



**REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

**BRIEF REMARKS BY UGANDA’S MINISTER OF TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND ANTIQUITIES**  
**AT THE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE CONFERENCE KASANE BOTSWANA**

*Your Excellence the President of Botswana Lt. Gen. Khama Ian Khama,*

*Your Excellences Heads of State and Governments present,*

*Honourable Ministers and Permanent Secretaries*

*All delegations*

*Ladies and Gentlemen.*

1. I wish on behalf of the Uganda delegation to congratulate the Republic of Botswana and Your Excellency The President for organizing and hosting this important Conference that is a follow up of both the Gaborone African Elephant Summit in 2013 and the London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade in 2014. Your Excellency, I extend our appreciation to the government and people of Botswana for the warm hospitality accorded to us.
2. This follow up meeting is timely and very important for us to evaluate the implementation of the measures and actions agreed upon more than one year ago. It is no doubt that illegal killing of elephants, illegal ivory trade as well as rhino horn trade has continued on the continent.
3. Your Excellency and Distinguished Delegates, Uganda has stepped up the fight against illegal wildlife trade and in the last one year, we have seized

over two tons of ivory at Entebbe International Airport, 30 rhino horns and about 2 tons of Pangolin skins all being smuggled through the airport. We have intensified our awareness creation not only with the general public but all enforcement agencies and as a result of good coordination and collaboration between various enforcement agencies, we are determined to make it increasingly difficult for wildlife traffickers to use Uganda as a Transit country.

4. We have developed a new National Wildlife Policy that was approved by Cabinet in March 2014. The Policy addresses gaps in the legal framework and outlines some good strategies for addressing wildlife trafficking and other crimes.
5. We have experienced some few challenges in the management of our national ivory stockpile to the extent that about 1.2 tons of ivory was in 2014 lost but we have since put up safeguards and measures to ensure that the ivory in the national stockpile is safe. We have since recovered some of this ivory from recent seizures but also noticed ivory from other countries' stockpiles within the seizures made in Uganda. We would like to share our experience and also learn from others that have managed their stockpiles well as experience is the best teacher.
6. Uganda has continued to make use of accredited forensic laboratories in USA and South Africa to determine the origin of seized ivory and rhino horns respectively. To this end, Uganda welcomes the establishment of the new forensic laboratory in Nairobi and we will definitely make use of it.
7. Uganda will continue to strongly support strategies and measures that are aimed at eliminating demand from consumer countries. It is this seemingly insatiable demand that has escalated the problem of illegal wildlife trade in

Africa. We strongly call upon the consumer countries to declare measures to be taken to eliminate this demand.

8. With regard to the **Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI)**, I understand that the process that was recommended for countries to join the EPI here at Kasane would be by declaration in our respective opening speeches. In that regard therefore, I now state that Uganda fully supports and is pleased to announce its acceptance of the invitation made by the Governments of Botswana, Ethiopia, Chad, Gabon and Tanzania at the London Conference to join the Elephant Protection Initiative.
9. In accepting to join the EPI, Uganda calls for immediate and longer term funding for the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan and we restate our support for the closure of both domestic and international ivory markets. All stockpiles should be put beyond economic use and for the moratorium over ten years imposed on any consideration of future international trade and thereafter until African elephant populations are no longer threatened.
10. Once again, I wish to thank the people of Botswana for the hospitality accorded to the Uganda delegation while here in Kasane and for agreeing to coordinate and host this Conference. Uganda looks forward to associating itself with the outcomes of this Conference.

***FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY***