

PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

OPPOSITION RESPONSE TO THE STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS, 2026

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Leader of the Opposition**

July, 2026

Rt. Hon. Speaker and Honourable Members,

The State of the Nation Address is one of the most important constitutional duties entrusted to a Head of State under Article 101 of the Constitution. It should give the country an honest account of its condition, acknowledge the challenges citizens face, and set out measures to address them. It should not be a catalogue of government activities or a victory speech; it is an opportunity for accountability.

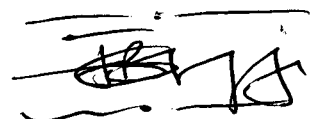
The Head of state built his address on three pillars: the NRM's historical journey from 1959, the reach of PDM into 3.7 million households, and a projected 10 percent GDP growth. He talked about milk surpluses and coffee exports, dismissed young people seeking work abroad by calling Uganda a paradise which they are abandoning, and named journalists whose writing displeases him. He did not speak with clarity about the debt consuming our country's future, the hospitals without medicines, the schools failing a generation of children, the roads deteriorating every rainy season, or the corruption documented in audit report after audit report.

Colleagues, the true state of the nation is measured by whether citizens can access quality healthcare, afford education, find meaningful employment, earn a decent living, and live under institutions that are honest and accountable. The farmer wanted to know why inputs are expensive and markets unreliable. The unemployed graduate wanted to know where jobs would come from. The patient wanted to know why medicines are unavailable. The parent wanted to know why universal education still costs more than they can afford. The taxpayer wanted assurance that public resources will be protected from theft. Most of those questions went unanswered.

Rt Honourable Speaker, I have prepared this response drawing on official government and public institutional sources, including the Auditor General, UBOS, sector performance reports, budget documents, and parliamentary committee findings. The central question before this House is this: are the lives of ordinary Ugandans improving? On that measure, there is considerable work yet to be done.

Economy and public debt

The Head of state cited GDP expansion to USD 69.3 billion and a per capita income of USD 1,420, just above the lower-middle-income threshold of USD 1,136. Yet many Ugandans are asking a simple question: if the economy is growing, why is life becoming more difficult? Growth must show up in household incomes, employment, and access to services. The Ministry of Finance's *Background to the Budget FY 2025/26* puts rural poverty at 19.4% against 10.3% in urban areas, and

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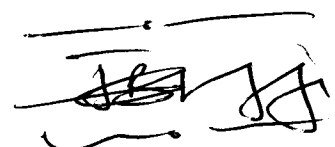
notes that seven sub-regions, home to 44% of Uganda's population, account for 70% of the country's poor. **Growth that does not reduce poverty or improve the cost of living for ordinary families is, in the end, largely statistical.**

The most serious threat to Uganda's economic future is public debt. **Our public debt has risen from roughly UGX 70 trillion in FY2020/21 to over UGX 126.19 trillion today, an 80% increase in five years. 80% increase of our debt burden in just 5 years should worry all of us colleagues.** The debt-to-GDP ratio is at 53%, above the 50% threshold set by Uganda's own Charter for Fiscal Responsibility, and domestic interest-to-revenue has risen to 23.66%: more than one shilling in every three collected now goes to creditors before a teacher is paid or medicine procured. Interest payments have climbed steadily, from UGX 3.9 trillion in FY2021/22 to a projected UGX 13 trillion in FY2026/27, for a cumulative UGX 46.9 trillion over six years, all flowing to foreign-owned commercial banks. The FY2026/27 budget adds a further UGX 185.5 billion in commitment fees on loans signed but not yet used: Uganda is paying for borrowing that has not happened.

Honourable colleagues, we keep borrowing, but without corresponding returns. The Auditor General has repeatedly flagged weak project implementation, delayed completion, cost overruns, and underutilised borrowed funds, among them the Lubowa Specialised Hospital arrangement with Enrica Pinetti, the Roko Construction bailout, the DEI-Biopharma bailout, the Inspire Africa Coffee venture in Ntungamo, and the Atiak Sugar Factory under UDC, all private ventures financed through public borrowing whose returns to citizens are yet to be demonstrated. Public revenue is being diverted from schools, hospitals, roads, and agriculture to service debt whose benefits ordinary Ugandans cannot see or feel. Sustainable growth requires prudent fiscal management, productive investment, value for money, and genuine accountability in the use of public resources.

Cost of living and employment

One of the most glaring omissions in the state of the nation address was the rising cost of living. Households are grappling with food, transport, school, healthcare and rent costs that together exhaust whatever income they earn. The UBOS National Governance, Peace and Security Survey (November 2025) shows food accounts for over 50% of low-income household expenditure: not a statistic to be tracked in a spreadsheet, but a household emergency at every meal. Fuel prices of UGX 6,500 and above per litre upcountry drive up the cost of everything that moves by road, and Uganda spends approximately USD 600 million annually on petroleum imports, priced in foreign exchange (**Uganda Investment Authority**). Every weakening of the shilling transfers directly into the price of a meal, a school run, and a market trader's fare.



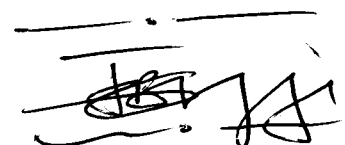
The employment picture is equally serious. Uganda's population stands at 45.9 million (2024 Census), yet only about 9.4 million are in formal employment. Approximately 700,000 young people enter the labour market every year, while manufacturing, the sector best placed to absorb them, contributes only 8.4% of GDP and employs 8.3% of the workforce, below the 13% average for least developed countries (**UBOS Statistical Abstract 2023**). The formal economy cannot absorb what the population produces, and the consequence is visible on every street corner and in every family surviving on informal, insecure work.

Between 2020 and 2025, an estimated 500,000 Ugandans took up work contracts abroad, most in the Middle East under conditions widely documented as exploitative. These are not people abandoning a paradise, as suggested; they are people searching for opportunities they cannot find at home. A government that exports its youth as cheap labour and then mocks them for leaving has forfeited the moral authority to speak about economic transformation. What is required is deliberate investment in industrialisation, agro-processing, manufacturing, tourism, and genuine support for small and medium enterprises, with success measured by decent livelihoods created, not programmes announced.

Corruption and accountability

Corruption is still one of the biggest obstacles to Uganda's development. The Inspectorate of Government's Anti-Corruption Annual Report 2024/25 estimates that Uganda loses about 10 trillion annually to corruption. The Auditor General's 2025 Annual Report found unaccounted funds, unsupported expenditure, and procurement irregularities in 72% of audited entities. Payroll audits continue to uncover thousands of ghost workers, and the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority has reported persistent irregularities in public contracting, including inflated prices and non-competitive awards. The cost is measured in schools not built, medicines not delivered, and opportunities denied. Parliament was told in January 2026 that only 31% of the Auditor General's recommendations for FY2023/24 had been fully implemented, while more than a third had not been implemented at all.

The fight against corruption will be judged by stolen funds recovered, audit recommendations implemented, and the investigation, prosecution and conviction of those responsible, regardless of office or political affiliation.



Human rights, civic freedoms and justice

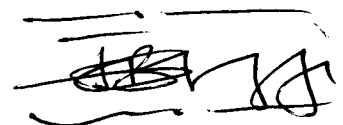
Rt Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, a nation's strength is measured not only by economic growth, but by its commitment to constitutional freedoms, human dignity, and the rule of law, an area that we always pay little attention to. The Uganda Human Rights Commission's Quarterly Report (January–April 2026) recorded over 1,200 complaints of arbitrary arrest, torture, enforced disappearance, and unlawful detention, a 34% increase on the same period in 2025. At least 47 journalists and media workers faced arrest, harassment, or confiscation of equipment in the preceding twelve months. Arbitrary arrests feed directly into the crisis in our prisons and courts. Even those produced in court spend lengthy periods without getting justice, and the proposals by the Head of state to abolish bail for a number of offences does not help matters. We should empower the judiciary to independently do its work, and then we together hold it accountable where delivery of justice is not forthcoming, and where there are concerns about fair trial as we have seen for several opposition politicians and supporters who are in jail.

The Uganda Prisons Service and Human Rights Commission's 2025 Annual Report records the system holding approximately 70,000 people in facilities built for 18,500 people, a congestion rate of 378%, with over 55% on remand, some waiting years to be heard. By October 2025, the Auditor General found 115 of 413 children in one rehabilitation center had completed their sentences but were still being held because the system lacked capacity to process their release.

The Chairperson of the Uganda Human Rights Commission, Mariam Wangadya, has publicly accused some State actors of deliberately weakening this vital institution. She argues that, despite the Commission's critical constitutional mandate to safeguard the rights enshrined in Chapter Four of our Constitution, the Bill of Rights, appointments have been made based on political considerations rather than competence. She described some appointees as "broke and sickly political failures," suggesting that such appointments have undermined the Commission's effectiveness. This matter ought to be addressed.

Constitutional rights are not privileges granted at government's discretion; they belong to every Ugandan by virtue of the Constitution, and security agencies must operate within the law, with every citizen enjoying equal protection under it.

Rt Hon Speaker and colleagues, sometimes Government blames Opposition, civil society and media houses for making the Country look bad. But if we were to be honest with ourselves, we would realise that Government officials contribute a great deal to making our Country look bad. Whenever people are abducted and tortured, or when media houses get closed arbitrarily, these violations of the law



make it to international press. How then do we expect tourists to come to our Country with all these negative situations. We've been dealing with a situation where most of the world thought numerous people were dying of ebola in Uganda, which ofcourse was not true. But travel advisories were issued, and many would-be tourists cancelled their visits to Uganda, which affected our tourism. And as we clarify to the world that the ebola situation in Uganda was blown out of proportion and misunderstood, we find ourselves having to deal with international press reports about violations of the law.

Potential investors who want to set up business in Uganda, can easily get discouraged because of what they see and hear about our Country. This hurts our economy, and affects all of us.

Civil society organisations have been targeted for suspension and closure, most of them have had their accounts frozen by the state, no explanations, no court orders. Why does Government target people and entities who point out the ills in our governance instead of addressing those ills. We have to build this our Country together, so dissenting voices should not be targeted for persecution, we need to listen to the issues of concern being raised, and then work towards fixing those issues.

Rt Hon Speaker and colleagues, we held our national election at the start of the year, but there are still many unanswered questions. Why does the military continue to interfere with our elections. This did not just happen to we the opposition competitors, I saw a number of colleagues from the NRM raising similar concerns in their constituencies as well.

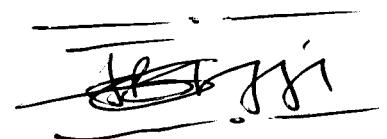
Why hasn't Government accounted for the billions spent on the Biometric Voter Verification Kits which did not function on election day?

Why hasn't the Electoral Commission publicized the Declaration of Results forms which they based on to declare results?

Our Country needs to heal from the tumult that has become of our elections, but we can only do so when these questions are sufficiently responded to.

Health

Honourable Members, **patients face medicine stockouts, long waiting times, inadequate staffing, and rising out-of-pocket costs. For many families, illness is simultaneously a health emergency and a financial crisis.** The Ministry of Health's Sector Performance Report FY2024/25 shows malaria is responsible for 27% of outpatient visits and 19% of in-patient deaths, placing Uganda among the top ten

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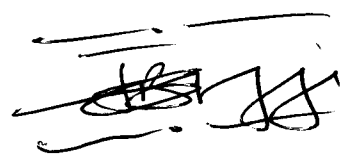
countries globally for malaria burden. HIV prevalence stands at 5.3%; tuberculosis affects 200 per 100,000 people with a 72% treatment success rate against the WHO's 85% target. Non-communicable diseases account for 33% of hospital admissions and 11% of deaths, with hypertension affecting 26% of adults and diabetes 5%, mostly undiagnosed. Skilled birth attendance falls to 55% in rural areas against a 74% national average, and a contraceptive prevalence rate of 39% drives a total fertility rate of 4.7 children per woman.

The Doctor to patient ratio in Uganda is 1:25,000 in comparison to the WHO recommendation of 1:1000; over 56% of approved health-worker posts are vacant, and 60% of Ugandan-trained doctors leave the public system within five years. The UGX 132.6 billion allocated to recruit 16,963 health workers is welcome, but without addressing pay, working conditions and career development, new recruits will simply accelerate the exodus. We also continue to entreat Government to abandon the plan to stop facilitating medical interns. This policy is counter-productive.

Financing is the most fundamental failure: the FY2026/27 health budget stands at UGX 5.7 trillion, 6.1% of the national budget, unchanged from last year and less than half the 15% Abuja Declaration commitment Uganda signed two decades ago. Per capita public health spending is USD 37, less than half the WHO minimum of USD 86. National Medical Stores required UGX 1.5 trillion in FY2024/25 and received UGX 1.4 trillion, while Mulago National Referral Hospital received UGX 18.2 billion against a documented need of UGX 72.3 billion, a 75% funding gap at the country's flagship hospital. Development partners financed 64% of essential medicines in FY2024/25; government contributed 36%.

Over 41% of health costs are paid directly out of pocket, and 40% of facilities experienced stockouts of antimalarials, antibiotics and antiretrovirals in 2023. Uganda has one ambulance per 200,000 people, only 12% of facilities have functioning emergency units, and referral hospitals operate at roughly 10% of ICU capacity due to inadequate staffing. Mental health is the most neglected area of all: 75% of the Ugandans who live with mental disorders receive no treatment, only five dedicated mental health units exist nationwide, and the sector receives less than 1% of the health budget against a WHO recommendation of 5%.

Rt Hon Speaker, we have severally demanded for the completion of Lubowa Specialised Hospital, and proper accountability for the billions spent on that project thus far. Government needs to provide answers to the questions about Lubowa Hospital.

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Education

Honourable members, few matters weigh on Ugandan families as heavily as education, yet we often give the challenge in this sector little serious attention. The Auditor General's Report for the year ended 31 December 2025 found that, across 157 local governments inspected, 136 secondary schools had no science laboratory and a further 270 had laboratories that were inadequately equipped, yet Government introduced a policy to promote sciences; 182 schools lacked libraries, 251 had no teacher accommodation, and 380 reported inadequate classrooms, with some schools operating condemned pit latrines, cracked walls and deteriorating roofs. Government speaks of competence-based learning, yet many schools lack the infrastructure to implement it.

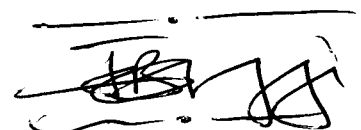
Learning outcomes are equally alarming. **The 2025 National Assessment of Progress in Education found more than 60% of Primary Six learners could not read a simple passage in English or perform basic numeracy, after decades of investment in Universal Primary Education.** The national pupil-teacher ratio stands at 53:1, exceeding 70:1 in several districts, against a recommended 40:1. Secondary gross enrolment sits at only 29%, and technical and vocational institutions enrol fewer than 400,000 learners against a youth population exceeding 10 million in the relevant age bracket.

The UPE capitation grant of only UGX 18,600 per learner, and UGX 21,000 for learners with special needs is insufficient, pushing schools to levy charges on parents, a practice that undermines the principle of universal education. Think about it, 18,600 shs per learner, not per term, but per year. How is that child supposed to be competent globally in this day and age?

Salary disparities between science, arts and primary teachers have weakened morale and fuelled attrition. We welcomed the increase in pay for science teachers, but there is no reason why the same does not happen for arts teachers as well. Government must substantially increase investment in school infrastructure, review capitation grants to reflect current realities, recruit and retain qualified teachers, strengthen technical and vocational education, and prioritise learning outcomes as the central measure of success, or risk producing a generation enrolled in school but unprepared for a modern world.

Agriculture and rural livelihoods

Agriculture employs approximately 68% of Uganda's workforce, and contributes 24% of GDP, yet productivity, measured as value added per worker, stands at just USD 462 per year, among the lowest in East Africa (Ministry of Agriculture Sector Performance Report FY2024/25). The Head of state highlighted selected success



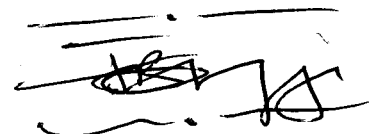
stories in dairy and coffee, while paying insufficient attention to the structural constraints trapping millions of smallholder farmers in low productivity and poor returns.

Uganda has approximately one extension worker per 2,000 farmers against a recommended ratio of one per 400, with more than 5,000 extension positions vacant nationwide; the Auditor General's 2025 report found only 44% of required extension workers across 135 local governments were fully employed, meaning farmers receiving PDM money through their SACCOs have no technical guidance to use it productively. Only 4.6% of cultivated land is under irrigation, and post-harvest losses run 30–40% for perishable crops, destruction of value caused not by farmers failing to produce, but by Government's failure to provide storage, cold chains and market infrastructure. PDM disburses UGX 100 million per parish annually, roughly UGX 4,000 per household per month, a sum that cannot transform smallholder productivity, absent extension support, storage and market access.

The Uganda Land Alliance's Annual Situation Report 2025 documents land conflicts affecting an estimated 3 million Ugandans every year, with average farm holdings shrinking from 2.5 acres in 2005 to 1.8 acres today. Government's proposed family companies address only one dimension of a far broader land governance challenge, and the FY2026/27 Legislative Programme contains no dedicated land tenure reform legislation. Addressing land insecurity requires stronger protection of property rights, improved land administration, registration of customary tenure, and firm action against unlawful evictions: a prerequisite for investment, productivity and sustainable growth.

ICT and digital transformation

Rt. Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, the Opposition shares Government's aspiration for a digitally connected Uganda, but digital transformation must be measured by whether citizens can access affordable internet and whether technology genuinely improves service delivery and accountability, not by systems launched or fibre laid. NITA-U's Uganda National ICT Survey 2025 shows internet penetration at approximately 26% nationally, with mobile internet reaching only 18% of rural households, and one gigabyte of data costs about 4% of average monthly income against the International Telecommunication Union's 2% affordability target, a pricing gap that concentrates digital benefits in urban areas while locking rural communities out of e-commerce and digital financial services.



Government has also been slow to deploy digital tools that could improve transparency: digitised procurement systems and open-access expenditure platforms are still unevenly implemented despite years of policy commitment. Billions have been invested in the national CCTV and Intelligent Transport Monitoring System (ITMS), yet these are used more for post-incident investigation than real-time prevention. Technology must empower citizens rather than merely modernise the bureaucracy that serves them: the priority must be affordable broadband, digital literacy, and genuine accountability tools, alongside greater investment in monitoring capacity and rapid response mechanisms.

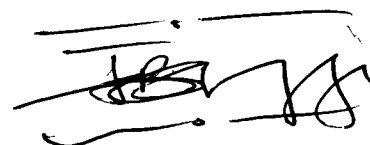
Works and transport

Honourable Members, the Head of state highlighted investment in roads and the Standard Gauge Railway, but paid insufficient attention to the maintenance crisis consuming what has already been built. The Parliamentary Committee on Physical Infrastructure's Report on the Integrated Transport Infrastructure System (ITIS) Programme for FY2026/27 shows over 95% of national, municipal and town council roads in poor condition, with transport costs accounting for up to 40% of Uganda's total export costs, a competitive tax on every producer, trader and farmer. The road maintenance backlog stands at UGX 3.2 trillion, and vehicle operating costs run 35% above regional comparators due to poor surfaces.

The ITIS budget rose from UGX 6,383.6 billion to UGX 8,787.57 billion, a headline 37.7% increase that is misleading given chronic absorption failures. The Ministry of Works closed FY2024/25 with arrears of UGX 1.489 trillion; the approved FY2025/26 arrears clearance budget of UGX 218.456 billion was never released, triggering contractor suspensions, yet government cut the FY2026/27 arrears allocation to just UGX 39.609 billion. The Auditor General identified 14 transferred road projects worth UGX 1,852 billion stalled after the UNRA mainstreaming exercise, while KCCA's allocation was cut 14.56% even as absorption fell to 22.74% under the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area Urban Development Programme, leaving KCCA facing a road funding gap of UGX 45 billion.

As the Opposition, we would like to see:

- 1) restoration of the transport arrears budget to at least UGX 300 billion with a binding three-year clearance schedule approved by Parliament;
- 2) quarterly audited progress reports on the ITIS Programme tabled before the relevant Parliamentary Committee; and



3) real accountability for non-performers. Uganda needs roads that last, rails that move cargo, and transport costs that fall, not promises while contractors go unpaid and roads deteriorate.

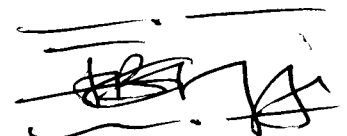
Local government and service delivery

The quality of government is judged not at the center of power but where citizens actually live. The **Secretary to the Treasury acknowledged in February 2026, that more than a third of all public spending flows through local government, and that government fails to deliver services where citizens live if internal audit fails at that level. The Auditor General's 2025 Annual Report shows this is already the present reality.**

PDM, Government's flagship poverty alleviation programme, is the most instructive case study. Of UGX 3.26 trillion released to over 10,500 PDM SACCOs nationwide, only UGX 2.75 trillion had reached intended households by June 2025, leaving UGX 508.6 billion undistributed; In 55 local governments, 619 households were found implementing ineligible projects, and the audit identified 109 confirmed ghost projects, activities that exist on paper, receive public money, and have nothing happening on the ground. UGX 263 million was diverted across 52 local governments, more than 2,336 households received PDM loans multiple times in violation of programme rules, and recovery of the Parish Revolving Fund has barely begun, with only 18,105 beneficiaries in 30 districts having repaid anything at all, just UGX 9.34 billion. The Auditor General's 2024 Annual Report found 2,985 PDM SACCOs across 127 local governments with no registered offices and 2,898 with no signboards, among the most basic requirements of institutional existence. A further 170 beneficiaries across 37 local governments received PDM funds for projects that do not exist. These findings demonstrate the price of weak accountability.

A special audit on payroll and pension irregularities found ghost pensioners and deceased beneficiaries still drawing payments because local governments and the Ministry of Public Service have failed to reconcile their records. Citizens experience government through the school without a roof, the clinic with no medicines, and the SACCO that received money for a project no one ever saw.

It is imperative that critical staff vacancies be filled across local governments, that accounting officers responsible for diverted funds face meaningful sanctions, that the pension payroll be cleaned through comprehensive biometric verification, that the identities of ghost PDM beneficiaries be made public, and that road maintenance grants be raised to levels commensurate with actual need.



Tourism, trade and industry

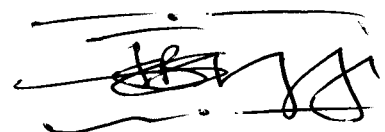
Tourism recorded strong performance in 2025, and the Opposition says so plainly: international arrivals grew 19.7% to 1.64 million visitors, exceeding the 2019 pre-pandemic benchmark, and earnings reached a record UGX 5.8 trillion (about USD 1.62 billion), up 21.3% on 2024. The sector contributed 6.6% of GDP and directly supported 803,691 jobs. Yet this is being delivered despite a structural funding deficit: current programme funding of UGX 492.82 billion falls well below the UGX 620 billion required under NDPIV, and the Uganda Tourism Board could not submit 16 planned international event bids in FY2024/25 for lack of subvention funds. Uganda ranks 112th on the World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, behind Kenya at 82nd, while Rwanda has invested over UGX 330 billion since 2018 on tourism branding alone, more than Uganda's entire annual UTB budget. These comparisons should be seen in good light, because these are sister-countries in the East African community.

Only four five-star facilities exist nationwide, and tourists leave an estimated 60% of potential spending untapped. The World Bank found that each tourist dollar generates USD 2.03 in local income around Queen Elizabeth National Park; government ought to invest accordingly in tourism infrastructure, marketing and product diversification.

On trade, the merchandise trade deficit narrowed 58.3% between April 2024 and April 2025, driven by improved non-traditional exports such as electricity, sugar, base metals and vanilla, genuine gains that deserve acknowledgment. But manufacturing still contributes only 8.4% of GDP and employs 8.3% of the workforce, as noted above, and manufacturing SMEs across food processing, beverages and textiles struggle to access financing as credit to the sector declined even while the wider economy grew. Industrialisation requires affordable long-term financing, reliable infrastructure, skills development and deliberate policy support. Manufacturing and value addition must move from a recurring aspiration in annual speeches to a genuine, funded national priority.

Environment and natural resources

One of the most significant omissions in the address was environmental sustainability. NEMA's State of the Environment Report 2025 shows Uganda has lost over 60% of its forest cover since independence, with deforestation running at



92,000 hectares a year, one of the highest rates in sub-Saharan Africa. Wetland coverage has fallen from 15.6% of national land area in 1994 to approximately 8.9% today, Nile perch and tilapia catches from Lake Victoria have dropped over 40% since 2000, and average temperatures have risen 1.3°C since 1970.

Climate change is already reshaping communities through unpredictable rainfall, drought, floods and declining yields, borne most by those who contribute least to global emissions. Environmental protection is a prerequisite for growth, not an obstacle to it. Recent demolitions of wetland settlements have also raised concerns about selective enforcement, with some encroachments targeted while others, often with political or economic connections, are spared, and families displaced without practical resettlement options. Government must enforce environmental laws consistently and without regard to political or economic interest.

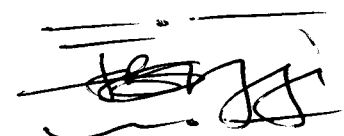
Energy and minerals

Installed electricity generation capacity has risen to 2,098 megawatts, a notable achievement not matched by access or efficient utilisation. The UN Country Analysis for Uganda (2025) shows that by 2024 only 53% of households had access to electricity and just 25% were connected to the national grid. The Auditor General's 2025 Report found government paid UGX 26.94 billion in "deemed energy" for power that could not be transmitted or consumed due to transmission-network limitations, and flagged underutilisation of generation assets at Karuma and Isimba. More than 90% of households still rely on firewood and charcoal for cooking, driving deforestation and indoor air pollution borne mostly by women and children.

Uganda's mineral and petroleum resources are a genuine opportunity, but resource wealth alone does not guarantee development. Real benefits depend on transparent licensing, sound contract management, effective revenue collection, and prudent investment of resource revenues in infrastructure, education and healthcare. Success will be measured not by the value of resources extracted, but by how far those resources improve the lives of ordinary Ugandans.

Presidency, Office of the Prime Minister and defence

Honourable Members, the Head of state spoke strongly against corruption and non-performance. These are welcome pronouncements, but credibility requires accountability to begin at the institutions closest to the centre of power, and on that test the record is unsatisfactory. The Office of the Prime Minister, designated by Article 108A as the engine room of government, has repeatedly been linked to major accountability failures. In March 2026, OPM officials appeared before the

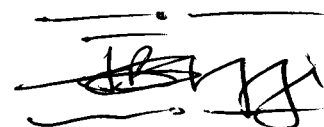


Public Accounts Committee over allegations that UGX 3.5 billion earmarked for victims of the Kiteezi Landfill collapse had been diverted to activities in the Elgon region, following the widely publicised 2023 Iron Sheets scandal. As detailed above, the Auditor General also found 170 beneficiaries across 37 local governments receiving PDM funds for non-existent projects, and identified billions paid to ghost workers and deceased pensioners due to the OPM and Ministry of Public Service's failure to reconcile their data systems. These failures call for strengthened internal controls, real-time expenditure tracking, integrated data systems, and enhanced parliamentary oversight.

The Office of the President presents its own transparency challenge. Classified expenditure within State House shields billions from meaningful audit behind a security label applied to a civilian office rather than the Ministry of Defence, where such classification properly belongs. In FY2024/25, UGX 300 billion was spent on special meals and drinks from State House, nearly double the UGX 172 billion allocated to social protection for the poor the same year, while the Ministry of Defence received UGX 3.737 trillion for FY2025/26. We believe that all civilian expenditure within the Office of the President must be made subject to full Parliamentary and Auditor General scrutiny without exception. The defence and security sector should be held to the same standard: security is essential to national development, but public confidence in security institutions depends on transparency, accountability and respect for the rule of law. We have seen some security chiefs being arrested for alleged corruption and other ills in the security space, we hope they will get a fair trial so that both accountability and justice prevail.

East African Community and regional integration

The Opposition supports regional integration, and the pan-African vision is one we share, but meaningful integration requires more than declarations. The EAC Secretariat's Regional Integration Report 2025 shows intra-EAC trade at only about 18% of total regional trade, and the East African Monetary Union, originally targeted for 2024, has been postponed indefinitely for lack of the fiscal discipline and institutional convergence it requires. When member states unilaterally amend their constitutions to remove presidential term and age limits, they signal that constitutional commitments are negotiable whenever incumbency requires it, creating governance mismatches that make political confederation structurally difficult to achieve. A truly integrated East Africa must be built on shared values as well as shared markets.

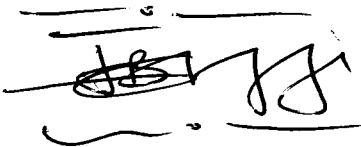
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Conclusion

The facts presented in this response paint a clear picture. While progress has been made in some areas, many Ugandans continue to face poverty, unemployment, poor public services, and growing pressure on their livelihoods, and the gap between official claims and daily experience is still wide. Ugandans want decent healthcare, quality education, reliable infrastructure, opportunities to earn a living, accountable management of public resources, and respect for the rule of law by all institutions. These are reasonable expectations that should be at the center of government action. The Opposition will continue to advocate for these priorities and to hold government accountable for its commitments to the people of Uganda. We love this Country dearly, and we commit to working towards its betterment, that is precisely why we keep raising the concerns that we do.

I say al this, For God and my Country.

I thank you, Rt. Hon. Speaker and Honourable members.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. S. N.', is written over a set of horizontal lines. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.