

**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EAST AFRICA TRADE AND INVESTMENT
FORUM ON THE SIDELINES OF THE NAM AND G77+CHINA SUMMIT, 16TH -
17TH JANUARY 2024, SERENA HOTEL-KAMPALA.**

By

Mr. Humprey Nzeyi

Chairman Board of Directors

Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU)

Protocol

- 1. Rt. Hon. Prime Minister – Robina Nabanja**
- 2. Hon. Ministers Present**
- 3. Hon. Ministers of State Present**
- 4. Excellencies the Ambassadors and High Commissioners,**
- 5. Boards of Private Sector Support Organizations,**
- 6. Heads of Government Agencies,**
- 7. Captains of the Industry - both Visiting and Ugandan Delegates**
- 8. Distinguished ladies and Gentlemen**

Good afternoon,

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Allow me to take this singular honor to welcome you Rt. Hon. Prime Minister and congratulate the private sector for reaching the conclusion of this East Africa Trade and Investment Forum.

Rt. Hon. PM, allow me to acknowledge our partners and sponsors in organising this Trade and Investment Forum including the Government of Uganda through the Ministries of Trade Industry and Cooperatives and Foreign Affairs, PSFU, UNDP, Stanbic Bank, National Housing and Construction Company, NSSF, Banana Industrial research and Innovation and NEC-Streit – Armoured Vehicles among many others.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, the Trade and Investment Forum's theme is **“deepening cooperation in trade, tourism and investment for shared global affluence”**. The forum and exhibition started on 15th January 2024 and was officiated by the 1st Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of East African Affairs Rt Hon. Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga and was officially opened by the Vice President Her Excellency Jesca Alupo yesterday 16th January 2024. This Forum has been attended by over **500 delegates** from **19 countries** which include Uganda, Qatar, United Kingdom (UK), Türkiye, Kenya, Egypt, Algeria, India, Cuba, China, South Africa, South Sudan, Italy, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Zambia, Saudi Arabia, Bulgaria and Morocco.

Alongside the forum was the exhibition which had over 32 exhibitors from 8 countries i.e. Uganda, India, Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, and Egypt.

Day 1. Opening Session

1.1 Why invest in Uganda?

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, some of the investment opportunities raised were in the, transport and works sector where projects in the sector that need investment were highlighted including; rail subsector 6, inland water transport- 6, logistic hubs – 4, road side stations 4, rural roads improvements - 1000 Km, major projects – 3 and 6 projects within the Great Kampala metropolitan met to decongest the capital city.

Uganda Investment Authority presented 13 key bankable projects which require investment in real estate, infrastructure development, health, ICT, mining, agriculture value addition, and public infrastructure. The investment incentives were also highlighted to include among others; security of persons and property, land for industrial park development, one stop centre, tax holidays for agro-processing and plant/machinery which are tax free, vehicles and equipment for tourism exempted from taxes, one stop centre services at UIA etc.

Second day

1.2 Uganda Tourism Potential

Rt. Hon. PM, the CEO of UTB, highlighted the unique selling propositions of Uganda, including; strategic location in EAC, Pearl of Africa and key investment opportunities in maritime tourism, accommodation investments, tour operations, infrastructure development, low entry barriers with ease of access and exit, low cost of labour, investments protected by the laws of Uganda and double taxation agreement/frameworks concluded with various countries, water base investments in agriculture or transport etc. Rt. Hon. the need to deliberately invest in tourism infrastructure development such as roads and airports to ease tourism business and grow the sector was highly emphasized.

We also had remarks from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC) who reemphasized the call for investors to invest in various sectors of the economy such as water transport, airline business, aviation.

The forum was also graced by **H.E Mohamed Bin Ahmed Twar Al Kuwari the Vice President the Qatar Chamber of Commerce** who noted the good relations between Qatar and Uganda and expressed *interest of Qatar in exploring investment opportunities in Uganda, through the Qatar Investment Authority in mining, energy, roads, railways, oil and gas, agriculture, and real estate*. He emphasized the enhanced cooperation and support of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce between Qatari and Uganda businessmen and respective companies for mutual benefit.

2.0 First Round of Panel Presentations and Deliberation

The panellists were from National Social Security Fund (NSSF), Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMED), Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT), National Housing and Construction Company (NHCC), and Uganda Free Zone Authority (UFZA).

Rt. Hon. PM, the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) indicated that the stability of the economy with *stable exchange rates* and the liberal economy policy provide conducive environment for trade and investment.

On the other hand Rt. Hon. PM, the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD) Hon. Ruth Nankabirwa noted that in regard to the Energy, the Ministry's strategy is to increase Uganda's energy from 1,781 megawatts to 52,200 megawatts, which is an opportunity for energy generation, transmission and distribution, nuclear energy power generation where sites have been identified and research has been undertaken, geothermal sites identified and feasibility studies being undertaken etc. are opportunities for investment. On transmission, there is opportunity in evacuation plant/transmission lines e.g. 240kv line from Bujagali, and investment in transformers and cables.

In regard to mineral development, this requires extraction and value addition. On petroleum resources, the standards for developing it is in place, the drilling of oil wells is ongoing. The Minister called for *investments in all remaining areas of oil and licenses for oil exploration continue* to be issued. She too, emphasized *value addition to minerals to be extracted*.

Rt. Hon. PM, the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) also made a case for investing in Uganda tourism sector and informed the delegation of the investment opportunities in; construction of Eco Lodges and hotels in national parks, house boats (on the Nile and queen Elizabeth and lake Edward), and new trail on Rwenzori Park.

The **Ministry of Works and Transport** also noted the opportunities for investment in the transport sector provided in Roads, Railways, Air, and Water Transport. The provided and listed projects in the master plan of about 20,000 km road network of national roads are at different stages of feasibility and designs undertaken etc. the listed bridges with ongoing designs were also provided.

Rt. Hon. PM, in **the housing sector**, the National Housing and Construction Company (NHCC) noted that there is a deficit of 7 million units thus, with 3.4% growth rate of population, there is 300,000 homes needed per year. Such housing requirements offer opportunity for investment and NHCC is ready to; facilitate investor entry by offering space at the headquarters to settle in, technical assistance, provide land among other.

Rt. Hon. PM, Uganda Free Zones Authority (UFZA) also presented the available opportunities in the UFZA including the bankable projects in coffee textile and apparel project in Jinja which is ready and operational, Mubende free zone, and Entebbe international airport free zone with storage and offices etc. The Nakaseke free zone will be ready in August 2024 as a multimodal largescale free zone, and provided with road infrastructure, water system, and electricity etc. The Northern Uganda (Gulu) free zone is also considered for a multimodal free zone.

4. Official Opening Ceremony

Rt. Hon. PM, the official opening ceremony was moderated by Hon. Mulimba, Minister of State for Regional Cooperation and officially addressed and opened by H.E. Jessica Alupo, Vice President of the Republic of Uganda. Hon. Mulimba underscored the importance of the EAC Trade and Investment Forum on the need to leverage on trade, investment, and tourism as a region of EAC.

Rt. Hon. PM, Ms. Elsie Attafuah, **Resident Representative UNDP Uganda** also addressed the summit. In her remarks, she emphasized tourism as low hanging fruit with culture, national parks and wildlife, fresh water, forests, beautiful sceneries, gorillas, and chimpanzees etc., thus most significant sector to contribute to GDP. Further, there linkages to other sectors such as agriculture, insurance and manufacturing. *She noted that UNDP is committed to supporting FDI, scale up country investments, regional partnerships and value chain investments which will continue to work with Uganda on strengthening that collaboration to build resilience on trade, tourism, and investment models.*

The forum was also addressed by the **EAC Deputy Secretary General - Customs, Trade and Monetary Affairs** Ms. Annette Ssemuwemba Mutaawe. She underscored the EAC policies on ensuring that the EAC is an attractive destination for trade and investment. Such include the Customs Union and Common Market with no tariffs and harmonized rules of origin, cost, and time of doing business in EAC which is reduced with 13 One Stop Border Point (OSBP), and there is common infrastructure to process goods in customs. She committed that the EAC secretariate is ready and capable to facilitate trade within the community.

Rt. Hon. PM, Amb. Jan Sadek the **Head of EU Delegation in Uganda** also highlighted the positive trade balance that Uganda has maintained and a top recipient of FDI with a lot of potential for business in the country. He pledged EU – EAC partnership in investment and trade based on the existing bilateral agreements and invited investors to the EU Business Summit which is due this year.

In his remarks, **Hon. Matia Kasaijja**, Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development expressed appreciation to H.E the President for blessing the convening of the EAC trade and investment forum. He noted the UIA One Stop Centre as a testimony to the commitment as single point of contact that ensures efficient processes for investors, seamless processes under one roof and reduce cost of doing business. He extended warm invitation to delegates to consider investing in Uganda.

2.1 Address by H.E Jessica Alupo, Vice President of Uganda

H.E. Jessica Alupo, the Vice President of Uganda extended appreciation to the organizers of the business forum and development partners such as EU and UNDP. She extended apologies of H.E the President who is the President of integration, according to the AU.

She noted that the convening of the EAC trade and investment forum demonstrated Uganda's commitment to the private sector development and renewed focus on strengthening partnerships between Uganda business community and foreign investments.

The Vice President also underscored the importance of interdependence and cooperation in trade and investment promotion, and called for development of technology and innovation to ensure value addition on resources and increase inter Africa trade that would transform lives of population. She emphasized technology transfer of south south trade to cause the desired transformation that is within our reach.

The Vice *president emphasized the country's commitment and continued support to investors*. She also encouraged the delegates to enjoy the beautiful natural features and other flora and fauna during their stay in Uganda.

3.0 Pannel Discussions on Innovative Financing for Investment and Trade in the Region.

Rt. Hon. PM, in the afternoon, we held other panel discussions. The first session was chaired by Ms. Sarah Kagingo, the Vice Chair Private Sector Foundation Uganda, and the keynote address on **innovative financing for investment and trade in the region** was delivered by Stanbic Bank Uganda. The panel discussants were from the East Africa Development Bank (EADB), Standard Chartered Bank, Diamond Trust Bank, Dott Services Company and Tembo Steel.

It was noted that, innovative financing addresses market failures like funding types, limited balance sheet and limited access to finance etc. Therefore, it was indicated that being able to *reallocate risks on temporary basis* e.g. World Bank *providing a guaranteed scheme* enables financial institutions to do business in various areas of operation.

It was further noted that there is need for initiatives that *embrace structured finance* e.g. secured financing for public sector, *blended financing to partnership in risk sharing* using multilateral platforms where there are people willing to take risks, *global partnerships with*

international works as intermediaries for financing, *macroeconomic stability and regional integration, legal frameworks for protecting capital markets, digitization* of a number of these solutions to raise funding, focus on high impact and *government framework to be set right for successful and innovative financing*.

EADB noted that they are open for business, and it finances a couple of projects like infrastructure projects that support regional integration e.g. the Standard Gauge Railways (SGR) in Tanzania that is being financed by EADB. The Central Provident Fund (CPF) Financial Services Kenya indicated that they manage employees' funds in Kenya with US\$ 13bn-14bn in Kenya for the entire pension scheme and are looking at how to deploy these resources in the region.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, on the sidelines of the plenary there was a Business to Government secession that was Chaired by the State Ministers for Trade and Industry Hon. Ntabazi and Hon. Bahati moderated by Uganda's Ambassador to Turkey Amb. Tiperu. The meeting was with the business delegation from Turkey and different investment and trade opportunities in mining, real estate, ICT, water, infrastructure, and manufacturing were discussed.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, towards the end of day two, we also had a panel discussion chaired by Ambassador Kabonero discussing which continued the discussion on business financing. The panel discussants were from Airtel Uganda, European Union, PAVO Group of Companies, Turkiye, Power Group State Company, Commonwealth Partnership for Technology (CPTM), United Kingdom (UK). The key outcomes from this discussion were the need to pay attention to the general population with access to finance and technology transfer. The need to continue support to the private sector and trade and investment in Uganda through digital financial inclusion was emphasised.

Third Day

Rt. Hon. PM, today morning we have had two other sessions on investment and the bankable projects in East Africa. In the first session, presentations were made by the Tanzania Investment Centre, Burundi Development Agency, Ministry for Investment in South Sudan and Uganda Investment Authority. Potential investment projects in the natural resources, real estate and housing, tourism, agriculture, infrastructure, ICT, energy were highlighted.

The second session which was a fire side chat chaired by CEO PSFU Mr. Stephen Asimwe was furthering the discussion on EAC as an investment destination. The keynote address was given by the Executive Vice President in charge of Intra African Trade Afrexim Bank and discussants were the Chairman of PSFU, Mr. Odrek Rwabwogo – Chairman PACEID, CEO MTN Uganda Ms. Sylvia Mulinge and UNDP Economic Advisor Mr. Thangavel.

Alongside the panel discussion was a Business-to-Business meeting between Afroexim Bank, DTB, National Housing, Centenary Bank discussing the Packages they can offer to the private sector. There are also ongoing discussions between NEC STREET Armoured vehicles and Bulgarian Business People on a potential business partnership. Ugandan company called Zoe

mentorship is in talks to establish crafts business in South Sudan. Rt. Hon. PM, these are just few of the many business and investment partnerships that have been created as a result of this forum.

In conclusion

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, the Private Sector noted that there is an urgent need to;

- i. Scale-up cross-country investments in connectivity and high-quality infrastructure across the region both physical and digital connectivity.
- ii. Invest in Bwindi and Mgahinga tourism infrastructure especially tourism roads, airports, and internal flights by Uganda Airlines. Rt. Hon. PM, data shows that money invested in such strategic infrastructure can be recovered in a period of less than 3 years.
- iii. Build the capacity of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to harness the potential of the AfCFTA. Strengthening the competitiveness and export readiness of SMEs in regional value chains through trade financing and business development services is crucial.
- iv. Strengthen regional cooperation to eliminate the persistent trade barriers.
- v. Rt. Hon. PM, the private sector has noted the need to invest in cross boarder infrastructure such as roads, cargo airlines and railways to facilitate trade.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, allow me once again take this singular honour to thank you for gracing this occasion and for the support you have always given to the private sector.

Business growth is our business