

**ADDRESS**

**BY**

**H.E YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

**ON**

**ENVIRONMENT, WEALTH CREATION, JOBS  
AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION**

**20<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2024**

Country men and Country women, especially the Bazzukulu. Greetings.

Today, I want to address you on five issues. I have told you before of the Runyankore proverb. It says: “*Endimi nyingyi, itukuriza obushera*”. The English equivalent would be: “Too many tongues spoil the broth”. Similarly, so many wrong analyses of issues, confuse some of our people and disable them from helping themselves and their country. The issues I want to address today are: the environment, especially the wetlands; wealth creation; jobs creation; regional integration; and parasitism, whether intended or otherwise.

On the issue of the environment, on this occasion, I will concentrate on the water bodies and the wetlands. On another occasion, I will talk to you about the forests, the mountain ranges and the landmarks (hills, rock-out crops etc.). NEMA has

been, in recent times, evicting people that had encroached on the wetlands against the law that was enacted in the year 1995 and our appeals ever since 1986. I remember very well, that in 1986, I evicted the people that had invaded Mabira Forest following the order by Idi Amin that people should take over the forests because forests have “no value” and “grow crops” because they have more value. Sheer ignorance, that is dangerous. You can see the satellite pictures of 1986 before my order for the invaders to leave Mabira and the pictures of 1989, when Mabira had been restored. Regarding the wetlands, there was no encroachment by 1986 in most parts of Uganda except for the areas of Busoga, Bukedi and Kigyezi, where both the colonial and post-colonial Governments, had misled our people to grow rice in the precious swamps and rear cattle there. The satellite pictures can show that encroachment. I started discussing with the local people in those

areas, how they should leave those wetlands and do alternative and more profitable enterprises such as fish-farming and apple- growing. There are the examples of Limoto wetland in Pallisa and Mzee Baritsigara in the Kabaale area. Regarding the wetlands in Buganda, Teso, Lango, Acholi, etc., there was no encroachment at all. With the ones in Buganda, that is where, we were fighting: Danze, Ddambwe, Lumansi, Lugogo, Mayanja, Sezibwa, Lwajali, Lubigi, Katoonga, Kafu, etc. ***These satellite pictures confirm this.***

Therefore, this encroachment, is recent and inspite of the law and our advice. The NRM, sometimes, uses soft methods to solve problems, even when people are wrong. However, when it is a matter of life and death or the destiny of Africa is at stake, we take decisive and uncompromising stand. This is what mistake-makers, have failed to understand

and to the peril of everybody including the mistake makers. When Idi Amin made the mistake of his coup in 1971, he did not realize our determination not to allow Uganda to deviate from the Pan-African path that we were patiently working on. When some narrow elements of UPC in 1979-80, thought they could eliminate the broad-based coalition of the patriotic and Pan-Africanist forces, they made a serious miscalculation to everybody's loss.

When it comes to the environment, especially the wetlands and water bodies (*enyaanja, emigyera, ebisharara, ebijyinja*, etc.) and natural forests (*ebibira*), it is a matter that is even greater than life and death; it is the threat of extinction (*okuchwekyerera, okusirikirira*). Why? The following are the reasons:

- 1.60% of our rainfall, comes from the oceans (the Indian, the Pacific and, may be, the Atlantic).

However, 40% of our rain, comes from the local water and forest bodies – the natural forests, the Lakes, the Rivers and the wetlands. The atmosphere is impregnated with moisture from these bodies by evaporation and transpiration; the moisture condenses in the atmosphere; and comes back as rain. You want to know how crucial these sources are in rain-formation? Look at two parts of your country – West Nile and Karamoja. They are more or less on the same latitude – between 2° North and 4° North. However, West Nile, gets 1467.4mm of rain per annum while Karamoja gets 811.0mm of rain per year. What causes the difference? The forests in Congo and the swamps of the Nile in South Sudan. That is why the Egyptians' idea of the Jonglei Canal, was very dangerous – because it would rapidly take away the water from the flood area of the sudd. It is these water sources, that

enable Kalangala to get 1,676.6mm of rain per year, Kigyezi to get 1,040.7mm of rain a year, Rwenzori to get 1043.9mm of rain a year, Mbale gets 2,213.4mm a year, etc. Therefore, anybody to invade the lake shore (*emyegyeego*), the river, the wetland, the natural forest, etc., is to work so hard to turn the whole Uganda into a Karamoja, in terms of rain.

2. Secondly, with rain-fed agriculture, we, sometimes, get some erractiness of rain. Sometimes, we get less quantity of rain. Therefore, to stabilize our agriculture, we must use our abundant water supply for irrigation, so that we stabilize the two rainy seasons (*katumba* and *Itumba*) and, even, add more harvests, using irrigation. The question, then, is: where will the water come from if you have dried the wetlands? Drying the wetlands is anti-agriculture – irrigated agriculture. It is so unfair,

that a small number of wetland encroachers, ruin the opportunities of the millions that could irrigate on the dry land.

3. The swamps, are the natural filters of the water that goes into the lakes. Otherwise, you get silt going into the Lakes, destroying the fish and even, eventually, drying the lake through silting. The silting and pollution of the lakes, after removing the swamp filter, also poison our lake water for drinking and household use. It pushes up the costs of cleaning water for that purpose.
4. Part of the cause of flooding, is swamp destruction. The swamp vegetation acts as a sieve for the water but also as a brake for the speed of the water. With the swamp vegetation (papyrus, cyperum latifolia - *ebifuunzho*, *ebigugu*), the water is not only sieved, but it is also slowed down. It can't cause damage. You



clear the swamp vegetation, you get water flowing quickly and massively and drying up quickly. Water destroys and, then, it dries up. Watch the Bwaise channel - it is sometimes full and then, dry.

5. When the vegetation in the wetlands and the forests slows down the speed of the water flow, it allows the water to sink in the soil and re-charge the under-ground water (*enshuuro*). Destroying the vegetation cover in the wetlands and forest areas, makes the run-off water (*omutuunga, omukoka, alele*), flow very fast and will not have time to sink in the soil. The underground water will, eventually, dry up. What is all this, if not a disaster?

6. There are, then, the natural resources of the wetlands - papyrus, the *ebigugu* (*Cyperam Latifolia*), the mud-fish (*eshoonzi*), the *minaaba*

(ropes), the cat-fish, etc. The *bigugu* are very good for mulching, papyrus for paper making, fish for nutrition, etc., etc. How and why, should we lose all this?

These are some of the existential threats to our future, that are involved in the phenomenon of invading the wetlands. Blaming NEMA as to why they allowed people to settle in the wetland and come later to evict them, is, of course, a good point. However, it does not exonerate the encroachers and their backers. Who does not know what a wetland is? Are you a Ugandan or are you from Europe? It is the duty of everybody, to defend Uganda's survival. In any case, in the matter of the environment, we have no choice. Uganda cannot be destroyed and we simply watch. Hence, please, all the people in the wetlands, leave peacefully. You have done enough damage. We are not prosecuting you. It is an amnesty, simply leave. We cannot compensate you for breaking the

law and common sense. It will, moreover, be another way of encouraging that indiscipline to continue.

2. The second issue I would like to talk to you about, is wealth creation. Right from the beginning, the NRM analyzed for you the social-economic history of this area- the Great Lakes area. On account of no written records, we, sometimes, rely on the early foreign travelers that came here. If you take HM Stanley in 1887 - while travelling through the Ituri area of Congo, partly populated by the Lunyoro speaking people, he was amazed by the abundance and productivity of the area and the people. On page 298 of his book entitled: ***In Darkest Africa. Volume II*** by Henry M. Stanley, he wrote as follows: “A *march of an hour and a half in the afternoon, apparently not far from the river, brought us to the populous district of the Babusesse. The banana plantations were very*

*extensive, reminding me of Uganda and their shades covered a multitude of huts. (1887 December 5<sup>th</sup> – Babusesse). Fields of millet and sesame, plots of sweet potatoes, occupied the outskirts of these plantations, and there was ample evidence round about that the land was thickly peopled and industriously cultivated.”*

Later on, while travelling through the Rwizi area of Ankole, on pages 371-372 of the same book, he wrote as follows: “*Crossing a narrow neck of land, descended into the basin of the Rwizi. By degrees the misty atmosphere of this region was clearing and we could now see about five miles distance, and the contour of the pastoral plateau of Ankori. It was not by any means at its best. It was well into the droughty season. The dry season had commenced two months previously. Hilly range, steep cone, hammock and plain were clothed with grass ripe for fire. The herds were numerous, and all as fat as prize cattle. In the valley, we had passed over 4,000 cattle of the long horned species.*

*The basin of the Rwizi, which we were now in, and which was the heart of Ankori, possessed scores of the finest herds of cattle I had never seen before.”* Earlier, 1862 and 1874, both Speke and Stanely, respectively, had travelled through and wrote about the Buganda area, bringing out the same point. Our ancestors, were very productive in crops, livestock, fishing, black-smithing, bark-cloth making, poultry, etc. However, the whole society was still in the pre-capitalist stage of development without a money economy, relying on the less efficient system of *Okuchurika* (barter trade). There were some pre-mordial efforts at using money in the form of Cowrie-shells (*ensiimbi*). Even now, in some of our dialects, money (*esente*), is still called *ensiimbi* (Cowrie-shells), *empiiha* (*Rupiah*), still capturing those early efforts at entering the money economy. When the British defeated our divided Kings and took over Uganda, they introduced the money economy, now based on the Shilling. By 1962, when the British

left, they had created a small island of money economy, surrounded by a sea of under-development (the economy of *okukolera ekidda kyoonka* - working only for the stomach). In the Universities in the 1960s, the description for those colonial and neo-colonial economies, was “enclave economies” - small islands of money economy, surrounded by a sea of pre-money traditional economic activities. In the case of Uganda, our small enclave economy, was being described as an economy of the 3Cs and 3Ts. The 3Cs, were: Coffee, Cotton and Copper; while the 3Ts, were: Tea, Tobacco and Tourism. The percentage of the homesteads inside this small island by 1969, was 4%. When Idi Amin came in, in 1971, much of this small island, was destroyed. Only Coffee and tobacco, kept limping on.

Therefore, from our analysis and given our orientation formed throughout the formative years of the Student Movement in the 1960s, our strategic (long-term) goal was to achieve a total

Socio-economic transformation by building a modern society of the middle class and a skilled working class as has happened in Europe since 300 years ago. In order to achieve this and given Uganda's natural resources – base, we developed a plan for a modern economy based on four money - making sectors. These are: Commercial agriculture with *ekibalo (cura, otita, aimar)*; manufacturing (industry); services; and ICT.

Our strategic goal, is to make every adult Ugandan of working age, join one of these sectors, either as an owner or as an employee. Given the collapse of the small island (enclave) sector, however, that strategic goal could not be achieved at one go. Since, however, we had philosophically, ideologically and strategically, correctly analyzed our situation, in spite of opposition from some of the civil servants and politicians, we have, successfully, attained four phases. These are: the minimum economic recovery (bring back the 3Cs and 3Ts and also reformatize the economy that had

become informal, with *magendo*, etc.); expand the enclave of the 3Cs and 3Ts; diversifying the enclave products by bringing into the money economy, new products such as milk, beef, bananas, maize, fruits, Irish potatoes, cassava, etc.; and start the knowledge economy of using science to create products such as vaccines, automobiles, electronic products, etc. However, all this could not happen, if you did not work on some elements of the infrastructure (the roads, the electricity, the ICT backbone, etc.).

This is how you now hear that our economy has expanded from USD 1.5billion in 1986 to now USD 55bn, albeit still being a raw materials producing economy. This is why you hear me insisting that this economy will jump to USD 500billion by simply adding value to most of our raw materials – agricultural, minerals, forest products, our fresh – water products, etc:



In this journey, we have had some Ugandans listening to our message of social-economic transformation through wealth creation in the four sectors of: Commercial Agriculture with *ekibalo*; Manufacturing and Artisanry; Services (hotels, transport, entertainment, etc.); and ICT.

In this address, I will show you, Ugandans who partially listened to our guidance and achieved considerable prosperity.

A. In agriculture, I will show you the following:

- i. The dairy farmers of the cattle corridor, represented by Mzee Matoongo of Ngoma. **See the pictures of** his house, his cattle, his educated family and hear his speech telling us what he earns. Many of the cattle corridor farmers – all the way from the Tanzanian border to Kiryandongo, have the same story. Yet, they are still using the free-range method (Kusetura). When they go to zero-grazing,

irrigation and stop wealth fragmentation on inheritance, they will be much, much more rich.

- ii. I, then, take you to Bundibugyo, where even before the NRM time, our people had learnt the value of Cocoa, Coffee, Palm oil, Vanilla and Up-land rice. Although their area is remote and, initially, did not have a road linking them to Fort-portal and no electricity, they have been quite prosperous for some time. Even in 1997, when their area was invaded by ADF, I was pleasantly surprised, when I met long columns of internally displaced persons – all carrying clean beddings of foam mattresses. I was also told that the Parish nearest Congo, at that time, had 12 pick-up vehicles. You can see their houses. Many of them have got solar power.

- iii. You, then, come to the Tea growing areas of Fort-portal, Bunyoro, Bushenyi, Kanuungu, Kabaale, Kisoro, etc.

***You see the Tea Estates.***

Unfortunately, in recent times, tea has seen the decline of prices. Why? It is because the global demand of tea is not so big. It is only USD 112.2 billion in 2022, compared to coffee whose global value is USD 460billion. This was the reason, I did not include tea in my four acres model and its seven activities – coffee, fruits, dairy, food-crops, poultry, piggery and fish– farming. In addition to the problem of modest global demand for tea, in recent years, we have had political problems in the big tea consuming countries of Egypt, Pakistan, etc, which, apparently, may have shrunk even more the demand for tea. I intend to meet the

tea growers, so that we agree on how to support them.

- iv. We have many Coffee growers in the Masaka zone that were encouraged by OWC and our leaders and cadres in the area, such as the late Kasamba, Ssempijja, Col. Nsamba etc. ***You can see those beautiful gardens and the nice houses of the farmers.***
- v. We have my 2,035 neighboring homesteads to my farm in Kisozi, whom I have been working on to move them into the money economy. The number of homesteads that have gone into coffee are 538; 908 have dairy cattle; and 120 are in bananas, etc.
- vi. We move to Kalangala district and you see, how the Palm oil project has helped the farmers there. A total number of 2,105

farmers, are involved in Palm oil growing. They yield 12 tons per Hectare per annum. Their net income is sh. 500,000 per acre per month. **See the pictures.**

- vii. We guided and assisted our people in Teso to shift from cotton to citrus and also built a small factory to produce the TEJU (Teso Juice), that we are now up – grading. **You can see both the factory and some of the farmers.**
  
- viii. Banana growing, which is an indigenous industry, but which we commercialized into the money economy and through NAADS and OWC, expanded greatly, has brought incomes to the families. **You can see the banana growing in some areas.** The production is so big, that prices are now as low as shs. 3000 –

sh.5000 per bunch. This has, of course, enabled our people to get affordable food. However, it is not fair to the farmers and, fortunately, unlike tea, there are steps we shall take to stabilize the price of bananas and, even, maize. This is value addition. The bananas and maize prices, are going down because we are still using them for only *emere* (food). With value addition, we shall get flour, starch, baby foods, etc., from bananas; and animal feeds, starch, bio-fuels (ethanol), from maize. That will broaden the spectrum of the demand for bananas and maize and stabilize the prices. It will also solve the problem of animal feeds, pharmaceutical starch, etc., that are now imported. Dr. Muranga and others, are working on this with government support.

- ix. With the recent PDM, you can see how some people are taking advantage of it for pigs, goats, produce buying, etc. ***See the pictures.***

- x. When it comes to large scale agriculture (extensive agriculture different from intensive agriculture), you can see sugar-cane growing, ranching, etc.
  
- B. In the sector of manufacturing and artisanship, I will show you some of the factories and artisan efforts. The manufacturing sector is now exporting goods worth of USD 2.5 billion per annum and employing 922,998 people. ***Here are some examples of factories and artisan products.***
  
- C. The third sector is services - hotels, tourism, transport, education, entertainment, etc.
  
- D. The fourth sector is ICT. It is employing 40,972 people. ***Here below are some examples.***

The progress in the four sectors is still partial. All of them have got huge room for improvement and expansion.

However, as we struggle to involve our people in the money economy, in social economic transformation, the next question is: “Where is the market for all these products?” That is why all the serious young people, should have long ago taken up the call of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and we his followers and that of Kwame Nkrumah, of the economic and political integration for East Africa and the economic integration for the whole of Africa, to provide a market for all these products. Where do we sell the milk, where do we sell the maize, where do we sell the sugar, the cement, etc.?

Milk production is 5.3billion litres, but the internal consumption is only 800 million litres. Maize production is 5 million tonnes, but our internal consumption, is only 1million tonnes. Sugar



production is 650,000 tonnes, but the internal consumption is only 380,000 tonnes, etc. It is a disaster for the future of Africa, to hear the young people talking only about the football of the clubs in Europe or just pushing the agenda of the imperialists. The future of Africa mainly belongs here.

Coming to the issue of jobs, we must ask the question: “Where are the jobs to be found?”. We have already answered the question. The big number of jobs, is to be found, in the 4 sectors: Commercial Agriculture; manufacturing and artisanship; services; and ICT. Irumba of Hoima, on Telephone no: 0772-593782, recently wrote to me, informing me that after listening to my repeated messages about wealth creation, they started 3 acres to produce 1200 trays of eggs per day and they are earning sh.600 million net per annum and employing 50 youth.

We have got 40 million acres of arable land. If only 7 million acres of that land were using the Irumba model of creating 50 jobs out of 3 acres, 116 million jobs would be created. We would have so many jobs, that we would have to import workers from outside Uganda from agriculture alone. Our farms at Rwakyitura, Kisozi, Ntugamo, etc., have already created hundreds of jobs for some Ugandans.

The other source of jobs is infrastructure development - building roads (Engineers - Civil), power stations (civil and Electrical Engineers), hospitals (doctors), schools (teachers). The administrative jobs, are few - the Muruka chief, the Goombolola chief, the CAO, the Assistant Secretary, the Principal Secretary, the Under-Secretary, the Permanent Secretary, etc.

Therefore, the social science graduates, should not pin their hopes on these administrative jobs in the central and local Governments. There are endless

jobs in the private sector. Our daughters finished education many years ago and they are all farmers. It is only Gen. Muhoozi, who is in the Army on account of Patriotism.

However, he is also a farmer. The families must instil these concepts among the youth. ***See my picture with Gen. Muhoozi in the cattle***, the very first Christmas out of the bush of 1986.

Finally, a word about people I will describe as unfair for now, out of politeness. While we the wealth creators are busy creating wealth for Uganda, some elements, some of them from the opposition, are always working with the foreigners to foment chaos in Uganda – riots, illegal demonstrations, illegal and inconsiderate processions, etc. These people are unfair and inconsiderate and they should check themselves or we shall have no alternative but to check them. **See the amount of food in the markets.** Who is producing it? Us. Who benefits from this huge

production? Everybody. What right, then, do some actors have to seek to generate chaotic behaviours? We have defended the direction of Uganda's revolutionary path in the past and we shall defend it even more now.

Yoweri K. Museveni  
**P R E S I D E N T**