



**THE GROUP OF THE PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE OF SOCIALISTS &
DEMOCRATS (S&D) IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

**S&D TOGETHER EVENT ON “MANAGING MIGRATION & SUPPORTING
REFUGEES IN A GLOBALISED WORLD”
“EUROPE & AFRICA: MANAGING MIGRATION”**

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The Leader of the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats in
the European Parliament

Members of the S&D Group

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Guest

I would like to thank the leader of the S&D Group for inviting me to participate
in your coming TOGETHER event on “Managing Migration & Supporting Refugees
in a Globalised World” I am honoured to be invited as a panel speaker of the
workshop on “**Europe & Africa: Managing Migration**” I am particularly delighted
to be here today to share with you Uganda’s experience as model refugee hosting
country in Africa. I believe Uganda’s story is African experience that Europe can
learn from in managing refugee and migration issues.

Uganda's hospitality and Refugees inflows to Uganda

Uganda is a haven in the unstable Great Lakes region. She has a population of 38 million and a land area of 241,038 km². The per capita income is US\$615. Uganda is a landlocked lower middle-income country facing development challenges, yet she is host to 1.4 million refugees. Uganda currently hosts the highest number of refugees in Africa. The refugees include 1 million refugees from South Sudan most of whom fled to Uganda during the past two years, 270,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 40,000 refugees from Burundi, 37,000 refugees from Somalia and 37,000 from other countries.

Uganda has in the past hosted refugees from Europe. In the early 1940s during the second World War Uganda hosted refugees from Poland at Nyabyeya in Masindi District, Western Uganda and Koja in Mukono District, Central Uganda. The Polish refugees were later resettled in Britain, Australia and Canada. However, Uganda's rigorous involvement with refugees and the refugee problem started in 1955 when Uganda hosted approximately 78,000 Southern Sudanese refugees. In 1959/1960 influxes of Congolese and Rwandese refugees entered the western part of Uganda. Since then, Uganda has played host to thousands of refugees from the following countries: Burundi, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra-Leone, Senegal, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. However, majority of refugees in Uganda has comprised the nationals of surrounding countries including; Rwanda, DR Congo and South Sudan.

Despite, dealing with its own development challenges and increasing vulnerabilities, including drought and food insecurity that affects many parts of the country from time to time, Uganda continues to maintain an open-door policy in face on the increasing refugee influx. Refugees in Uganda live in settlements similar to villages

other Ugandans live in but not in refugee camps. They are given land to build their own houses and grow their own food. They are permitted to seek gainful employment outside the settlement in any part of the country, where they are permitted to free movement after registration and being provided with a refugee identity cards. The question that begs to be asked is why and how is Uganda able to sustain this unique refugee model.

Obuntubulamu approach for Social Cohesion and Sustaining Peace

Uganda has a long tradition of hospitality towards refugees. Uganda's rich cultural heritage grounds her approaches to development including refugees hosting which is ensconced in empathy, solidarity and brotherhood like most African states. This is known as Obuntubulamu in Uganda and in Southern Africa as "Ubuntu", the concept denotes humanity towards others. Across the different cultures in Uganda, it manifests as a set of an almost endless number of values.

Obuntubulamu not only forms a building block to national values and identity, but it harnesses the social integration and endeavours to preserve local relationships in the Ugandan society. Obuntubulamu is not only practiced among the Baganda but it cuts across different communities within which Luganda, the language of the Baganda, is widely spoken.

This model of transformation is predicated on the theory that inculcating the values of Obuntubulamu is a catalyst for social transformation. It posits that behavioural change is possible through culture to reduce distortion of personal and communal development of citizens by affecting positively the attitudes of the people and interrupting negative patterns. Consequently, a new society emerges where its young adults are instilled with values of mutual respect, tolerance, integrity, humanity and

empathy. This is expected to have a snowball effect on the Ugandan society leading to increased trust in leadership, public institutions and governance, and a more tolerant society that abhors violence and resolves conflicts through non-violent avenues shall emerge. Further, as the project has a special focus on youth and women, gender equality can be addressed from a non-threatening approach in an otherwise patriarchal society.

United Nations System in Uganda Support to Refugees and Host Communities

The United Nations System in Uganda comprised of 18 agencies is supporting the Government of Uganda to meet the humanitarian and development needs of the refugees and communities hosting them through implementing the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2016-2020 in support of the National Development Plan (NDP). The UNDAF focuses on Governance; Human Capital Development; and Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Development (SIED). The UN System in Uganda supports the Government to meet the humanitarian and development needs of the refugees and communities hosting them through implementing the Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE).

ReHoPE is multi-stakeholder framework developed in partnership with the World Bank around common outcomes based on four objectives around: (i) Delivery of basic social services, (ii) strengthening of local district capacity, (iii) promotion of sustainable livelihoods with a focus on women and youth, and (iv) protection of the environment. It seeks to effectively address immediate emergency refugee needs and build the resilience of the most vulnerable sections of refugees and host communities alike. ReHOPE is premised on broader partnerships among UN agencies, international and local NGOs, private sector, CSOs and Government that promotes greater value for money and increases overall efficiency through combined efforts.

ReHOPE is aligned with the Government's Settlement Transformative Agenda and the National Development Plan (NDP II) and prioritizes strengthening of Government surge and risk capacity. It also promotes sustainable local government ownership over the long term by ensuring humanitarian interventions are initiated with the engagement of Local Governments and resilience interventions are informed by local development plans. This is how ReHOPE contributes to the fulfilment of the SDGs as well as to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) where Uganda has been chosen as one of the countries to inform the blue print of the Global compact on refugees.

These frameworks link humanitarian and development interventions across the spectrum ranging from protection, assistance and relief to development. The humanitarian response is situated within a development framework to ensure seamless transition and reinforce partnerships between international stakeholders and national actors. It maintains and protects humanitarian space while promoting a pragmatic approach. The refugee response must be life-saving and have a development aspect to preserve the asylum space by investing in host communities.

The generosity and investments of the Ugandan government and people in maintaining an open-door, transformative policy, is unique and should be praised, particularly at a time when the asylum space is shrinking in many countries around the world. This links to Uganda's role as a reference country on the implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) model, in fulfilment of the New York Declaration. The Uganda model, addresses the humanitarian-development nexus by applying a theory of change to the national vision including its national development plan II as well as to.

Uganda Solidarity Summit for Refugees

The Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees convened and jointly hosted by President Yoweri Museveni and United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in Kampala on 23rd June 2017 raised US\$ 500million, more than half of which was from the EU, for refugees and Ugandan communities hosting them.

The summit was unique because it was the first summit of its kind to be held in the global south in the same country for which support was mobilised in solidarity. The Summit was attended by representatives from 46 countries and international organisations including several Heads of States and Governments

Addressing the Summit President Yoweri Museveni said, ' Given our Pan-Africanist ideological orientation and the history of our people, it is not such a difficult problem to absorb or co-exist with refugees from within Africa. Nevertheless, the sudden large numbers of refugees present the following problems: feeding them; sheltering them; providing energy for them for cooking and lighting so that they do not destroy the environment by cutting trees; water for household use and production; allowances for clothing and other household needs; education for knowledge and skills especially for the children and the youth, immunization and treatment.'

President Museveni called on international partners to assist Uganda to cope with these challenges. He highlighted the importance of rewarding refugee hosting districts in Uganda especially in the area of road infrastructure.

For his part, the UN Secretary-General António Guterres said, 'I have seen Uganda's borders open, I have seen the doors of Uganda's people open, I have seen the hearts of the Ugandan people open.'

‘But not all doors are open in the world. Not all refugees are accepted, some are rejected, and sometimes in countries much richer than Uganda. So it’s also necessary to look into this example and to say clearly that the international community must come together and re-establish the integrity of the refugee protection regime everywhere in the world.

And, at the same time, the international community needs to step up and needs to give to the Ugandan people and to the refugees hosted by the Ugandan people the kind of support that is absolutely needed because the circumstances in which these sacrifices are being made are extremely challenging.’

The way forward to better manage migration flows in partnership with African States

People: equality and equity

Embrace the African spirit of Obuntubulamu or Ubuntu

African States have a long tradition of hospitality towards refugees and have developed legal frameworks governing aspects of refugee protection specific to Africa. Africa is a continent of 11 million square miles and 1.28 billion people. Although Africa is the origin of Man and the human beings did not start populating other Continents until 100,000 years ago, the population of Africa remained small for a significant period of time. Having a small population, in a vast and rich Continent, negatively affected the process of State formation, innovativeness of the African people and the ability to resist colonization. Despite these challenges African kingdoms and chiefdoms retained dignified approaches to migration which are informing modern efforts to strengthen regional integration and continental free trade. Shared values such as Ubuntu known as Obuntumulamu in Uganda have

existed for hundreds of years informing the ability of communities to welcome migrants and refugees, take care of the destitute and ensure the safety of inhabitants.

I call upon the EU to embrace the African spirit of Obuntubulamu or Ubuntu – “my humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in yours” to harness social integration, build relationships and preserve peace, in order to manage the migration challenges Europe is facing.

Embrace Migration more as a part of the solution rather than a burden:

Overview of Migration Globally

- Evidence shows that migrants accounted for 47% of the increase in the workforce in the United States and 70% in Europe in ten years
- Migrants contribute significantly to labour-market flexibility, notably in Europe.
- Migrants contribute including Africans in the diaspora in Europe more in taxes and social contributions than they receive in benefits
- Migration boosts the working-age population.
- Migrants arrive with skills and contribute to human capital development of receiving countries and can contribute to technological progress.

Overview of Migration in Africa and Uganda

- 20.6 million International migrants in Africa in 2015.
- Over 80% of migration in African is within the continent.
- International migrants in Uganda in 2015- 749, 471 (UNDESA 2015)

- Refugees in Uganda in 2017- 1.4 million
- In 2015, remittances received in Uganda were over USD 1.2 billion

With 80% of migration in African is within the continent only 20% of the migration from Africa is outside the continent including Europe. The EU should invest in initiatives that promote social cohesion and peacebuilding, and positive effects of migration such as the Obuntubulamu project that the United Nations System in Uganda with cultural/traditional leaders.

The Uganda Refugee Model which promotes peacefully coexistence between refugees and host communities responding to both their humanitarian and development needs including education and acquisition of entrepreneurial skills should be supported by the EU both as collectively and bilaterally.

Emphasis should be placed on building the capacities of local governments structures and local community based organisation because they are the ones that best understand their realities

Planet: conservation and transformation

I commend the EU for the support provided to Uganda through the United Nations System on several projects aimed at conservation and transformation.

The Switch Africa Green Project is an European Union (EU) funded project implemented by UNEP in collaboration with UNOPS and UNDP that builds on previous and on-going UN initiatives in promoting economic growth that is inclusive and takes environmental concerns into account- Green economy. The project aims to promote the green business entrepreneurship and the use of sustainable consumption practices (SCP) by: (i) supporting the formulation of sound policy and

regulatory frameworks; (ii) ensuring that micro and small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) are better equipped to apply SCP practices and (iii) informing public and private consumers of the multiple benefits of sustainable, resource-efficient products.

The ACP-EU Development Minerals Programme, is a pioneering three-year, multi-country initiative of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, funded by the European Union and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and implemented by UNDP. In Uganda, the EU is supporting the ACP-EU Development Minerals Programme to build the profile and improve the management of Development Minerals. Development Minerals are minerals and materials that are mined, processed, manufactured and used domestically in industries such as construction, manufacturing, infrastructure and agriculture. Uganda was allocated \$820,000.

Uganda Presidential Wetland Initiative

Under the Uganda Presidential Wetland Initiative in Uganda UNDP and UNEP supported the preparation of Uganda Wetland Atlas; and the formulation of the National Strategy for reducing deforestation and forest degradation to provide policy makers and implementers with the information needed to support actions for wetland restoration and afforestation. As a result, Uganda has been awarded USD 24 million by the Green Climate Fund for the initiatives intended to restore wetlands and reduce green gas house emissions. I call upon the EU to join in supporting the initiative.

The rapidly increasing number of refugees in the settlements in Uganda is putting pressure on the environment as refugees cut trees for firewood. EU should support innovations that protect the environment such as solar/energy saving cooking stoves

Prosperity: inclusive and sustainable

It is imperative for African states to be robust in order for them to have capacity to trade among themselves and with the rest of the world. I call on the EU to contribute to strengthening the capacity of African states to engage fairly in intra-continental and international trade through supporting indigenous systems that promote social cohesion such as Obuntubulamu in Uganda and formal institutions that promote trade and Invest.

EU Governments, Politicians, Private Sector and CSOs should invest in areas that Indigenous and local capacities through education and entrepreneurial skills development so that Africans are able to be more productive in their own countries instead of seeking to become illegal immigrants in Europe.

Promote Fair trade between Europe and Africa – It must be noted that development aid alone is not sufficient to address the challenges in Africa. Private sector investment to complement official aid is vital to create the necessary volume and quality of jobs needed to address Africa's unemployment challenge, for example. This means placing bolstered trade and investment at the centre of the Africa-EU partnership and by championing policies to buy products from producers in developing countries at a fair price, which is a more efficient way of promoting sustainable development than traditional charity and aid.

Harness the Youth bulge – One of the major challenges in Africa, which compels people to migrate, is the high rates of unemployment among young people and the African Union and its Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have set the goal of

freer movement of people across borders to stimulate trans-continental labour mobility, alongside infrastructural connectivity and increased intra-African trade. While the high youth population is a development challenge, it is also an opportunity. The demographic dividend should be harnessed.

Uganda is faced with persistent employment challenges especially amongst youths. 78% of the population in Uganda is below 30 years making it one of the countries with the youngest population in the world.

The UN in Uganda Adolescents and Youth Strategy (2017-2020) is a four-year strategic document that seeks to help the United Nations in Uganda maximize the impact and responsiveness of its frameworks and programs on adolescents and youth and streamline United Nations' support to the Government of Uganda. This is done through: (i) guiding the UN in its engagement and support for adolescents and youth; and (ii) harmonizing the UN's support to the Government of Uganda in matters concerning adolescents and youth. The strategy is expected to be reviewed in line with the next UNDAF period. The UN in Uganda Adolescents and Youth Strategy guides the implementation of the current UNDAF in areas that pertain to the adolescents and youth of the country.

Uganda Graduate Volunteer Scheme

To enhance young graduates' employability and bridge their transition to work, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Uganda and UN Volunteer (UNV) Programme in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) on behalf of the Government of Uganda, have developed a Project, "Uganda Graduate Volunteer Scheme".

The project aims to contribute to efforts of addressing persistent employment challenges faced by Ugandan young graduates. The project will specifically aim to provide young graduates, below 30 years leaving institutions of higher learning on an annual basis with access to work spaces to gain employability skills. This is in line with national strategy to increase availability and quality of gainful employment, and enhancing human capital development in the country.

The project has four key components: a) Building national capacities to promote employment intensive growth and to mainstream employment in national and sectoral policies and planning; b) Enhancing youth skills and competencies for employability and enterprises' competitiveness; c) Promotion of job creation and innovative enterprise through entrepreneurship and inclusive financial services development; and d) Supporting the development of labour market intermediation services including job search matching, job placement, job readiness trainings, labour market information systems and awareness of available employment information.

Conclusion

In conclusion, through supporting indigenous systems that promote social cohesion such as Obuntubulamu in Uganda and formal institutions that promote good governance and a robust state, the EU will be able to go along way in contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 10 Reduced Inequality between Europe and Africa. In Uganda the United Nations System is doing this through the UN Development Assistance Framework 2016 -2020 in support the implementation of the National Vision 2040 and National Development plan aimed at transforming Uganda into a middle income country through inclusive

growth. I invite the EU to join us in this journey in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you