



**ADDRESS BY THE HON. THE CHIEF JUSTICE**

**AT THE OPENING OF THE  
24<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL JUDGES' CONFERENCE**

**HELD AT MESTIL HOTEL, KAMPALA**

**JANUARY 30<sup>th</sup> TO 3<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY, 2023**

Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of Uganda  
The Rt. Hon. Speaker of Parliament  
My Lord, Hon. Justice Raymond M.M. Zondo, the Chief Justice  
of the Republic of South Africa  
My Lord, the Deputy Chief Justice  
The Hon. Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs  
The Learned Attorney General of Uganda  
My Lord the Principal Judge  
My Lords, the Justices and Judges of Courts of Judicature  
My Lady Judges from the Judiciary Service of Ghana  
Your Excellences the Ambassadors  
The Hon. Members of Parliament present  
The Inspector General of Government  
The Chairpersons of Constitutional Commissions  
The Head of the Public Service  
The Members of the Judicial Service Commission  
The Members of the Judiciary Council  
The Heads of the Administration of Justice Programme  
Institutions  
The Permanent Secretaries present  
Your Worship, the Chief Registrar  
Your Worships the Registrars  
Our Esteemed Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. I am greatly honoured and privileged to welcome Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda to the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Judges' Conference for the year 2023. I profoundly thank you, for honouring our invitation to open this year's Conference. In a special way, I thank you for steering the country well, for aptly managing the upsurge of the Ebola outbreak and for leading the recovery of the economy from the ravaging effects of Covid-19.
2. I am also honoured to welcome Hon. Justice Raymond M.M. Zondo, the Chief Justice of the Republic of South Africa. I heartily welcome you to the Pearl of Africa and I specially applaud you for accepting our invitation; and travelling all the way from Braamfontein, Johannesburg to Kampala to grace our Conference by delivering a keynote speech. You are most welcome, my Lord, and please feel at home. I also have the pleasure to welcome your dear wife, **Madam Sithembile Zondo** and your entire entourage, and I thank them for making you very comfortable on this audacious errand. You are all much welcome and please feel at home.
3. Allow me, in a special way to also welcome, **Hon. Justice Angelina Mensah-Homiah** and **Hon. Justice Afia Serwah Asare-Botwe** of the Court of Appeal of the Republic of Ghana for honouring our invitation to come and share with us the Ghanaian experience on **performance assessment, monitoring and mentoring** during this Conference. I heartily welcome you and sincerely thank you for coming.
4. I welcome you all, our distinguished guests, friends, partners and facilitators; and I thank you for, once again, accepting our invitation to this year's Annual Judges' Conference.
5. This Conference gives us an opportunity to reflect on the theme: *"The Judiciary Transformation Agenda: Enhanced Access to Justice."* The transformation agenda of the

Judiciary was triggered through the enactment of the Administration of the Judiciary Act, 2020 which not only operationalized Chapter eight of our Constitution, but strengthened our independence and streamlined the management of finances in the Judiciary among other key features.

6. The Judiciary transformation agenda is geared towards *enhancing access to justice services across Uganda*. To achieve this dream, we are guided by the Judiciary Strategic Plan V 2020-2025 and we have resolved to concentrate our energies on a few pivotal areas. These are:

- (i) Recruitment and deployment of more judicial and non-judicial officers and providing them with modern and adequate tools of work;
- (ii) Establishing more Courts across the country in order to eliminate case backlog and to bring justice services nearest to the people;
- (iii) Strengthening the Judicial Training Institute to offer up-to-date capacity building and refresher training to the judicial and non-judicial staff;
- (iv) Reinforcing the Inspectorate of Courts, to effectively supervise court operations, promote judicial accountability and fight corruption; and
- (v) Promoting innovations, simplifying court processes and enhancing the use of ICT in case management and delivery of justice services.

7. In relation to enhancement of the human resources, last financial year a total of 246 judicial officers were recruited and deployed in several Courts across the country. I am pleased to report also that the three newly elevated Justices of the Supreme Court and one newly appointed Justice of Appeal were sworn in by H.E. the President of Uganda last week, on 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2023. I take this opportunity thank Your Excellency, the President and the Judicial Service Commission for these timely appointments. I also take this leverage to congratulate you, my Lords, and to welcome you to the Judiciary Family.
  
8. I am pleased to report that the Judicial Service Commission has already commenced the process of recruiting more judicial officers; 02 Justices of Court of Appeal, 11 Judges of the High Court, 06 Registrars, 14 Deputy Registrars, 08 Assistant Registrars, 13 Chief Magistrates and 71 Magistrates Grade.
  
9. The recent appointment of 16 Judges of the High Court has raised their number to **70** up from **56**, as a result of which we have already operationalized the High Court Circuits of Moroto, Tororo, Iganga, Luwero, Hoima and Rukungiri.
  
10. Just a year ago we had only 42 Chief Magistrates. Today we have **77** Chief Magistrates and consequently, we have operationalized more Magisterial areas of Dokolo, Mayuge, Sironko, Katakwi, Rakai, Kiryandongo, Kyenjojo, Bubulo, Kumi, Kamuli, Isingiro, Kotido, Kira and Lugazi. Karamoja sub-region now has 2 Chief Magistrates, while Acholi Sub-region has 4 Chief Magistrates.

11. Regarding the Magistrates Grade one, we had only **186** a year ago but today we have **298** Magistrates. As a result, we have operationalized Magistrate Grade One Courts of Kyotera, Kyanika, Kole, Lamwo, Kyazanga, Kalungu, Amuria, Atanga, Kalongo, Kangulumira, Namugalwe, Kibito and Nyarushanje, plus Municipal Courts of Mbarara, Masaka, Tororo and Arua.
  
12. The improved coverage of the Judiciary at Magistracy level has reduced case backlog to **11,333** cases in the year 2022 compared to **14,741** in the year 2021, giving a difference of **3,408 cases**.
  
13. Looking at the performance of Courts over the past years, the number of cases completed each year has been growing, from **126,265** cases disposed of in 2020 to **158,423** cases disposed of in 2021 and **250,021 cases** disposed of in 2022. A total of **91,598 cases** were disposed of in the year 2022 more than in 2021.
  
14. This substantial rise in case disposal was mainly attributed to the increase in the number Judicial Officers at the Magistracy and High Court levels; and intensity in the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as plea bargaining, mediation and Small Claims Procedure, daily hearings at the Criminal Division among others.

*Comparison of Court performance for the year 2021 and 2022*

Court Level	Registered		Completed		Pending		Backlog	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
Supreme Court	225	148	82	53	683	666	319	312
Court of Appeal/ Constitutional Court	1,542	1,672	931	979	7,887	8,711	4,658	5,332

<b>High Court (Divisions &amp; Circuits)</b>	35,946	42,474	27,558	38,214	60,713	65,957	29,118	26,944
<b>Chief Magistrate Headed Courts**1</b>	111,572	127,648	89,685	140,503	72,195	67,938	11,781	9,114
<b>Magistrate Grade I Courts</b>	46,953	65,546	38,383	68,490	23,380	22,506	2,875	2,186
<b>Magistrate Grade II Courts</b>	2,591	2,110	1,784	1,782	1,056	959	85	33
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>198,829</b>	<b>239,598</b>	<b>158,423</b>	<b>250,021</b>	<b>165,914</b>	<b>166,737</b>	<b>48,836</b>	<b>43,921</b>

15. From the table above, it can be seen that the High Court completed **10,656** more cases than it completed in 2021, the Chief Magistrates Courts completed **50,818** more cases than they completed in 2021 and the Magistrate Grade One Courts completed **30,107** more cases than in 2021. Overall, the performance for 2022 surpassed that of 2021 by **91,598 cases** thereby reducing case backlog by **4,915 cases**, i.e. a reduction in backlog from **43,921** cases in 2021 to **44,339** cases in 2022.

16. With the added numbers, during the last calendar year 2022, All the Magistrates Grade 1s deployed at the independent Court stations and those under Chief Magistrate headed Stations performed exceptionally well.

**For Emphasis, the table below provides the Case Performance for Individual Ranks of Magistrates for the Calendar 2022.**

S/N	Rank	No. of Cases completed
1	Chief Magistrates	29,296
2	Magistrates Grade I	140,438
3	Magistrates Grade II	7,435

<sup>1</sup> Includes statistics of the Chief Magistrates with that of Magistrates Grade I working in the same Court. Example Nakawa Chief Magistrate Court, Mengo Chief Magistrate Court and Anti-Corruption.

17. It can be noted that Magistrates Grade I completed the highest number of Cases (**140,438 cases**) followed by Chief Magistrates (**29,296 cases**). The Magistrates Grade II completed the lowest number of cases (**7,435**).
18. The performance is strongly correlated with the staffing levels at the respective Individual Ranks, with Magistrates Grade I having the highest staffing of **292** Judicial Officers, followed by Chief Magistrates **with 77** Judicial Officers and Magistrates Grade II with the lowest staffing of 22 Judicial Officers as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.
19. Under special court innovations, for the calendar year, 2022, the Small Claims Court resolved **21,819** Commercial disputes from which a total of **Ushs 12,387,209,913/=** (*Twelve Billion, three hundred eighty-seven million, two hundred and nine thousand, nine hundred and thirteen shillings*) was unlocked and made available for reinvestment back into the economy.
20. In addition to Small Claims procedure, we have also done tremendously well under the Plea Bargaining process for criminal cases. This innovation has played a commendable role in delivering quick and acceptable justice to the parties and has undoubtedly helped in reducing case backlog and decongestion of prisons.
21. During the year 2022, Plea-bargaining sessions were conducted at Mbarara, Mukono, Masindi, Jinja, Mbale and Mubende High Court Circuits. The Criminal Division also conducted plea bargain sessions at Rukungiri, Kabale, Entebbe, Mbarara and Luzira Magistrate courts.

***Performance from Plea Bargaining Sessions held in the Year 2022***



S/No	Station	Period	Cases cause listed	Completed Cases	Percentage Completed
1	Masaka High Court	January 22	43	43	100
2	Criminal Division		6	6	100
3	Mukono High Court at Nakasongola Main prison	22nd - 23rd March 2022	46	29	63
4	Masindi High Court at Main Prison	March 2022	444	331	79
5	Soroti High Court	April 2022	63	63	100
6	Mbarara High Court	7th March-2022	230	230	100
7	Mbarara Chief Magistrate court		271	271	100
8	Kabale High Court and Magistrates Courts of Rukungiri and Kabale	5th April -13 May 2022	211	211	100
9	Arua High court		147	147	100
10	Mukono High Court at Kamuge Prison	25th July – 1st August 2022	64	34	53
11	Mbarara High Court	29th August 2022	220	84	38
12	Mbarara Chief Magistrate court	30th August 2022		121	55
13	Plea Bargaining Camps at Luzira Prison, Murchison Bay	6 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> Sept. 2022	442	359	81
		December 2022	975	901	92
<b>Total</b>			<b>3,162</b>	<b>2,830</b>	<b>90</b>

22. During these sessions, out of **3,162** cases cause-listed for Plea-Bargaining Sessions, 2,830 cases were completed translating into 90% completion rate. Out of the **2,830** completed cases, **2,254** cases were completed at High Court level while 576 cases were completed by Magistrates Courts. The High Court spent **676,2000,000/=** to dispose of the 2,254 Cases, but if the cases went for full trial, the Government would have spent **2,254,000,000/=** to compete them; hence there was a saving of **1,577,800,000/=**. At the Magistrates Court Level, the Government spent **172,800,000/=** instead of **216,000,000/=** which would have been spent for full trials of the same cases, hence saving **43,200,000/=**

23. Previously, during the initial 6 years of the advent of the Plea Bargain program, between **2014 and 2020**, a total of 35,000 cases were disposed of at a cost of 10 Billion shillings, hence saving **25 Billion shillings**. In addition to saving money, the Program has also greatly reduced the ratio of convicts to those remanded and has played a big role in prison decongestion.
24. Plea Bargaining has also been the best tool in promoting community reconciliation in line with Article 126(2) of the Constitution of Uganda. Reconciliation as a mode of dispute resolution has stood the test of time as the most acceptable indigenous African mode of dispute settlement across different ethnicities in Africa. Plea Bargain also guarantees victim involvement and strives to balance the rights of the victim against those of the accused and the society at large.
25. This exceptional performance gives the Judiciary Family and the Ugandans we serve the hope that in the near future the ghost of case backlog will be banished and the people of Uganda will be able to receive meaningful, cost effective and timely justice within a walkable distance.
26. Your Excellency, I appeal to you to continue supporting the Judiciary so that we do not lose the gains we have registered regarding minimising case backlog at the Magistrate Grade One level. 3,586 cases completed by the Magistrates have been appealed and are pending before the High Court which is already overwhelmed by the cases handled at first instance. We should recruit more judges so that we do not have an increase of backlog at the High Court resulting from appeals from the Magistrates Courts.

27. In addition to the above, Your Excellency, we are in the processing of completing the compilation of the value of cases in our Courts, the preliminary report so far indicates trillions and trillions of shillings locked up in disputes in this country. The highest sums of money locked up is in the Commercial Court where we need a minimum of 20 judges to expeditiously dispose of cases.
28. Your Excellency the average caseload per judge of the High Court now is 945 cases. We appeal for a caseload of 300 cases per judge which is possible if more judges are recruited. As you have supported the Judiciary before, we will deliver timely justice to all our people once we have the numbers.
29. We have already registered commendable results with the ECCMIS which we launched on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022 in seven pilot courts namely: Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, Anti-Corruption Division, Commercial Division, Lands Division, Civil Division and Mengo Chief Magistrate Court. Luwero High Court was also enrolled on ECCMIS mid last year.
30. The ECCMIS has improved efficiency and record-keeping and also reduced chances of physical contact with court staff which in itself has reduced opportunities of corruption. The registered benefits of ECCMIS so far include increased case registration, increased Non-Tax Revenue (NTR) collection and increased use of e-payment mode of paying court fees and fines.
31. The construction of Supreme Court building is at finishing stage (85%) completion with furnishing, plumbing, electrical

installations, air conditioning and IT fittings ongoing while Court of Appeal building is at finishing stage (75%) completion with window fitting and tiling ongoing. The twin buildings including two basement floors are expected to be occupied before end of the year 2023.

32. The Judiciary has also renovated Mbale High Court, Makindye, Hoima, Luwero, Ntungamo, Masaka, Kisoro, Tororo and Masindi Chief Magistrates Court buildings. While the Court buildings housing Gulu High Court, Pader CM, Oyam CM, Katakwi CM are under renovation at finishing stage.
33. Your Excellency I wish to assure you that the funds advanced to the Judiciary are put to good use, and I undertake to deliver on the Judiciary Transformation Agenda as I promised. We continue to call upon your usual support so that the milestones outlined in our transformation agenda can be realized, for the good of our people.
34. My Lords, I can now speak with confidence that the current challenges affecting our operations are gradually being addressed; and the Executive and the Legislative Arms of Government are on our side on this agenda. Once we achieve the targeted recruitments, and infrastructural setup, the Courts will have more Judicial officers deployed per station across the country.
35. This will facilitate speedy disposal of cases thus releasing a great deal of resources to the various sectors within the economy. The benefits of speedy trials as dictated by Article 28 (1) of the Constitution are enormous. It acts as an economic stimulus and an incentive for local and international investments. It is also the bench mark for the rule of law, good governance, sustainable peace and

national security and stability and a fulfilment of SDG 16 of the United Nations which calls upon us to “*Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide **access to justice for all** and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels*”.

36. The contemporary needs of justice call for innovative approaches if we are to remain relevant. I am glad to note that the Criminal Division which introduced daily hearing of criminal matters in December 2021 as opposed to sessions, has already registered commendable results. I have been informed that each of the 05 Judges of the Division has a *Case Clearance Team* comprising members from the ODPP, Uganda Prisons and Defence Counsel, who sit on weekly basis; and jointly draw up cause lists and plan the smooth management of the sessions, which has resulted in a considerable upward trend in their performance.

37. I call upon you, my Lords, to be guided, in this transformation agenda, by our Judiciary Strategic Plan V (2020-2025), which is hinged on the following Strategic Objectives:

- a) To enhance equitable access to Judiciary Services;
- b) To improve Court processes and case management;
- c) To strengthen the use of ICT in the administration of justice;
- d) To develop and support the Judiciary workforce and institutional capacity;
- e) To improve coordination, partnerships and accountability;
- f) To improve public awareness and the image of the Judiciary; and
- g) To enhance resource mobilization and management.

38. The Judiciary continues to promote and implement alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, mediation, and other innovations such as the Plea-Bargaining Programme, the Small Claims Procedure and Increased use of ICT-based court services. All these interventions will continue to enhance the disposal of cases in the year 2023. This will be boosted further by the use of ECCMIS, Video Conferencing and other online services.

39. The Judiciary continues to work on reforms in procedural laws and Court processes to leverage access to Justice in the Country. The following Rules were enacted and gazetted on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

- a) The Judicature (Court Bailiffs) Rules, S.I. 53/2022
- b) The Judicature (Amicus Curiae) Rules, S.I. 54/2022
- c) The Judicature (Legal Representation at the Expense of the State) Rules, S.I. 55/2022
- d) The Constitution (Bail Guidelines for Courts of Judicature) (Practice) Directions, L.N. No. 8/2022

40. Due to the steady transformation of our economy and the consequences of inflation, some of the laws require amendments to bring them in tandem with the ever rising market values of goods and services in the Country. We are working with the Hon. Attorney General for the amendment of the Magistrates Courts Act enhance the pecuniary jurisdiction of Magistrates. This will go a long way in reducing backlog in the High Court.

41. This year, the Judiciary Law Reform Committee and other stakeholders are working on the following legislation that will

help enhance access to justice by our people.

- a) The Judicature (Court Fees) Rules, 2023
- b) The Magistrates Courts (Amendment) Bill, 2023
- c) The Judicature (Management of Exhibits) Rules, 2023
- d) The Judicature (Court of Appeal) (Amendment) Rules, 2023
- e) The Judicature (Supreme Court) (Amendment) Rules, 2023
- f) The Judicature (Cases of Persons with Disabilities), Rules, 2023
- g) The Judicature (Electronic Filing, Service and Virtual Proceedings) Rules, 2023
- h) The Magistrates Courts (Magisterial Areas & Magistrates Courts) Instrument 2023
- i) The Constitution (High Court Environment and Infrastructure Division) Practice Directions
- j) The Registry Operations Manual

42. I am also pleased to report that the Judiciary Council, in its meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022 approved the *Administration of the Judiciary (Establishment of Committees) Regulations, 2023* which are intended to establish committees necessary for the effective administration of the Judiciary in accordance with sections 6 and 7 of the Act, and to provide for their powers, functions and procedures.

43. The Council also approved the *Administration of the Judiciary (Inspectorate of Courts) Regulations, 2023* to operationalise Part III of the Administration of the Judiciary Act, 2020 by detailing the functions, powers and procedures of the Inspectorate. These Regulations are now pending gazetting. This year, the Judiciary Council will further



consider the *Judicial Training Institute Regulations*, the *Judiciary Service Regulations* and the *Judiciary Anti-Corruption Strategy*

44. The Judiciary has launched a number of programs, health awareness camps and trainings aimed at improving the human capital. I can proudly report that all the newly appointed/promoted Judicial officers were fully inducted into the Judiciary Service, by attending two-weeks training courses under the auspices of the Judicial Training Institute. We have also acquired land at Nakasongola, where we hope to establish a world-class Institute.
45. Your Excellency allow me to specially pay tribute to the Judiciary staff who retired from Service in the course of last year. My Lords, Your Worships and distinguished administrative staff, we acknowledge your hard work and commitment to the Judiciary Service and we wish you God's Grace in your retirement.
46. Whereas we thank the Government for improving the salaries of judicial officers, we continue to appeal to the Government to consider improving the salaries of non-judicial staff, as well, to give them ability to live a meaningful life during these hard times.
47. During the year, 2022 the Judiciary took a deliberate effort to scale up stakeholder engagements and court user sensitizations across the country. As a result, a number of Court Open Days were organized in various High Court Circuits and Magisterial Areas across the country. The court users and the public used this forum to understand the processes of Court and to give feedback to us. I commend



and appreciate the Hon. Deputy Chief Justice, Principal Judge, Chief Registrar, Secretary to the Judiciary and all the Judges and staff who participated in these Court Open Days.

48. As you recall, the Judiciary successfully hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Annual East African Judicial Conference* from 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2022 and the 17<sup>th</sup> *International Association of Women Judges Conference* from 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2022. We were honoured, during these conferences to host the Honourable Chief Justices of Kenya, South Sudan, Burundi and Somalia, as well as the President of the East African Court of Justice, among others. We thank all those who organised and participated in these conferences for a job well done.

49. I also wish to congratulate Hon. Justice John Eudes Keitirima who was voted the new President of the *East African Magistrates and Judges Association* at the EAMJA Conference in Kigali, in November 2022. We look forward to hosting the next annual EAMJA Conference for the year 2023.

50. On a sad note, we lost Hon. Justice Rubby Opio Aweri, JSC and also Hon. Lady Justice Elizabeth Ibanda Nahamya (Rtd). However, I am also happy to report that in line with section 23 of the Administration of the Judiciary Act, Hon. Justice Rubby Opio Aweri, who died in the Service as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Uganda, was accorded a State Burial on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022. I thank your Excellency and the Government for recognizing Justice Aweri's great sacrifice and impeccable service to the people of Uganda. Justice Opio Aweri was also our Chief Inspector of Courts. I have appointed Hon. Justice Stephen Musota, JSC as the new Chief Inspector of Courts and I take this opportunity to

introduce him.

51. During the current year, the Judiciary will consolidate the programmes already under execution including continuing to implement the Case Backlog Reduction Strategy, enforcing ADR mechanisms of dispute resolution, implementing the use of ICT in case management and recruiting and deploying more staff; among others.

52. We shall also further work on the following areas:

- a) Lobby for more funding to enable us recruit and establish more court houses and justice centers up to constituency level across the Country; including establishing Chief Magistrates Courts at each District level, Magistrates Grade I Courts at each constituency level, and more High Courts circuits.
- b) Amend the Magistrates Courts Act Cap. 16 to enhance the pecuniary jurisdiction of the Magistrates Courts.
- c) Develop the Instrument for the Instrument for the Regional Courts of Appeal
- d) Revise the Magisterial Areas Instrument of 2017 to establish Chief Magistrates Courts at every district in Uganda and Magistrate Grade One Courts at every county/constituency in Uganda.
- e) Review the High Court Circuits Instrument 2016 to increase the number of High Court Circuits across the regions. This will give rise to the creation of new High Court Circuits at Nebbi, Kitgum, Apac, Kumi, Kamuli, Lyantonde, Bushenyi,

Kasese and other deserving places as the Taskforce shall advise, in order to alleviate the severe inhibitions to access to High Court Services in those areas.

- f) Expand the structure and establishment of non-judicial staff and recruit more Justices to the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court. Under the new Judiciary Structure, we have planned to enhance the numbers of Judicial and non-Judicial staff commensurate with our Vision and Strategic Plan V.
- g) Strengthen the Judicial Training Institute to offer up-to-date capacity building and refresher training to the judicial and non-judicial staff, including seeking for funds to enable us construct a robust Institute of international standing.
- h) Reinforce and decentralise the Inspectorate of Courts to effectively supervise court operations, promote judicial accountability and fight corruption.
- i) Strengthen our communication function by launching a robust communication strategy so as to create more awareness of our processes and procedures and revamp our call centre to provide timely responses to court users.
- j) Champion and oversee more reforms in case management practices and use of ICT in managing court sessions; and further roll-out ECCMIS to another 06 Courts in Cluster 2 which will include: Jinja High Court, Family Division, International Crimes Division, Jinja Chief Magistrates Court, Kakira Magistrate Grade One Court, and Bugembe Magistrate Grade One Court.

- k) Renovate the current Court buildings which are dilapidated and customise Court premises in line with the guidelines I issued on the standardisation of courthouses to include facilities for persons with disabilities, the elderly and good Court ambience in order to enhance access to judicial services by all.
- l) Complete the construction of the following Court buildings, Supreme Court and Court of Appeal buildings; Soroti, Rukungiri and Tororo High Court buildings; Albetong, Lyantonde and Budaka Chief Magistrates Courts; and Abim, Patong and Karenga Magistrates Grade One Courts.
- m) Start the construction of:
- (i) 02 Regional Courts of Appeal buildings in Gulu and Mbarara;
  - (ii) 06 High Court Circuits buildings in Moroto, Mpigi, Iganga, Mubende, Luwero and Kitgum;
  - (iii) Chief Magistrates Courts of Kira, Dokolo and Sironko;
  - (iv) Magistrate Grade I Courts of Omoro, Kaliro, Bududa and Kyazanga;
  - (v) 04 Institutional houses in hard to reach and stay areas at Nakapiripirit, Moyo, Bukwo and Buhweju;
- n) Meet payment of contractual obligations for construction under the formerly JLOS funded projects being: Mukono High Court, Kamwenge CM, Butambala CM, Mayuge CM and 11 Justice Centres at Sembabule, Buhweju, Buyende, Rubirizi, Kole, Nwoya, Sheema, Maracha, Namayingo, Kibaale and Nakaseke.
- o) Procure more vehicles for new Judicial Officers and the Inspectorate of Courts, replace old motor vehicles of judges

and Justices, acquire a 14 seater Mini-bus, a specialized van for the Registry of Public Relations and a van for the Mobile Courts in Refugee camps. These Vehicles will facilitate Judicial Officers across the Courts especially in hard to reach areas, handle locus visits and other adjudication functions of Courts.

- p) Acquire a Judgement Writing Tool for the Judicial Officers to ease the process of judgement writing and hence reduce on the number of undelivered judgements that lead to the growing case backlog.
- q) Install solar systems at 17 Magistrate Courts at Ibanda, Kiryandongo, Kiruhura, Kasangati, Butambala, Budaka, Patongo, Pader, Wakiso, Mayuge, Nakapiripit, Moroto, Karenga, Butaleja, Manafwa, Nabilatuk and Napak. These will boost the process of automation Courts that require uninterrupted power supply and pave way for efficient use of ICT initiatives in Courts.

36. Your Excellency, when these reforms are funded and implemented we hope to have a robust Judiciary that is accountable and capable of delivering quality and timely justice in accordance with our vision, mission and Strategic Plan. We thank you once again, Your Excellency for attending this Conference and for supporting the Judiciary agenda. We look forward to your continued support in enhancing our budget in order to enable us achieve these milestones.

37. I thank the Chairperson of the Governing Council of the Judicial Training Institute, the Executive Director JTI and all the staff for making it possible for us to convene here today

for this week-long conference.

38. Allow me to also extend our heartfelt appreciation to our indomitable team of facilitators for accepting to come and take the Justices and Judges through this year's conference.
39. Our esteemed development partners and friends, the Pepperdine University, IDLO, UNFPA, UN Women, UNICEF, UNDP, HiiL, LASPNET, the Human Trafficking Institute, Evolve, IJM, Austrian Development Cooperation, European Union and all you who have contributed to our success in one way or the other; we are much indebted to you and heartily thank you for your benevolence.
40. I thank you all dear participants for sparing your valuable time to attend this important conference. I pray that you fruitfully use this opportunity to share your diverse experiences and come up with best practices to further our transformation agenda.
41. I thank the top management team with whom I work for their tireless efforts, zeal and commitment.
42. I once again thank my brother, Chief Justice Zondo for gracing our conference.
43. Lastly, Your Excellency, I thank you for finding time amidst your very busy schedule to be with us.
44. It is now my singular honour and privilege to invite Your Excellency to address this gathering; and to officially open the Conference.

I thank you.

Alfonse Chigamoy Owiny – Dollo  
**CHIEF JUSTICE**  
30<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.