



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

PLOT 9-11 APOLLO KAGGWA ROAD. P.O. BOX 341, KAMPALA, UGANDA

TELEPHONES: General Line 0417 770500, Web: www.opm.go.ug, E-mail: ps@opm.go.ug

In any correspondence on this subject, please quote No: **R/88/160/01**

PRESS RELEASE

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

June 20th of every year, is celebrated by the entire world as **‘World Refugee Day’**. It marks celebration of the signing of the 1951 Convention relating to the status of Refugees and it is held to show solidarity with those who have been displaced and to honor their resilience and determination to keep their families safe. The day is also marked, to draw the public’s attention to the millions of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) worldwide who have been forced to flee their homes due to wars, conflicts, persecution, human and naturally induced disasters.

Uganda, as a country, holds a special place on the world stage when it comes to refugees. It is currently hosting 1.424,373 refugees as of May 2020 from 31 nationalities making it the, the largest population ever in its history with 65% of them coming from South Sudan, 30% from DRC and 3.5% from Burundi.

This year’s theme for World Refugee Day is **“Everyone Can Make a Difference, Every Action Counts”**. Indeed, we must remember that, everyone counts in the fight against COVID-19

and together, we must work to ensure that, every human being is protected and included in the response to this crisis. Everyone, regardless of his or her socio-economic status deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

We recognize the resilience that brings refugees to our doorsteps in desperate situations, usually traumatized by harrowing experiences before and during their journeys. We do acknowledge and salute the openness, generosity and resilience of our host communities who have continuously opened their homes and shared whatever they have with the refugees.

Uganda's policies are acclaimed globally and the government of Uganda has set aside land for refugees to settle and cultivate and more is still provided by host communities. Refugees in Uganda have access to government provided health care, basic primary education, promotes self-reliance, resilience, peaceful co-existence among refugees and host communities and they are included in the National Development Plans.

Despite the Covid-19 challenges where 872 refugees have been quarantined from different settlements in the country, with already 44 testing positive, efforts are being put to ensure that there is continuous delivery of critical services such as food, health and other forms of assistance in the various refugee

settlements. Furthermore, isolation centers and quarantine spaces have been reactivated in all our refugee settlements to manage any suspected COVID-19 cases. The Ministry of Health, the Office of the Prime Minister and the District Covid-19 taskforce teams have initiated mechanisms to detect any likely occurrence of Corona Virus among the Refugees.

We want to uproar the UN System, Individuals, Organizations both Local and International and other countries that have, for decades, supported Uganda in the plight of refugees and host communities and any input that has helped to alleviate the refugee crisis since 1940 when Uganda first received the first refugees from Poland and subsequent influxes from Rwanda, DRC, South Sudan in the late 1950's to date.

We still continue to count on the international community to support our endless efforts to ensure a safe and dignified stay of our brothers and sisters in Uganda as well as uplifting those communities that play a pivotal role as frontline and first responders when refugees arrive in the country.

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY

Eng. Hilary Onek (MP)

MINISTER FOR RELIEF, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND REFUGEES