



REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

COURTS OF JUDICATURE

OPENING SPEECH

OF

HON. JUSTICE DR. ESTHER KITIMBO KISAAYE, JSC
CHAIRPERSON, JUDICIAL TRAINING COMMITTEE

AT THE OPENING OF THE
18^H ANNUAL JUDGES' CONFERENCE

HELD AT

MUNYONYO COMMONWEALTH RESORT HOTEL, MUNYONYO

19TH JANUARY, 2016

PROTOCOL

Your Excellency, the President of Uganda,

My Lord, The Chief Justice of Uganda,

My Lord, The Deputy Chief Justice of Uganda,

My Lord, Principal Judge,

My Lords, Justices of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal/Constitutional Court,

My Lords, Judges of the High Court,

My Lords, Retired Justices and Judges.

Your Worships,

Invited Guests.

On behalf of the Uganda Judicial Training Committee, I warmly welcome all of you to the 2016 Annual Judges Conference. Happy New Year.

I wish to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Judicial Training Committee, to warmly welcome in a special way our Guest of Honour and to thank him for honouring the invitation to officiate at the opening of this important Conference.

In the same vein, I wish to welcome and thank our guests from Kenya, the Hon. and the United States (Judge) who have travelled all the way to here to

share their knowledge and experience with us during this 4 day Annual Conference.

We are meeting once again in 2016, like we have done in the past 18 years to review our performance last year and to lay strategies for this year and the future.

The objectives of this Conference are four fold:

1. To show the extent to which judicial practice in Uganda is accountable;
2. To examine the new ways the Judiciary can apply to entrench the rule of law in Uganda;
3. To provide practical solutions on enhancing performance of and excellence in the Judiciary; and
4. To stimulate debate among judges on contemporary affairs affecting the administration of justice in Uganda.

This year's Conference has been organized under the theme **“PROMOTING THE RULE OF LAW IN UGANDA THROUGH JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND EXCELLENCE”**.

This theme is anchored in the Constitution of Uganda which mandates and requires us to exercise our Judicial Power **“in the name of the people and in conformity with law and with the values, norms & aspirations of the people”**.

Access to justice for many Ugandans continues to be hampered by limited resources. We should also recall that we are operating in a legal environment where a substantial number of the Ugandan citizens either lack or have limited knowledge and understanding of our judicial system and procedures.

Concerns also continue to be expressed by some Ugandans on how the Judiciary is delivering on its constitutional mandate. We note that while some of the concerns may be as a result of misunderstanding and/or misinformation, there are areas where we need to jointly explore and adopt best practices.

The Conference theme and the various presentations that will be made during the 4 days we will be here, provide us with yet another opportunity to individually reflect on our role as Judicial Officers, and to also jointly and collectively critically examine to what extent we promoted the rule of law. Learning from the experiences of the past year, we will have laid a good foundation on which we can lay strategies on how to excel in the execution of our roles and responsibilities.

Judicial excellence is key to our performance. Attaining judicial excellence will require, among others, substantial investments in training for judicial officers at all levels.

I trust that the Executive Director, JSI will at an appropriate time share the details of how many judicial officers were trained last year and in what areas. I however wish to note that the Judiciary through JSI and its partners, run training programmes in various areas for judicial officers including but not limited to the following areas:

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At this juncture, on behalf of the Judicial Training Committee, I take this opportunity to extend our thanks to the Hon. Chief Justice and the entire leadership of the Judiciary for their continuing commitment to provide resources for building the capacity of various officers through the various training activities that were undertaken both by the Judicial Training Institute and its partners in 2015. I also wish to extend to thank the CJ to permitting judicial officers at all levels clearance wherever requested by the JSI to take time off their judicial duties to attend the various trainings.

I do acknowledge that it has not yet been possible for JSI to provide training to each and every officer on an annual basis as is done in some other country. We also regret that as the Judicial Training Committee has not always been able to approve training requests from Judicial Officers to pursue external training opportunities. This is largely a result of limited resources available for training. My Lord, we pray that under your leadership of the Judiciary, judicial training will be further prioritized and streamlined to ensure that the training arm of the Judiciary is properly facilitated and resources to run the training activities which are very crucial to building judicial excellence.

I would like to thank the outgoing Executive Director of the Judicial Studies Institute, Justice Jane Kiggundu for the training activities that she has been able to undertake during her tenure. Thanks also go to the Registrars and the entire JSI team for your respective contributions.

I also congratulate the incoming Executive Director, Justice Henry Peter Adonyo on your appointment. On behalf of the JTC, we look forward to working with you as we train for judicial excellence.

My Lords, once again, we welcome you all and look forward to your active participation. I wish you fruitful deliberations during this 18th AJC. **HAPPY NEW YEAR** to you all. Thank you.

