

Telephone 0414 231900/0414343308
Fax: 0414 235462
Email: Press@statehouse.go.ug
P.O. Box 25497 Kampala, Uganda

The Republic of Uganda
STATE HOUSE

Department of Press and Public Relations. News. Information. Communication

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Africans best suited to solve African Problems - Museveni

February 24, 2012

President Yoweri Museveni said that problems in African can best be solved if African countries take the lead.

“When external stake holders usurp the powers to solve African problems, failure and catastrophe is unavoidable; whereas where Africans take the lead in partnership with others, results are better,” he said.

He cited examples such as the Independence of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola and the majority rule in South Africa as some of Africa’s successfully handled situations.

The President said the correct way of handling African crises involves three issues; engaging internal stakeholders; respective regional efforts and international partners.

The President was addressing a one day London Conference on Somalia which took place at Lancaster House in London. The conference organized by the British government attracted over 40 delegations and heads of state from Africa and Europe.

President Museveni described that the conference as timely and that by legitimate stakeholders like AU, IGADD, the AU Commission and others are represented. “It is the

type of packaging that is legitimate, credible and effective,” he said.

He appreciated the material and financial assistance given by external partners to AMISOM regarding the ongoing humanitarian efforts and problems in Somalia but decried sectarian tendencies in the country, calling for unity and fostering of brotherhood. He said that modern life requires specialization and exchange of goods which can't be done at the village level. He said that what the Somalis need are security for peaceful co-existence and markets to sell their produce.

“We therefore need markets and national unity in Somalia. We should assist the Somalis in expelling the chauvinists of Al shaabab from strategic areas of the Somali territory and the coasts.”

He cited five areas which are crucial for Somalia including democracy, providing relief to the Somali people to avert hunger, repair and rehabilitation of infrastructure and an end to piracy on the Somali borders. He was happy to note that Somalis have resolved to end the transitional form of government and elect a representative government by 2013.

The British Prime Minister David Cameron said the conference is the most influential with every region in Somalia represented, adding that the focus is on the plight of Somalis who have suffered for two decades with famine, bloodshed and poverty.

“There is another reason for the international community to help the Somali people and that is because the problems in Somalia don't just affect Somalis; they affect us all. In a country where there is terrorism disrupting the whole world, abduction of tourists and disruption of trade routes, if the rest of us sit and look on, we will pay a price. As an international community it is in all our interest to help the people in Somalia address this,” he said.

The UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, paid tribute to those soldiers who died in the course of fighting for peace in Somalia.

The President later held separate meetings with the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki

Moon, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and the British Prime Minister, David Cameron.

The conference comes in a wake of prolonged absence of a representative government in Somalia which has given way to terrorism, famine and death.

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