



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA



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### **STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER FOR DISASTER**

#### **PREPAREDNESS, RELIEF & REFUGEES**

**HON. ENG.HILLARY**

**ONEK**

**AT THE HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON ADDRESSING LARGE**

**MOVEMENT OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS**

**UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK**

**(19<sup>th</sup> Sept 2016).**

The President UN General Assembly, H.E Peter Thomson  
Your Excellencies Heads of States and Governments,  
H.E Ban Ki Moon UN Secretary General,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. Currently, Uganda is experiencing an unforeseen influx of South Sudanese refugees into the country, having received over 120,000 since the beginning of July alone. Add this to the current population and the continuing influxes from DRC and Burundi, Uganda is now host to over 690,000 refugees. By the end of the year we expect Uganda to host over 810,000 refugees.
2. As a result of the continuous influxes from the region, Uganda is, as of today, the 8<sup>th</sup> largest refugee hosting country in the world and 3<sup>rd</sup> in relation to GDP.
3. This is happening in an environment, where globally, the asylum space is dwindling.
4. Uganda has lived these challenges since the days of the great wars when it hosted Polish Refugees fleeing from World War II.
5. Since 1959 to date, on average, Uganda has been host to over 160,000 refugees per year.
6. This solidarity has now been codified into policy, whereby refugee protection and management is integrated into the National Development Plan II, as well as the UN Development Assistance Framework.
7. The Government of Uganda is already implementing a comprehensive response, and this model needs to be adopted globally.
8. The Government of Uganda needs commitment from the International Community to ensure sustained interventions in the protection regime in the Country and to build strong partnerships internally, regionally and globally to address the question of forced Migration.
9. Uganda is ***the place*** to support for transition from humanitarian to solutions prospects for protracted refugee situations. It has the enabling frameworks in

place and strong partnerships transcending the humanitarian-development divide.

10. Uganda will continue to ensure the rights of refugees are respected. This includes:
  - Prima facie recognition of refugees from South Sudan, DR Congo and Burundi
  - Individual registration and provision of Identity Cards to all refugees
  - Birth registration of children born to refugees in Uganda
  - Refugees have access to social services, such as health and education, on par with nationals
  - Refugees have the freedom of movement
  - Refugees have the right to work and establish business
11. Through the settlement approach, refugees are provided with land for housing and agricultural production either in government gazetted areas, or on community owned land. The value of this land availed is US\$ 50 Million.
12. The Government of Uganda is also in the process of establishing the National Solutions Alliance which should come up with alternative broad solutions to protracted refugee situations in the country.
13. Steps have been taken by the Government of Uganda to secure a loan from the World Bank that will help address the development gaps in refugee hosting areas, and the addition of Refugee Host Population Empowerment(ReHOPE) by the UN Country team is a welcome innovation and UNHCR must lead the process of resourcing the Settlement Transformation Agenda and Refugee Host Population Empowerment (ReHOPE) Strategies.
14. The Government of Uganda has set the requisite foundation for UNHCR to ably take off in this direction. Further to this, the Government appreciates the recent commitment by UNHCR High Commissioner of US\$ 31m towards ReHoPE interventions in 2016 and 2017.
15. While doing all this, there is a need to develop the institutional capacity of the Ministry and the local Governments hosting refugees to maintain the current protection regime. This includes capacitating the Ministry's Department with the requisite human and financial resources to implement the World Bank and ReHoPE programmes.

16. The Ugandan Government supports the move towards a Global Compact on Refugees, and envisions that the Ugandan model will be instrumental in modeling the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.

## **FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY**