

**Speech by His Excellency Urban Andersson, Ambassador of
Sweden & Chair of JLOS DPG, at the 19th Annual JLOS
Government of Uganda /Development Partners Review**

**30th October 2014
Munyonyo - Kampala**

Your Lordship the Honourable Chief Justice,
Honourable Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs,
Honourable Minister of Internal Affairs,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Heads of JLOS institutions and their representatives,
Representatives from civil society and the private sector,
Fellow development partners,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to participate in this 19th Annual Review of the Justice Law and Order Sector and to deliver this statement on behalf of the development partners engaged in the sector.

First of all, I would like to congratulate the sector for the progress during the year under review, and for the continued good working relationships at different levels. In particular I would like to thank the JLOS Leadership for the open interaction and candid discussion we had on Tuesday last week during the Leadership informal dinner. The free exchange of ideas and information on issues pertaining to the sector will help us to jointly find solutions to the challenges that affect the sector performance.

We believe this open and constructive dialogue has contributed in part to improvements in a number of areas including reporting, monitoring and evaluation as well as enhancing the delivery of JLOS services.

Development partners would like to stress the importance of the sector and emphasise our interest in the functionality of the sector as a critical pillar in promoting national development, enhancing democracy and rule of law, fighting corruption as well as increasing transparency and accountability.

We would like to acknowledge the improvements that have been made by the sector, especially scaling up the physical infrastructure and in closing the physical distance between the institutions and the population.

However, these improvements need to be in tandem with improved and efficient delivery of services by JLOS staff. Good customer service is still largely lacking in many of the JLOS institutions and this affects the sector's capacity to offer effective, efficient and transparent services. Basic principles of customer care and reform of institutional culture needs to be prioritised to build public trust and confidence in the sector.

Development partners appreciate the recent appointments of Judges and the improvements in the staffing situation especially in the higher courts.

However, the staffing situation at lower courts is still poor and other institutions like the police, prisons and Directorate of Public Prosecution still lack the required numbers to be more effective, especially at grassroots level. This also coupled with the lack of sufficient capacity in terms of training of lower cadre staff negatively impacts on the delivery of services. We encourage government to ensure that the sector is fully staffed and is utilizing all its resources effectively.

We commend the sector for spearheading the strengthening of the policy, legislative and institutional framework for the promotion, protection and fulfilment of human rights. Fundamental to this is the establishment and sustenance of a legislative, policy and regulatory framework cognisant of human rights, rule of law and conducive to national development.

However, we are concerned that there is lack of progress on some of the policies and proposed legislations for example the Administration of Judiciary Bill, Legal Aid Policy, Transitional Justice Policy and the Witness Protection Amendment Bill to mention but a few. We would therefore like to encourage the sector to expedite the process of ensuring that these are enacted and operationalized.

We are now in the third year of implementing the Third JLOS Strategic Investment Plan (SIP III) or you could say we have gone half way in the implementation of SIP III. With improvements noted, this is a suitable time to review what the sector has achieved and more critically look at how the sector plans to deal with the outstanding challenges that have continued to hold back the sectors performance. In this regard, there are a few issues that we like the sector to continue to address:

First we would like to address the issue of the delayed appointment of a substantive Chief Justice. We understand that this responsibility does not fall under the sector as such, but we would like to urge government to prioritise this as an important element in ensuring that democratic principles are upheld and that all three arms of government are fully constituted and fully facilitated to execute their mandate as provided for by the constitution.

Secondly, we note that the internal and external accountability of the sector is very critical in ensuring rule of law and respect for human rights. However, we note that some of the institutions within the sector continue to rank highly as the most corrupt institutions in the public sector as well as leading in human rights violations. We urge the sector to take remedial actions and restore public confidence in the sector. Ultimately this is all about customer care and fostering a culture in the sector that is people oriented and focused on service delivery.

In this respect, the Anti-Corruption Units of JLOS institutions should ensure effective investigation, prosecution and sanctioning of corruption cases both from within the sector and those that come to the sector. The sectors anti-corruption strategy should be operationalized by all JLOS institutions and effectively enforced. We commend the judiciary for starting the implementation of their institutional anti-corruption strategy and encourage the rest of the JLOS institutions to follow suit.

Thirdly we are also concerned that recommendations of the Auditor General are not being adequately followed up and addressed by JLOS institutions. We would like to urge the sector to put in place appropriate strategies to implement the Auditor Generals recommendations. In this regard allow me to underline that all development partners' financial support and funding modalities to the sector, are always fully transparent and available for scrutiny.

Lastly, we would like to once again raise the issue of case backlog and overstaying on remand. This creates serious human rights violations of Ugandans caught up in the justice system and affects the levels of public trust and confidence in the sector. We would like to appreciate that the

sector has put in place strategies to address this challenge. The Honourable Principle Judge last Tuesday clearly outlined the initiatives that are being undertaken by the sector to address this (including plea bargaining, mediation, Alternative Dispute Resolution etc.), but he also reiterated that this is still a big challenge to the sector and that the numbers continue to increase. Just last month I had the opportunity to visit JLOS institutions in Kalangala, an area that is considered hard to reach. There, we saw how mediation specifically in land related cases has helped magistrates keep their case backlog low. This is an indication that if the case backlog reduction initiatives are effectively implemented, they have positive effects on the population and the performance of the sector. We encourage the sector to intensify implementation of all the initiatives to address case backlog.

In conclusion, we once again congratulate the sector on the progress that has been made this year. We look forward to an in-depth and frank discussion on the sector's progress and sharing ideas to address the sector challenges.

With these remarks, I wish you/us successful deliberations.

Thank you for your attention.