption in Uganda

2. We appeal to the Districts, Cities, and Lower Local Governments and in particular call on the Office Chairperson or Mayor respectively, as Head of Local Government and the Speaker as Chair of Local Council, to Local Governments Councils in their

next Council sittings, to adopt Resolutions and actions to **Promote Active Citizen Participation in Social Accountability for improved service delivery in Uganda.**

3. We further call for concerted effort among all actors including Civil Society, the Private Sector, Religious Leaders and Cultural Heads within our respective Local Governments, to support this noble cause by creating awareness on the cost of corruption on quality service delivery and how to join the struggle and fight against Corruption in Uganda.

4. ULGA also calls upon the Government of Uganda to reconsider the full decentralization of the procurement process to Local Governments as we have continued to witness huge amounts of money allocated for 'Central Projects' in form of **Hybrid Procurement** as opposed to the allocations given to Local Governments to implement the same projects which we feel is fueling corruption and undermining service delivery.

5. As we prioritize the provision of better incentives as a Country to the Scientists, we as ULGA equally resound the fact that the Scientist do not operate in isolation but are joined by the other professions, administrators and political cadres in the delivery of services as a wholesome unit that drive the national development Agenda. It therefore remains imperative that arrangements be made to equally improve the remuneration and welfare packages of the entire Labour force of Uganda across the Political, Professional as well as administrative divide. This is a reality for all the citizens

which if addressed will most definitely add a mile in the struggle against corruption in our Country.

6. The issue of absenteeism in public sector that costed Uganda an estimated total of 2,054.1 Billion shillings, mainly under Health and Education, is majorly due to poor facilitation of the core cadres to execute their monitoring and supervisory mandate. As ULGA, we strongly recommend that Government expedites the process of procuring vehicles to all Local Government leaders including District Chair Persons, District Speakers, Chief Administrative Officers, respective heads of departments and also procure motorcycles for the Lower Local Governments to enable them carry out their oversight and monitoring role on all government programs.

CONCLUSION:

Transparency and accountability are essential to earn the trust of people. Without them, the fight against corruption in Uganda will remain a dream and the delivery of quality services to our people will continue to be compromised. Corruption is synonymous to Covid 19 pandemic. Therefore, the same efforts put in place at all levels to fight this pandemic should be directed to the fight against Corruption in our Local Governments and the Country at large.

To you fellow Local Government Leaders, let us be vigilant by stepping up our oversight role, provide clear information to the masses, be accountable and as well the citizens need to demand for information and services as well.

We the Local Governments equally call for the rebuilding of trust and confidence in our Local Government System to amplify the agreement with the citizens of Uganda as spelt out under Chapter Eleven of the amended 1995 Constitution of Uganda on decentralization. An empowered Local Government system presents all the opportunities for democratic good governance, where the active participation of the people guarantees transparency, and accountability. This can be exhibited through adequate funding and capacity enhancement programmes, which continue to elude our Local Governments of today. The review of this approach will present our people with strong structures of service delivery build on functional accountability structures that are crucial to the success of the fight against corruption and securing our future.

I thank you.

For God and My Country and the Unity and Efficiency of Local Governments

Rwabuhinga Richard

President ULGA/District Chairperson, Kabarole

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