

# Diplomatic Notes

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**CAADP**  
COMPREHENSIVE AFRICA AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME Kampala Summit  
9-11 JANUARY 2025  
KAMPALA, UGANDA



**THIRD SOUTH SUMMIT**  
KAMPALA, UGANDA 2024  
"LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND"

**Uganda's Chairmanship:**  
Non-Aligned Movement (2024 - 2027)  
The Group of 77 and China (2024 - 2025)



## HEY, DEAR ESTEEMED READERS



The December issue is a tribute to our Ugandan Diaspora (colloquially and fondly called ba-sama, a derivative of the summer vacation influx) and what they offer to their homeland Uganda. Over at the MoFA we were not going to miss out on their presence in town. The Ministry held the Inaugural Ministry of Foreign Affairs Diaspora Convention under the theme “Mobilizing the Diaspora for Socio-economic Transformation” at the Speke Resort, Munyonyo. Highlights will be in these pages.

Do not miss our Special Features Section where we celebrate diaspora success stories like Job Zilaba, a nursing assistant living and working in Switzerland, who built a Community Hospital in rural Namutumba in Eastern Uganda. We also feature Chipper Cash CEO Ham Serunjogi and his journey from his childhood in Kawempe to the US Silicon Valley and finally to US President Biden’s Advisory Council on African Diaspora Engagement.

In this issue, in honor of our Diaspora, we have included articles by diaspora guest writers from South Africa and the United States. Good news for our creatives as the Uganda Registration Services Bureau makes milestone announcements on Uganda signing the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources, and Associated Traditional Knowledge and The Cabinet of Uganda approving the Copyright and Neighboring Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2024.

The Green Corner was most fun to put together this month, with the Editorial Team having a field trip to The Floating Island, an environmental conservation project, located in Luzira, created by James Kateeba, who built a giant raft atop thirteen tonnes of plastic waste he collected from Lake Victoria. To learn more about his story, read on.

Wishing you all enjoyment, rest and Happy Holidays

Editor-in-Chief  
Ag. Head, Public Diplomacy Department

DIPLOMATIC  
HIGHLIGHTS



SPECIAL  
FEATURE  
STORY



UGANDA  
MISSIONS  
ABROAD



TÊTE-À-TÊTE





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*This document is a publication of the Department of Public Diplomacy. Any comments or recommendations can therefore be channeled to the Department for feedback or action.*

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*Ugandan model stuns audience in a dress adorned with cowrie shells during the mesmerizing runway show by renowned Ugandan fashion designer Charles "Ras" Kasozi. Showcasing his "Thread the Earth" collection, Kasozi masterfully blends traditional textiles with bespoke designs, celebrating heritage and innovation in a spectacular fusion of culture and couture.*

[Learn more](#)





## The Inaugural Uganda Diaspora Convention Set To Mobilize For Social Transformation .



*Vice President of Uganda Maj.Rtd Jessica Alupo (C) together with Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Gen. Odongo Jeje Abubakhar (L) PS Foreign Affairs Mr. Bagiire Vincent Waiswa(R), together with other dignitaries and Ugandans within the Diaspora during the Diapsora Covention which took place at Speke Resort Munyonyo.*

**Kampala** - The Inaugural Ministry of Foreign Affairs Uganda Diaspora Convention commenced in Kampala at the prestigious Commonwealth Speke Resort in Munyonyo. Held from the 18th to the 19th of December 2024, the convention, themed "Mobilizing Uganda's Diaspora for Socio-Economic Transformation," attracted hundreds of Ugandan nationals residing abroad, government officials, business leaders, and development partners to explore strategies for collaboration and investment.

Her Excellency Vice President Jessica Alupo delivered a keynote address, emphasizing the government's dedication to harnessing the diaspora's potential for national development. Government representatives presented various incentives and streamlined processes to encourage diaspora investment in critical sectors like agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, and technology.

The first day featured dynamic panel discussions and knowledge-sharing sessions, providing valuable insights into Uganda's economic landscape, business environment, and opportunities for impactful diaspora engagement. Hon. Gen. Odongo Jeje Abubakhar, Minister of Foreign Affairs, highlighted the pivotal role of the diaspora in Uganda's development agenda, emphasizing the convention's significance in empowering them to contribute meaningfully to socio-economic transformation.

The Convention facilitated vibrant networking opportunities, fostering connections among diaspora participants, government officials, and potential investors. Day Two, the concluding segment, provided a platform for diaspora members to present their ideas and projects to government and private sector stakeholders. Resolutions outlining actionable steps to enhance collaboration between the government and the diaspora were adopted during the event. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirms its commitment to strengthening bonds with Ugandans abroad, recognizing their indispensable role in realizing Uganda's Vision 2040.

..... **Compiled by Margaret Kafeero**





## Highlights of the Uganda Diaspora Convention.





## Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan Hold 4th Tripartite Technical Boundary Committee Meeting.

----- Compiled by Moses Bwambale Syahuka



Signing of the report during the Kenya-South Sudan-Uganda Tripartite Technical Boundary Committee: Kenya's Head of Delegation, Ms. Juster Nkoroi (right), South Sudan's Hon. Dr. David Nailo Mayo (left), and Uganda's Ms. Jacqueline W. Banana (center).

**Kampala** - The 4th Tripartite Technical Boundary Committee (TTBC) meeting, comprising representatives from South Sudan, Kenya, and Uganda, was successfully held from the 17th to the 19th of December 2024 at the Golden Tulip Hotel in Kampala. The primary objective of the meeting was to review and advance the agreements reached during the tripartite meetings of December 2019, September 2021, and December 2021.

Additionally, the delegates aimed to revise work-plans and budgets for establishing the tri-junction and determine the commencement date for the re-affirmation of the Tri-junction Point among the three countries.

Ms. Jacqueline W. Banana led the Uganda Delegation, Ms. Juster Nkoroi led the Delegation of the Republic of Kenya, and Hon. Dr. David Nailo Mayo led the delegation of the Republic of South Sudan. The meeting was inaugurated by Mr. Baglire Vincent Waiswa, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who emphasized the significance of concluding and implementing the modalities for the tri-junction boundary point. Mr. Baglire expressed gratitude to the African Union Border Programme (AUBP), the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), and the East African Community (EAC) for their support in facilitating border activities through equipment provision, funding, and technical capacity building. He acknowledged their role in sensitizing border communities and leaders to garner support for border demarcation activities.

The meeting concluded with the signing of the Report of the Kenya-South Sudan-Uganda Tripartite Technical Boundary Committee Meeting on the establishment of the Tri-junction at the Golden Tulip Hotel in Kampala, marking a significant step towards enhancing regional cooperation and boundary delineation efforts.





## Uganda and AU Launch Official Preparations for January CAADP Summit

**Kampala** - Minister of Foreign Affairs Gen. Odongo Jeje Abubakhar, Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries, Hon. Frank Tumwebaze and the AU Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment (ARBE) of the African Union Commission, H.E. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, on December 19th 2024, launched official preparations for the the Extraordinary Summit of the African Union Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) set for January 9-11, 2025, in Kampala.

This extraordinary Summit under the theme "Building Resilient Agri- Food Systems in Africa" will bring together leaders to discuss sustainable agriculture and endorse Africa's Agri-Food System 10-Year Strategy and Action Plan. The Summit is also expected to address key challenges in food security and agri-food systems.

Leaders are expected to discuss solutions to land management, sustainability, and food security and other pressing agricultural challenges. Participants will explore strategies for enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainability across the continent.

The CAADP Kampala Summit is an opportunity to strengthen Africa's collective approach to food sovereignty and sustainable land management. By endorsing the Agri-Food Systems 10-Year Strategy, Africa will take significant steps toward climate resilience and food security.



Group photo of Minister of Foreign Affairs, AU Commissioner for ARBE and Minister of Agriculture, Gen. Odongo and Hon Tumwebaze(C) and other dignitaries at the CAADP Media Launch.

## Uganda - Qatar Diaspora Convention Forges Stronger Bonds in 2024



Amb. Dr. Stephen Chemoiko Chebrot, Head of Mission at the Uganda Embassy Qatar giving opening remarks during the hybrid first Uganda Qatar Diaspora convention.

**Doha-** The inaugural Uganda-Qatar Diaspora Convention 2024, held at La Cigale Hotel in Doha, was a significant milestone in fostering ties between Uganda and its diaspora in Qatar. Ambassador Stephen Chebrot Chemoiko, Uganda's Head of Mission in Qatar, opened the hybrid event with remarks emphasizing its importance.

Mr. Vincent Waiswa Bagiire, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, highlighted efforts to finalize a Diaspora Policy aimed at mobilizing the diaspora for investment and economic participation. Plans for a business hub to support Ugandan entrepreneurs and small-scale businesses were also unveiled, fostering innovation and collaboration.

Uganda's agricultural exports to Qatar, including sweet potatoes, avocados (with a 35% market share), and Nile Perch, were spotlighted. The embassy is also working to boost Qatari tourism to Uganda. Current trade figures show Uganda exports \$9M worth of goods annually to Qatar, while importing \$12.5M from Qatar.

Day two included National ID registration for Ugandans in Qatar and discussions on business opportunities, passport renewals, small-scale investments, and government securities. The convention aimed to strengthen collaboration and drive economic growth for Uganda and its diaspora.

Compiled by Margaret Kafeero ..... Compiled by Sharon Priscilla Kayinza





## Hon. Odongo Jeje Abubakhar Delivers Statement to the AU Peace and Security Council

Compiled by Mildred Anne Nasirumbi

**Kampala** - Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Gen. Odongo Jeje Abubakhar, recently addressed a Virtual Ministerial Meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, focusing on Somalia and Post ATMIS Security arrangements. In his address, Gen Odongo congratulated Somalia for achieving a credible Government and Leadership through three successive elections, noting their imminent joining of the UN Security Council. He commended all Troop and Police Contributing Countries and partners for their support to Somalia, AMISOM/ATMIS over the years.

Expressing concern over the recent situation in Ras Kamboni, Gen Odongo called for de-escalation of tensions and urged dialogue between the FGS and Juba-land to resolve any differences. He also welcomed the outcomes of the meeting of CDFs of Troop Contributing Countries in Mogadishu, emphasizing Uganda's readiness to support Somalia in the spirit of brotherhood, Pan Africanism, and solidarity.

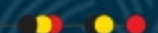
Highlighting concerns about the funding model of ATMIS, Gen Odongo stressed Uganda's strong support for the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2719 to finance the AU Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia from 01 January 2025 onwards. He urged the Commission and the UN to develop a roadmap for resource mobilization to address the funding gap of 25% for AUSSOM as directed by resolution 2719, possibly through a pledging conference.

Furthermore, Gen Odongo called for the presentation of the AUSSOM Budget for review to determine the allocation from the Peace Fund in line with the decision of the 1236th meeting of the PSC. He emphasized the importance of mobilizing the required funding to address the ATMIS deficit of 120 million USD by 31 December 2024, urging collective efforts from the Commission, the UN, and International Partners to ensure the mission's operational continuity.



Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Gen. Odongo welcoming and presiding over the meeting of CDFs of Troop Contributing Countries during the virtual Ministerial Meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union | Ugandan troops decorated with AU service medals in Somalia.

Follow to access statement







## Uganda High Commission in Kuala Lumpur, Strengthens Ties With ASEAN Through Tourism And Investment

..... *Compiled by Ivan Koreta*

**Kampala** – In a bid to advance its position as a top-tier destination for investment and tourism, The Uganda High Commission in Kuala Lumpur in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recently welcomed a delegation from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on a 10-day visit, held from November 25 to December 7, 2024 aimed strategically at leveraging its diplomatic networks to foster global partnerships.

H.E. Dr. Betty Oyella Bigombe, High Commissioner of Uganda to Malaysia, emphasized as part of Uganda's Economic and Commercial Diplomacy framework, this initiative aims to showcase the country's trade and tourism potential, marking a significant step toward enhanced economic collaboration between Uganda and ASEAN nations.



**L-R Delegation from ASEAN during one of the tour trips, posing for a group photo| H.E Dr. Betty Bigombe during the interactive meeting with ASEAN team at Sheraton| ASEAN delegation posing at one of the Equator stops in Uganda.**

Dr. Bigombe said, "This event offers a unique opportunity for key players within the tourism sector and beyond to identify areas for strategic partnerships. Building robust collaborations with ASEAN not only enhances trade but also creates jobs and contributes to the economic development of both nations," she noted.

Amb. Betty further highlighted Uganda's attractive investment climate, including tax incentives and opportunities in key sectors like infrastructure, mineral value addition, agro-processing, and oil and gas, was underscored during the visit. Dr. Bigombe emphasized Uganda's access to regional markets through platforms like the East African Community (EAC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

With the tourism sector as a cornerstone of Uganda's economy, contributing 7.7% to its GDP and creating nearly 667,000 jobs, according to a baseline report by Tourism Research and Development and ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, 2024. Dorcus Namajja of the Uganda Tourism Board, also underlined that the visit comes at a time when the Ugandan Government has made a deliberate effort to capitalize on its foreign missions to promote Uganda as a first-choice tourism destination intended to cultivate a long-term relationship between Uganda and ASEAN.

Uganda's High Commission aims to sustain momentum with promotional media campaigns in Malaysia and business conventions in 2025 to boost partnerships in trade, technology, tourism, and agro-processing.

The visit concluded with a dinner attended by dignitaries, including Minister of State for Tourism Hon. Martin Mugarra Bahinduka, PS/Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. Bagiire Vincent Waiswa, and UTB CEO Lilly Ajarova. Amb. Bigombe emphasized the initiative's goal to reshape Asia's perception of Uganda and Africa, highlighting Indonesia's economic growth as an example.

Hon. Bahinduka praised the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Missions for effectively managing resources and acknowledged the Malaysia Mission's financial support for activities in Kampala and the FAM trip. He pledged to advocate for more resources, commending the Ministry's impactful work with limited funding.

This visit marked a pivotal step in strengthening Uganda's economic and tourism ties with Southeast Asia, positioning the country as a growing player in global trade.





## Uganda And Cuba Celebrate 50 Years of Diplomatic Relations.

----- *Compiled by Sharon Priscilla Kayinza*

**Kampala** - Uganda's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Gen. Odongo Jeje Abubakhar, with H.E. Tania Perez Xiques the Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba convened to discuss bilateral and international issues of mutual interest.

The Minister commended Cuba for its longstanding support, particularly the establishment of the Mbarara University of Science and Technology, a milestone in their partnership. He also outlined Uganda's priorities as Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement and G-77+China, emphasizing the need to champion the Global South's interests in security, conflict management, and economic development.



Both leaders condemned unilateral sanctions by certain countries, stressing that such measures undermine multilateralism and obstruct progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Marking 50 years of Uganda-Cuba diplomatic ties, Ambassador Xiques praised the relationship as exemplary, expressing confidence that the recently inked Memorandum of Understanding would boost trade and economic collaboration. Minister of State for International Affairs Hon. Okello Henry Oryem joined Cuban Ambassador H.E. Tania Perez Xiques in celebrating the milestone. During the event, she announced the conclusion of her official tour of duty in Uganda. MoFA congratulated her on a successful tenure.

## Uganda-Algeria Relations Deepen with Promising Trade and Educational Ties



President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni (C) Hon. Gen. Odongo Jeje Abubkar (R) and MFA and special envoy of President Abdelmajid Tebboune of Algeria (L)

**Kampala** - President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni held talks with Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmed Attaf, a special envoy of President Abdelmajid Tebboune, to review progress on agreements made during Museveni's March 2023 state visit to Algeria.

The discussions highlighted increased trade, including a rise in Ugandan coffee exports from \$13M to \$16M and milk exports from \$800M to \$1B, with more Ugandan companies poised to access the Algerian market.

President Museveni was pleased to learn that the number of scholarships offered by Algeria to Ugandan students in science-based courses has surged from 100 to 217, demonstrating a deepening educational partnership between the two nations.

Expressing gratitude for the positive developments, President Museveni conveyed his support for Algeria's bid for the Vice Chairperson position of the African Union Commission. In return, he shared that Uganda is backing Kenya's Raila Odinga for the Chairmanship position, highlighting solidarity with East Africa and admiration for Odinga's Pan-Africanist stance. Minister Attaf delivered a written message from President Tebboune to President Museveni, affirming Algeria's commitment to enhancing bilateral relations and expanding collaborative efforts. The discussions between President Museveni and Minister Attaf also delved into various African Union agenda items, as well as regional and international developments, including the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and the decolonization process in Western Sahara.





## President Museveni Bids Farewell to Outgoing Envoys of South Africa and Cuba



*L-R President Museveni (C) in a group photo with outgoing South African Ambassador H.E Lulama "Lulu" Marytheresa Xingwana (L) as he bids her farewell | President Museveni together with outgoing Cuban Ambassador H.E. Dr. Tania Perez Xiques as he bid her farewell.*

**Kampala** - During a meeting with H.E Lulama "Lulu" Marytheresa Xingwana, the outgoing High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa to Uganda, President Museveni praised South Africa for its steadfast stance against apartheid, emphasizing the pivotal role it played in inspiring liberation movements across Africa. The President expressed gratitude for South Africa's support during challenging times, highlighting the shared history of anti-colonial struggles and the enduring friendship between the two nations.

H.E. Lulama, in turn, expressed heartfelt appreciation to President Museveni and the people of Uganda for the support extended to her mission during her tenure, particularly amidst the global pandemic. She highlighted the deepening economic ties between Uganda and South Africa, emphasizing the successful trade and investment summits that fostered collaboration between businesses in both countries.

The outgoing South African High Commissioner lauded the warm hospitality she received in Uganda and expressed admiration for the Ankole cattle breed, a symbol of Uganda's rich agricultural heritage. She underscored the importance of strengthening economic partnerships and highlighted upcoming initiatives, such as the joint funding of road construction projects, as a testament to the growing cooperation between Uganda and South Africa.

President Museveni also bid farewell to H.E. Dr. Tania Perez Xiques, the outgoing Cuban Ambassador to Uganda, marking the culmination of 50 years of diplomatic relations between Uganda and Cuba. The President commended the enduring friendship between the two nations and pledged support for Cuba through food supplies, while Cuba reciprocated with medical assistance and expertise in the healthcare sector.

Ambassador Tania expressed gratitude for the collaborative efforts in education, health, and cultural exchange between Uganda and Cuba, underscoring the shared commitment to mutual prosperity and cooperation.

The departure of the outgoing Ambassadors signifies the conclusion of their respective tenures, marked by significant contributions to strengthening diplomatic ties and fostering cooperation between Uganda, South Africa, and Cuba. Their legacies of goodwill and partnership will continue to shape the enduring relationship between the nations in the years to come.

----- Compiled by Githa Ogume -----

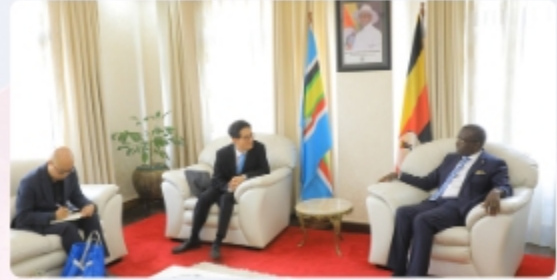




## Bilateral Meetings



Minister of State for Foreign Affairs/ International Affairs Hon. Oryem Henry Okello (right) held a meeting with HE Vladlen Semivolos, Russian Ambassador to Uganda discussing bilateral issues of mutual concern.



Minister of State for Foreign Affairs / Regional Affairs Hon. John Mulimba held a bilateral meeting with H.E. Park Sung-Soo Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Uganda. .



PS Foreign Affairs, Mr. Baguire Vincent Waiswa with members of the EU at an end of year lunch hosted by head of EU envoy in Uganda, H.E Jan Sadek reflecting on the progress of their partnership in 2024.



PS Foreign Affairs, Mr. Baguire Vincent Waiswa met with H.E Ahmed Ibrahim A Awad Elseed Sudan ambassador to Uganda discussing bilateral issues of concern.



PS Foreign Affairs, Mr. Baguire Vincent Waiswa met the Danish Ambassador to Uganda, H.E Winding Albjerg at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs



The new French Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, Mr. Emmanuel Cohet discussed matters of mutual bilateral and regional interest with PS Foreign Affairs, Mr. Baguire Vincent Waiswa





## Ministry of Foreign Affairs Welcomes New Envoys

Compiled by Mildred Anne Nasirumbi

**Kampala** - On November 28, 2024, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a formal ceremony to receive credentials from newly appointed envoys and honorary consuls. H.E. Ms. Fardowsa Mohamed Kanyare, Ambassador-designate of the Federal Republic of Somalia to Uganda, presented copies of her credentials to Hon. Oryem Henry Okello, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.

Similarly, Mr. Sami Alam, the newly appointed Honorary Consul of Mexico to Uganda, presented his credentials in a ceremony witnessed by Ambassador Charles Ssentongo, the Chief of Protocol. Mr. George Nkya, the newly appointed Honorary Consul of Morocco to Uganda, also presented his credentials to Hon. Oryem Henry Okello. These appointments signify continued collaboration and strengthened diplomatic relations between Uganda and these nations.



H.E. Ms. Fardowsa Mohamed Kanyare, Ambassador-designate of Somalia to Uganda with Hon. Oryem Henry Okello after presenting her credentials.



H.E. Mr. Sami Alam (L) Newly appointed Honorary Consul of Mexico to Uganda with Hon. Oryem Henry Okello (R), State Min for Foreign Affairs



H.E. Mr. George Nkya (L) Honorary Consul of Morocco to Uganda with Hon. Oryem Henry Okello (R) after presenting his credentials.

## National Days



### Kenya : Jamhuri Day

Jamhuri Day commemorates an important moment in Kenyan history and is observed annually on December 12. An occasion for introspection, joy, and solidarity, it honours the declaration of independence from British colonial control in 1963.



### Qatar : Qatar National Day(QND)

Celebrated annually on December 18, Qatar National Day (QND) is a public holiday and national commemoration of Qatar's unification and independence.



### Tanzania Independence Day

Tanzania celebrates its Independence Day on December 9, which commemorates the end of British rule in Tanganyika in 1961.



### Thailand National Day

The 5th of December is a significant occasion in Thailand, celebrated as both the National Day and the birthday anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great.





Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja (C) together with H.E. Mohammed Ali Rashed Lootah, President and CEO of Dubai Chambers(L) and Ms. Olive Kigongo, President of the Uganda Chamber of Commerce and Industry(R) while delivering her address during a side meeting at the "Doing together forum"

## Uganda and Dubai Chambers of Commerce Strengthen Economic Ties

*Report compiled by Christiana Ampeire*

The "Doing Business with Uganda" forum, held at the Sheraton Hotel in Kampala as part of the Uganda-Tanzania Roadshow, highlighted opportunities for trade, investment, and cooperation between Uganda and Dubai Chambers of Commerce. The event attracted business leaders and policymakers eager to explore collaborations across various sectors. H.E. Mohammed Ali Rashed Lootah, CEO of Dubai Chambers, praised Uganda's economic growth and strong trade ties with Dubai, noting that non-oil bilateral trade reached USD 1.2 billion last year.

He highlighted coffee as a key growth area, introducing the Dubai MCC Coffee Center to connect Ugandan exporters with global buyers. Lootah also encouraged Ugandan businesses to use Dubai as a gateway for global expansion and called on Dubai investors to explore Uganda's growing sectors, including energy and agriculture.

Ms. Olive Kigongo, President of the Uganda Chamber of Commerce and Industry, emphasized enhancing economic relations, citing Uganda's USD 1.12 billion exports to the UAE, mainly in gold and agricultural products. She highlighted Uganda's strategic position as a "land-linked" nation with access to 300 million consumers through trade agreements like EAC and COMESA.

**President Olive Kigongo highlighted the country's economic relations with the UAE, highlighting its \$1.12 billion exports in gold and agricultural products.**

H.E. Hassan Al Hashemi, VP of International Relations at Dubai Chambers, highlighted Dubai's role as a global hub, connecting the Middle East, Asia, and Africa, and attracting USD 10.7 billion in FDI in 2023. He emphasized Dubai's favorable tax policies and its appeal to foreign investors.

Mr. Martin Muhangi, Deputy Director General of the Uganda Investment Authority (UIA), described Uganda as a top investment destination with a young population, strategic trade agreements, and incentives like 10-year tax holidays for agro-processors.

The forum concluded on a high note with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Uganda Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Dubai Chambers. The MOU, signed by H.E. Olive Kigongo and H.E. Mohammed Ali Rashed Lootah, marks a significant step toward formalizing the commitment to enhance bilateral trade and investment cooperation between Uganda and Dubai.

As both regions look ahead, the "Doing Business with Uganda" forum serves as a beacon of prospective economic growth, inviting collaborative ventures that promise to benefit both Uganda and Dubai in their quest for sustainable development.





## Cross-Border Traders Push for Elimination of Fees and Charges to Optimize EAC Trade at Busia Border.



*Group photo of Women and Youth Cross-Border Traders at the EABC-AGRA Public-Private Dialogue on Non-Tariff Barriers.*

During the East African Business Council (EABC) – AGRA Public-Private Dialogue on Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) at the Busia One-Stop Border Post on December 5, 2024, women and youth cross-border traders called upon the Governments of EAC Partner States to eliminate fees and charges imposed by agencies to improve the uptake of the EAC Simplified Trade Regime (STR).

Mr. Frank Dafa, EABC Manager for Trade in Goods, representing the EABC Acting Executive Director, Mr. Adrian Njau, stated that the EAC STR has enabled cross-border traders to access the Simplified Certificate of Origin, exempting consignments valued under USD 2,000 from import duties. The high fees and charges undermined the purpose of the STR. The Public-Private Dialogue brought together 80 stakeholders, composed of 60 women and youth cross-border traders, trade facilitation agencies at the border, and officials from the Uganda Ministry of EAC Affairs and the Kenya Ministry of East African Community, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs), and Regional Development.

Mr. Matia Etedu from the Uganda Ministry of EAC Affairs emphasized that agriculture, primarily conducted by women and youth, is the backbone of the economy and accounts for the highest intra-EAC trade. Mr. Dennis Osoro, from the Kenya Ministry of EAC Affairs, noted that the region has established an EAC NTB reporting and elimination mechanism and encouraged traders to visit trade facilitation agencies at the border for advice on standards and quality requirements for their export/import consignments.

Following the successful dialogue, capacity building for women and youth cross-border traders on trade facilitation under the EAC STR was conducted. This initiative was part of the EABC-AGRA project, "Promoting Intra-EAC Agri-Food Cross-Border Trade by Addressing NTBs." The dialogue concluded with a commitment by Trade Facilitation Agencies to address challenges during Joint Border Management Committee meetings and streamline procedures to promote cross-border trade. EABC remains steadfast in presenting key policy recommendations from the dialogue to EAC Technical Committees for necessary policy reforms.

----- *By Mildred Anne Nasirumbi*





## SERA Wild Coffee, Crafting Excellence From Ugandan Arabica Beans To The Final Cup.

*By Isaac Olupot, Marketing Content Coordinator at Sera Wild Coffee.*

At Sera Wild Coffee, our Ugandan Arabica coffee undergoes a meticulous journey to ensure premium quality. The process begins in our farm in Kapkwata village, Chema sub county in Kapchorwa district on the slopes of Mount Elgon, where Arabica coffee thrives in the fertile volcanic soils and favorable climate. First, our casual workers carefully handpick ripe, red coffee cherries, ensuring only the best are selected.

Once harvested, the cherries are washed to remove impurities and sorted for uniformity. The washing process involves depulping the cherries to separate the beans from the fruit, followed by fermentation. This step enhances the beans' flavor profile by breaking down the mucilage layer. After fermentation, the beans are thoroughly washed again and spread out to dry under the sun. They are frequently turned to achieve consistent drying, which typically takes 7-14 days. The dried beans, now referred to as parchment coffee, are stored in moisture-controlled environments to preserve quality.

Next, the dry parchment coffee is hulled to remove the protective parchment layer, revealing the green coffee beans. These beans are graded and sorted based on size, density, and appearance to meet international standards. The highest-grade beans are then bagged and transported to the roaster facility.

At the roastery, the green coffee beans are expertly roasted to develop their rich flavors and aroma. This critical step involves precise temperature control to highlight the beans' unique notes, which include hints of chocolate, citrus, and floral undertones. After roasting, the beans are cooled, ground (if needed), and packaged in our eco-friendly bio-degradable cans to maintain freshness.

The final product is Sera Wild Coffee, a testament to the dedication of Ugandan farmers and our commitment to quality. Every cup offers a taste of Uganda's vibrant coffee heritage, crafted with passion from bean to brew.

We have 4 different roasts- Light, Medium, Gold and Dark Roast which come in 3 sizes that is 150gms, 250gms and 500gms at Ug shs 15000, 25000 and 50000 respectively.

Orders can be placed on +256766526477 or +256759027273.



**Frame 1:** A trained employee carefully hand picking ripe, red coffee cherries on our farm in Kapkwata village, Chema sub county in Kapchorwa district on the slopes of Mount Elgon.

**Frame 2:** Washing the fermented beans to remove impurities before they are spread out to dry under the sun.

**Frame 3:** Well packaged SERA coffee







## UNEBC Plans To Establish Examination Center in Burundi to Ease Student Testing

**Bujumbura** - Top executives from the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEBC) led by the Chief Executive Mr. Dan Nokrach Odongo convened at the Uganda Embassy, Bujumbura to strategize an ideal approach to conclude the process of setting up a UNEBC Examination Center in the Republic of Burundi.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 disrupted the initial progress, as only one school in Burundi was teaching the Ugandan syllabus at the time. However, with the number of schools offering the Ugandan curriculum now standing at five and over 100 students per school annually traveling to Uganda for their final UNEBC exams, the need for a local examination center has become imperative to alleviate the financial and logistical burdens on parents and students.

During the Joint Permanent Commission held in Bujumbura in March 2022, the collaboration areas agreed upon were in Education, Immigration and Health. The setting up of a UNEBC Center in Burundi aligns with UNEBC's Vision of becoming a globally competitive educational assessment and certification body.



**UNEBC top executives led by the Chief Executive Mr. Dan Nokrach Odongo (2nd L) held a meeting with Mr. Nangosya Mike Masiky, Director Examinations (2nd R) Mr. James Turyatemba Principal Examinations Officer (3rdR).**

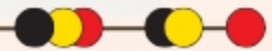
The meeting underscored that while H.E. President Yoweri Museveni has been a key advocate of regional integration, Uganda's education system has been a major player in that aspect with many alumni from the region studying at Ugandan institutions at secondary and tertiary levels. UNEBC's role in enhancing Uganda's soft power diplomacy was also acknowledged.

In this sitting, UNEBC committed to expedite internal processes and thereafter send a Technical Officer to Burundi in February 2025 during the Uganda Education Expo in Bujumbura. The Officer will also assess progress made in meeting criteria and adherence to UNEBC guidelines shared in 2018.

The meeting was attended by Mr. Nangosya Mike Masiky, Director Examinations, Ms. Naigaga M. Laetitia representing the Office of the Executive Director, Ms. Nabukenya Rose Mukasa, Principal Examinations Officer, Mr. James Turyatemba and Mr. Solomon Kasasira from Uganda Embassy, Bujumbura.

----- **The article was written by Solomon Kasasira, Second Secretary, Uganda Embassy Bujumbura .**





## Hon. N Robert Mao Signs WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources, and Traditional Knowledge.

----- Written by Joy Zoe Kirunda.

**Geneva** - On December 4, 2024, Hon. N Robert Mao, Uganda's Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, made a historic move by signing the WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources, and Associated Traditional Knowledge at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) headquarters in Geneva. The treaty aims to establish a global framework to protect and promote the intellectual property rights of nations, particularly concerning their genetic resources and traditional knowledge. This landmark agreement seeks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from the use of these valuable assets.

In his remarks, Minister Mao highlighted Uganda's commitment to protecting its cultural heritage and natural resources, emphasizing that the treaty will strengthen the country's capacity to protect its indigenous knowledge and support sustainable development. He remarked, "This treaty is a significant step towards safeguarding our cultural and natural assets and ensuring that local communities are fairly compensated for the use of their traditional knowledge and resources." The Director-General of WIPO Daren Tang expressed his strong support for Uganda's efforts, pledging to assist the country in building its intellectual property (IP) capacity.

He noted that WIPO is committed to supporting Uganda in strengthening its IP systems to ensure that the benefits of this treaty are fully realized. Mr. Tang further highlighted the importance of the treaty in enabling developing countries like Uganda to protect their valuable resources and traditional knowledge while fostering innovation and sustainable development. The signing of the WIPO Treaty and the pledge from the Director-General to assist Uganda in building IP capacity signals a strong partnership between WIPO and Uganda, setting the stage for enhanced international cooperation and development in intellectual property. This milestone underscores Uganda's leadership in the global dialogue on the protection of genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and cultural heritage. The Minister's engagement with the diaspora reflects Uganda's growing influence in the global arena, as well as its ongoing efforts to strengthen its economy, promote sustainable development.

In addition to the signing, Minister Mao also took time to meet with members of the Ugandan diaspora living in Switzerland, a meeting organized by the Uganda Permanent Mission. During the meeting, he commended them for their contribution to national development and encouraged them to invest in Uganda's growing economy and to continue working closely with the Ugandan Mission. "Your expertise and resources are vital in driving Uganda's progress. We welcome you to invest back home and support initiatives that will improve livelihoods, foster innovation, and protect our heritage," he said.

The Minister was accompanied by the Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva Ambassador Marcel Tibaleka, the Registrar General of the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB) - Ms. Mercy Kainobwisho, Mr. Gilbert Agaba, Director, Intellectual Property, URSB and staff of the Permanent Mission. Also in attendance was the Assistant Director General, Mr. Edward Kwakwa and Mr. Wend, Wendland, the WIPO Director for Traditional Knowledge.



**Hon. Norbert Mao, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs signs the Treaty in Geneva next to WIPO DG, Mr. Daren Tang, (standing -centre), H.E. Marcel Tibaleka, Uganda's Ambassador to the UN in Geneva, Ms. Mercy K. Kainobwisho (extreme right), Registrar General, Uganda Registration Services Bureau and other Officials. | Statement on the copyright and neighboring rights (amendment bill, 2024)**





## Uganda High Commissioner in UK Enhances Collaboration with Diaspora Health Groups.

..... *Moses Wasswa Mulimira, a Ugandan living in the UK.*



**H.E. Nimisha Madhvani with Ugandan Diaspora Professionals in London**

**London** – Her Excellency Nimisha Madhvani, the Uganda High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, recently hosted Ugandan Diaspora Associations at Uganda House in London. The event was attended by members of several key organizations, including the British-Ugandan Doctors Association, the Uganda Nurses and Midwives Association UK CIC, the Ugandan Diaspora Allied Health Association UK, as well as representatives from the National Health Service (NHS) Health Partnerships with an interest in engaging the Ugandan diaspora in global health initiatives.

During the event, High Commissioner Madhvani emphasized both the opportunities and challenges within Uganda's health sector, urging the health diaspora community to unite in their patriotic efforts to enhance health outcomes for Ugandans.

The Health Associations present at the meeting agreed to collaborate more effectively in their respective global health programs. The High Commissioner also recognized three outstanding diaspora members—Primrose Magala, Moses Mulimira, and Dr. Nik Kotecha—for their sustained dedication to strengthening the health sector in Uganda. Dr. Edith Nakku from the Uganda Medical Association emphasized the need for better alignment with the Ugandan government's health initiatives.

The Uganda-UK Health Alliance, a collaboration between the Ministry of Health in Uganda and NHS Health Education England, was highlighted as an umbrella organization for UK institutions and organizations involved in healthcare capacity-building activities in Uganda. This alliance serves as a platform for fostering partnerships and sharing expertise to bolster Uganda's healthcare system.



## Uganda Participates In Russian Healthcare Week 2024.

**Moscow** – The 5-day Russian Healthcare Week 2024 at Moscow's Expo Centre brought together global health stakeholders to showcase advancements in healthcare. Uganda used the platform to enhance bilateral ties with Russia, focusing on infectious diseases, emergency medical services, electronic medical records, and specialist training.

Representing Uganda's Health Minister, Dr. Joseph Okware, Director of Governance and Regulation, thanked Russia for its partnership, highlighting the recent donation of a mobile laboratory truck aiding outbreak response. Building on April's Africa-Russian International Scientific Conference in Kampala, Dr. Okware reiterated Uganda's collaboration priorities, particularly in emergency system management and transitioning from paper-based to electronic medical records.

Dr. Okware emphasized Uganda's need to develop affordable, specialized care locally, reducing reliance on costly treatment abroad. He noted the establishment of specialized hospitals such as UCI, UHI, and MSWNH to address this gap.

Accompanying him was Dr. Juliet Birungi, a consultant gynecologist-oncologist from Mulago Specialized Women and Neonatal Hospital, which focuses on advanced care for women and children.

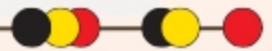
Prof. Murashko, chairing the meeting, urged countries to identify specific collaborative interests with Russia's Health Ministry. He acknowledged Uganda's partnership in epidemic management, particularly Ebola, and highlighted Russia's leadership as the first to manufacture Ebola vaccines. This engagement underscores Uganda's commitment to leveraging international expertise to strengthen its healthcare system.



**Dr. Joseph Okware, Director of Governance and Regulation leading Uganda's delegation on behalf of the Minister of Health in Moscow during the Russian health week.**

..... *Written by Herbert Ssekatawa.*





## Ugandans in Southern Africa Gather for 2nd Annual Confederation Convention.

By Sharon Priscilla Kayinza



Hon. Henry Musasizi (Chief Guest), PS Foreign Affairs, Mr. Bagire Vincent Waiswa, Amb. Paul Amoru, Amb. Kintu Nyago (D/HOM)

**Pretoria** -The 2nd Convention of Ugandans in Southern Africa recently took place in Pretoria, South Africa, from November 23-24, 2024. The event, co-organized by the Uganda High Commission and the Confederation of Ugandans in Southern Africa (COUSA), convened under the theme "Celebrating Ugandan Excellence and Development Solutions." Hon. Henry Musasizi, Uganda's State Minister for Finance, represented President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni as the Chief Guest at the convention.

Attendees included prominent figures from Uganda's public and private sectors, with notable personalities such as Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs Mr. Vincent Bagire and Commissioner for Immigration Mr. Marcellino Bwesigye in attendance. The convention, held at Villa Africa Boutique Hotel in Pretoria, saw a gathering of hundreds of Ugandans from various Southern African countries, including South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, and Eswatini.

Key highlights from the convention included President Museveni's address, delivered by Hon. Henry Musasizi, where he lauded the efforts of COUSA in promoting unity and Pan-Africanism. The President reiterated the government's commitment to regional integration and emphasized the need for a collective approach to unlock Africa's potential for prosperity and interconnectedness. The Permanent Secretary, Mr. Vincent Bagire Waiswa, commended the diaspora community in Southern Africa for their resilience and contributions to Uganda's development. He highlighted the government's initiatives to empower Ugandans abroad and encouraged them to engage in key sectors like agro-industrialization, tourism, and technology to drive the nation's growth.

Ambassador Paul Amoru, in his address, expressed gratitude to President Museveni for his support and highlighted the strengthening bilateral relations between Uganda and the countries in Southern Africa. He outlined the progress made in education, health, trade, and industrial development, citing significant achievements resulting from collaborative efforts. COUSA President, Mr. Moses Ssentongo, extended appreciation to President Museveni for supporting Ugandans in Southern Africa and emphasized COUSA's commitment to unity and collaboration within the diaspora community. Mr. Ssentongo highlighted the organization's role in providing a platform for discussions on development and social support.

A significant announcement at the convention was the launch of the Southern Africa Ugandan Excellence Awards (SAUEA) by the Ugandan High Commission and COUSA. The awards aim to recognize outstanding contributions of Ugandans in Southern Africa across various sectors. The official website for the awards, [www.awards.cousaonline.org](http://www.awards.cousaonline.org), was unveiled, marking the beginning of a prestigious recognition initiative. The 2nd COUSA Convention showcased the unity, resilience, and commitment of Ugandans in Southern Africa towards promoting excellence and collaboration for the collective advancement of the diaspora community and Uganda as a whole.



## Turning Plastic Waste into Prosperity, Uganda's Floating Island Leads Climate Innovation

..... Compiled by Amiri Wabusimba



As the world intensifies efforts to combat climate change, innovative solutions are emerging from unexpected places. In Luzira, Uganda, James Kateeba has massed recognition for his groundbreaking environmental project, the Floating Island. This initiative, built on Lake Victoria, transforms plastic waste into a sustainable asset while addressing pollution and empowering communities. The idea for the Floating Island emerged seven years ago when James observed the alarming pollution of Lake Victoria, primarily from empty plastic bottles originating from Munyonyo and Kampala. Inspired by a 1950s dry bamboo floating structure from Lake Kyoga, James adapted the concept using the readily available plastic waste instead of bamboo.

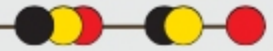
Built on 13 tons of recycled plastic bottles, it has evolved into a thriving ecosystem that seamlessly blends environmental conservation with economic empowerment. The impact of this initiative extends far beyond its structure, particularly benefiting the surrounding communities. One of the most striking successes of the Floating Island is the exceptional cleanliness of the waters surrounding it. Unlike other parts of Lake Victoria, which suffer from rampant plastic pollution, the waters near the Island are pristine. This transformation is attributed to a unique system introduced by James, where local fishermen and residents earn an income by collecting and selling plastic bottles. "This initiative turns pollution into opportunity," James explains. "People on the lake actively collect these bottles to sell to us, which not only cleans the lake but also creates jobs." By fostering a sense of shared responsibility for environmental preservation, the Floating Island has become a vital source of livelihood and a beacon of hope for the region.

The Floating Island is not just a concept; it is a tangible structure capable of hosting gatherings of 200–300 people at a time. With lush green vegetation adorning its surface, this artificial island serves as a mobile oasis of natural beauty. Anchored securely, the Island can traverse up to 100 meters into the lake, with waves acting as natural forces for movement. James envisions replicating the initiative across Uganda to bring similar environmental and economic benefits to other communities. "With the right support, this model can be scaled nationwide, offering solutions for housing, farming, and even disaster resilience," he noted. The Floating island demonstrates how grassroots innovation, coupled with strategic partnerships, can address global challenges such as climate change and inclusive development.

The Floating Island resonates deeply with discussions from COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, which emphasized the urgency of innovative solutions to mitigate climate challenges. It offers a scalable model for countries in the Great Lakes region to combat pollution, promote sustainable agriculture, and adapt to rising water levels. Beyond its ecological benefits, the Floating Island exemplifies inclusive development and community engagement. By transforming waste into wealth, pollution into opportunity, and challenges into solutions, James Kateeba has redefined conservation in Uganda. His visionary work is a reminder that tackling global environmental crises begins with bold local actions. As Uganda advances its climate action agenda, the Floating Island stands as a testament to the power of grassroots innovation, strategic partnerships, and unwavering determination to protect our planet.



**L-R James Kateeba the founder of the floating Island on the right during an interview with the Diplomatic Notes's Amiri Wabusimba \ PD editorial team pose for a photo during tour of the floating island.**



## Strengthening Diplomatic Ties: A Transformative Experience in the UAE

By Jeremiah Guma



In November 2024, a delegation of Ugandan diplomats participated in the Global Connections: A Diplomatic Training program in Abu Dhabi, hosted by the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy (AGDA).

The program provided an invaluable opportunity for the diplomats to deepen their understanding of the UAE's political, economic, and cultural landscape, strengthening ties between the two nations. The Ugandan team, comprising Ms. Joanitta Among, Ms. Muna Abdulnasir, Mr. Guma Jeremiah, Mr. Joshua Oriokot, Ms. Catherine Ndagire, Ms. Alisha Kiiza, and Mr. Maloba Rodgers, engaged in a four-day training designed to enhance their knowledge of the UAE's multifaceted role in global diplomacy.

The program included insightful lectures, interactive discussions, and site visits all of which offered a comprehensive perspective on the UAE's contributions to international relations. The training began with an overview of the UAE's remarkable international cooperation efforts. Delegates learned about the UAE's position as the world's largest per capita foreign assistance donor and its commitment to empowering women, advancing infrastructure, and providing technical assistance. The discussions highlighted how the UAE leverages its comparative advantages to excel in global diplomacy.

On the second day, the diplomats explored the UAE's rich history and cultural evolution. They gained insights into the visionary leadership of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founding father of the UAE, whose values principles have shaped the country's development. Through expert-led sessions, the delegates examined the UAE's political and social transformation, fostering a deeper appreciation for the nation's progress. The program also delved into the UAE's foreign policy priorities, with a focus on fostering strong relationships with neighboring countries and global powers. An interactive session with officials from the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided an in-depth understanding of the country's strategic objectives, particularly its role in promoting peace and tolerance.

The training included sessions on the UAE's economic policies, highlighting Abu Dhabi Vision 2030 and its emphasis on economic diversification and attracting foreign investment. Delegates were impressed by the UAE's strategic approach to positioning itself as a regional economic hub and a global trade leader. One of the most impactful segments focused on climate diplomacy, where participants explored the UAE's leadership in COP28 negotiations and its commitment to addressing climate change. This session emphasized the collaborative efforts needed to tackle global environmental challenges and the UAE's proactive stance on sustainable development. The program also included visits to key cultural and institutional sites, such as the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, the Emirates Red Crescent, and the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC). These visits offered firsthand insights into the UAE's history, values, and strategic initiatives in the energy and humanitarian sectors.

By the end of the training, the team had not only gained a deeper understanding of the UAE's political, economic, and cultural landscape but also forged strong connections with fellow diplomats from around the world. The experience fostered a spirit of collaboration and mutual respect, equipping the participants with valuable tools for navigating the complexities of international diplomacy. The delegation expressed their gratitude to AGDA for organizing the well-structured and enlightening program, as well as to the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UAE Embassy in Uganda for their hospitality and support. The diplomats described the experience as transformative and pledged to apply the lessons learned to enhance Uganda's diplomatic efforts and strengthen its role in the global community.





## Diaspora Stories

### From Kawempe to Silicon Valley: Ugandan Diaspora Icon Ham Serunjogi's Inspiring Road to Chipper Cash and Advancing Cashless Transactions in Africa

Special Report By Amiri Wabusimba

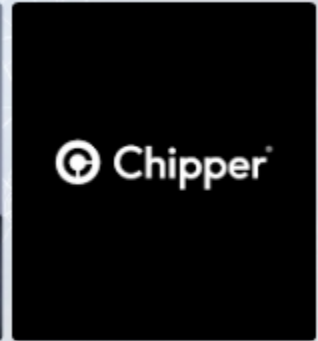
The financial landscape in Africa is undergoing a significant transformation, with Chipper Cash, a mobile payment platform that is redefining financial transactions across the continent, leading the way in changing transaction methods for individuals and businesses.

Founded by Ugandan Ham Serunjogi, Chipper Cash is vital in connecting users to essential financial services, enhancing access across the continent. It enables seamless cashless transactions, collaborating with the Bank of Uganda to navigate regulatory frameworks and expand its reach. Its rapid growth marks an important step towards creating inclusive, accessible, and secure financial systems.

Ham Serunjogi's transformative journey from the bustling streets of Kawempe, Uganda, to California's Silicon Valley, highlights the profound impact of access to quality education. Growing up in a community where resources were limited, he became acutely aware of the challenges faced by students from underprivileged backgrounds. This early awareness fueled his passion for dismantling barriers and creating opportunities for young Africans.

Ham's primary education in Uganda was a crucial stepping-stone in shaping his leadership trajectory. He attended local schools where he developed critical thinking skills and a profound appreciation for the power of education. Engaging in extracurricular activities like sports and debates, he honed his leadership qualities and communication skills. His initiative in organizing group projects fostered a collaborative spirit, which would later define his professional pursuits. In the United States, Ham attended and graduated Grinnell College with a degree in Economics.

As technology began to permeate educational environments, Ham recognized its potential to enhance learning experiences. Despite limited resources, his curiosity for technology inspired him to explore digital tools, recognizing their potential to bridge educational gaps and drive societal innovation. Chipper Cash's growth highlights Uganda's potential for an inclusive digital economy, co-founded by Ham Serunjogi, a Grinnell College Economics graduate.



Co-founder and CEO of Chipper Cash, Ham Serunjogi

Ham started his career at Meta, managing UK partner relationships and later joined Grinnell's Board of Trustees from where he was appointed by US President Biden to the Advisory Council on African Diaspora Engagement. Today, Ham stands at the forefront of Africa's digital revolution. However, Ham's vision extends beyond mere profit; he seeks to democratize finance, empowering individuals and small enterprises to thrive and contribute to local economic development.

For small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), digital platforms like this, open new avenues for growth by enabling transparent and traceable transactions, SMEs establish financial records that attract credit and investment, fostering local economic development. However, challenges like limited internet access and a lack of smartphones persist. Addressing these gaps is key to ensuring vulnerable populations are included. Chipper Cash's success is largely due to its partnership with Bank of Uganda, which has provided critical regulatory support and facilitated necessary approvals.

This collaboration has enabled the platform to introduce innovative cashless solutions to millions globally. As it expands, Chipper Cash remains committed to strengthening ties with regulators throughout Africa to ensure the smooth integration of digital financial services. Ham's leadership at Chipper Cash showcases innovation supported by regulatory collaboration, ensuring secure and accessible cashless solutions for a more inclusive economy. His ambition and resilience inspire young Africans to leverage education and technology for transformative change, fostering progress and hope across the continent.





**Diaspora Stories**

**Ugandan Diaspora Hero Brings Accessible Healthcare to Namutumba.**

*By Margaret Kafeero*

Meet Job Hasigaye Zilaba Amooti, a trained social worker and Radiologist at the Bern University Hospital Clinic for Intensive Care Medicine, in Switzerland for several years. Zilaba whose ancestry is in Bunyoro, was born and raised in Mbale, but spent most of his life in eastern Uganda, where his father, a District Education Officer worked for many years.

Sharing his experience at the MOFA Inaugural Uganda Diaspora Convention, Zilaba said that his inspiration to found a hospital arose when he witnessed a roadside birth in Namutumba when an expectant mother had to give birth on the side of the road because the 72km journey to the nearest hospital in Iganga was too long. Thus the idea of the Namutumba Community Hospital was born. "The original goal was to provide immediate and appropriate care for women giving birth and their children in the Namutumba region," he shared.

Mobilizing assistance from residents in the area and a network of friends as well as his employer, the Klinik for Intensive Medicine Bern, in Switzerland, he got to work, identifying land and getting involved in construction in 2010. "The residents were involved in the project from the beginning," he said.

"The most difficult thing was the financial cost," he said. "I was encouraged by the people of Namutumba contributing what they could to the construction," he narrates. We handled the less expensive work, friends and family in Switzerland occasionally contributed, and I had incredible support of Klinik for Intensive Medicine Bern, which helped to get the Hospital ready for use with donations of equipment as well as helping to fix the laboratory and lighting system".



*L-R: Job Zilaba co-founder of the Namutumba Community Hospital, nurses monitoring iNICU incubator*

On July 12, 2021, after 11 years of hard work and sacrifice, the Namutumba Community Hospital opened in Uganda, not just providing medical care but creating jobs. Zilaba also acquired a pre-used Ambulance that cost 12,000 CHF and the shipping costs to Namutumba Uganda was 4400 CHF, totalling to CHF 16,400. With his supporters, he deposited 5000 CHF and raised 9000 CHF through crowd funding covering the 2400 CHF from out of pocket.

The Namutumba Community Hospital is open to all people in the region who need medical support. The bed capacity is 50 beds. Of these, 15 are pediatric, 15 are gynaecological, and 20 are general patients. The hospital provides diagnostics, treatment, medication and pharmaceutical services under one roof. Patients come from the districts of Namutumba, Pallisa, Butalejja, Budaka and Bugiri. Post and ante-natal care is free, vaccination is free and the rest of the treatments are highly subsidized. Besides supporting the project, his co-workers in Bern not only also visited the site and volunteered in physical construction alongside him, but they regularly volunteer medical services at the hospital.

The staff work five days a week in 12-hour shifts. The day shift begins at 7:00 a.m. with the report. The rounds begin at around 7:15 a.m. They usually last around two hours, depending on the condition of the patients in the departments. The doctors then split up into teams. He further emphasizes that besides medical equipment, the Swiss culture of respect of patient rights, compassion and courtesy is one of the major adoptions of the hospital's methods of work.

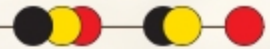


**Exterior view of the Namutumba Community Hospital**









----- Story continued from previous page

Proving descent, however, often requires documentation, which can be challenging in societies where oral traditions dominate. In 2014, during a visit to Dallas, President Museveni explained Uganda's dual citizenship framework by comparing it to the clan system. He argued that a child born abroad still belongs to their father's clan, regardless of birthplace. Citizenship, he said, is simply a modern extension of this understanding—now including maternal lineage to reflect gender equity.

I have always admired President Museveni's ability to simplify complex matters, drawing on cultural frameworks to connect with both peasants and philosophers.

If resources were no barrier, I would fund a comprehensive genealogy project for the Great Lakes Region of Africa. Such an initiative could collect oral histories, digitize clan records, and create a centralized archive accessible worldwide.

Platforms like Geni.com allow users to build family trees, and I've often wondered what it would reveal if all Ugandans participated. Imagine discovering how interconnected we truly are, bound by shared ancestors and histories. The Great Lakes Museum and the Igongo Cultural Center have made strides in preserving regional history. But a national effort—leveraging anthropologists, historians, and technology—could deepen these efforts, uniting Ugandans at home and abroad.

Such a project would not only celebrate our heritage but also illuminate migration patterns, and cultural richness, leaving a profound legacy for future generations. My fascination with genealogy led me to modern tools like DNA testing. When 23 and Me revealed that I shared an ancient paternal lineage with Pharaoh Ramesses III, I was astonished. These discoveries remind me that genealogy connects us not only to our families but to a global human story.

The academic field of genealogy is expanding, with institutions like the University of Strathclyde in the United Kingdom offering advanced degrees in genealogical studies. Its applications span law, medicine and forensic science, demonstrating genealogy's growing importance. Could Uganda's diaspora unite to support a national genealogy project? I believe so. Many of us long to reconnect with our roots and preserve our cultural heritage. By pooling resources, we could ensure that our ancestors' stories are cherished for generations.

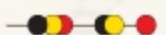
Genealogy isn't just about the past—it's about shaping the future. For young Ugandans, especially those born abroad, access to a rich repository of genealogical information could inspire a deeper connection to their identity.

As the African proverb goes, "Until the lion learns to write, every story will glorify the hunter." It's time to take charge of our narrative, documenting and honoring the richness of our heritage.

Through genealogy, we affirm our place in history and leave a legacy worth celebrating—one that unites all Ugandans in the shared pride of who we are.



**Brian Mushana Kwesiga is a Ugandan-born engineer, author, and civic leader living in the United States. He is a former President and CEO of the Ugandan North American Association (UNAA) and previously served as the General Manager of the Uganda men's national lacrosse team.**





## TECHNOLOGY

### Uganda Strengthens ICT Collaboration with US Diaspora at Ambassador's Roundtable

By Christiana Ampeire

The Uganda-US Diaspora IT Professionals Ambassador's Roundtable Breakfast Meeting on December 19, 2024, which took place at Speke Resort Munyonyo showcased Uganda's commitment to fostering innovation through ICT. Under the theme **"Building Partnerships in ICT,"** the gathering united top leaders, innovators, and diaspora professionals from Uganda and the U.S. to explore strategies for driving technological growth and collaboration.

Ambassador Robinah Kakonge, Uganda's Ambassador to the U.S., and Hon. Dr. Monica Musenero, Minister of Science, Technology, and Innovation, delivered keynote addresses highlighting Uganda's commitment to leveraging ICT for national development. Ambassador Kakonge shared a personal anecdote about a Ugandan Microsoft employee in Washington, underscoring the wealth of expertise in the diaspora. She emphasized ongoing efforts to integrate this talent into Uganda's burgeoning tech landscape.

Minister Musenero outlined Uganda's vision for a tech-driven economy, emphasizing policies that promote women's participation in technology, climate innovation, and youth skills development. She called on the diaspora to invest in Uganda's tech sector, noting its potential to transform industries and create opportunities.



**L-R:** Minister Musenero (C) together with Amb. Robinah Kakonge (R of Hon Musenero) followed by H.E William W Popp, Ambassador of the US to Uganda in a group photo with participants at the Uganda-US Diaspora IT Professionals Ambassador's Roundtable Breakfast Meeting. \ H.E. William W Popp (C) shaking Hon Musenero's hand (R) in a brief conversation together with Amb. Robinah Kakonge (L).

A panel discussion on "Ugandan Women in Technology" featured industry leaders like Diana Ninsiima, Primera Mutoni, and Angella Kakumirizi. They highlighted mentorship and leadership as critical tools for empowering women in STEM, addressing challenges in male-dominated fields, and fostering career opportunities through initiatives like Girls for Girls and Healthware.

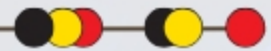
Discussions on Uganda's tech landscape focused on infrastructure investment, certification standards for IT professionals, and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and 3D printing. Panelists Francis Ssessazi, Robert Mutyaba, and Professor Charles Kwesiga emphasized ICT's potential to drive economic growth and innovation in Uganda.

U.S. Ambassador to Uganda, William W. Popp, commended the focus on collaboration, highlighting ICT's transformative potential for education, healthcare, and financial inclusion.

He reiterated U.S. support for Uganda's tech sector and announced the upcoming SelectUSA conference, which will spotlight gender equality in technology.

The meeting underscored the importance of partnerships to overcome challenges in Uganda's ICT sector. By aligning government, private sector, and diaspora efforts, Uganda is poised to lead Africa's technological innovation, showcasing the power of collective action in building a sustainable digital economy.





## TECHNOLOGY

### Ugandan Teenagers Crowned Champions at the EnjoyAI 2024 Global Final In China

By Mildred Anne Nasirumbi



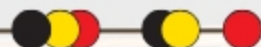
Ugandan teenagers from the African School of Innovations Science and Technology (ASIST) Limited emerged champions at the EnjoyAI 2024 Global Final in Shanghai, China on December 18, 2024. The Young Engineers Uganda team, comprising 10 young innovators, two coaches, the Chief Operations Officer and two parent representatives departed for Shanghai on December 12, 2024, to represent Uganda in the EnjoyAI Competition.

During their visit, the team participated in a STEM tour at The Shanghai Minhang Polytechnic and were welcomed by the governor and president who promised collaboration and exchange programs which would support STEM education activities across the country. Uganda competed in the Galactic Defence Battle Challenge, where it emerged as a champion for 2024 Global Final. The Uganda teams' robots also stood out, winning the "Dedicated" and "Team Spirit" awards.

"We are thrilled and proud of our team's achievement," said Ms. Maureen Ayebare Karamagi, CEO ASIST Ltd/Young Engineers Uganda and team lead. The EnjoyAI Competition, a global and yearly event, brings together talented individuals from around the world to demonstrate their AI skills and collaborate on innovative projects. This year's championship saw participation from 34 countries, including China, from across the world, competing in different categories.

Young Engineers Uganda is a flagship program of African School of Innovations Science and Technology (ASIST) Ltd, a STEM and robotics organization in Uganda which aims to nurture the next generation of scientists, innovators, problem solvers, entrepreneurs, and critical thinkers. This remarkable victory marks a significant milestone for Uganda, solidifying its position as a rising star in STEM education and the global AI and robotics landscape.





## Diaspora Red Carpet Gala Dazzles the City

By Margaret Kafeero



**Ronnie Mayanja (1st left), Uganda's Ambassador to the US, Amb Robinah Kakonge (3rd right) Amb John Leonard Mugerwa (2nd right) during the award session at the Annual Uganda Diaspora Homecoming.**

December 29th marked the 14th Annual Uganda Diaspora Homecoming. The signature star-studded celebrity event by US-based promoter Ronnie Mayanja, took place at the Kampala Sheraton Hotel, Kampala. "...the event is intended to bring together the Ugandan diaspora from around the globe to engage in dialogue and activities focused on the development and prosperity of Uganda, but it is also an opportunity to recognize and celebrate various Ugandans who have made their mark on the international scene" explained Mayanja.

The 2024 Gala event featured the Diaspora Recognition Award Ceremony which included awards to nominees like BBC Journalist and Broadcaster, Alan Kasujja, Queen of Katwe brainchild, Robert Katende, Victoria University Kampala's Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Lawrence Muganga, for their outstanding contribution in their various fields.

The guests were treated to Comedy guest appearances by Madrat and Chiko and special performances by musicians King Saha, Karole Kasita, and The Baninas crowning the evening was a repertoire of classics by the timeless Afrigo Band.

Ronnie Mayanja, visionary founder of the Uganda Diaspora Network, brought together government leaders and representatives, private sector leaders, civil society specialists, business entrepreneurs, academics, and members of the diaspora community.

Representing the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Amb. John Leonard Mugerwa thanked Mayanja for the years of putting the signature event together, pledging the support and cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Addressing the members of the diaspora for their remittances which are surpassed only by revenue from tourism and coffee, he called upon them to focus their energies on scaling existing investments.



The most memorable part of the evening was a breathtaking Runway show by Ugandan International Fashion Designer Charles "Ras" Kasozi who showcased his "Thread the Earth" collection, a fusion of traditional textiles and bespoke designs. "I designed this limited-edition capsule collection to celebrate the vast reach of our diaspora across the planet and your contribution in threading our rich and diverse cultural heritage throughout the world", shared Kasozi.

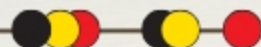
Explaining his consistent promotion of Ugandan art and crafts in his designs, Kasozi who in 2012, won the prestigious Vancouver Fashion Week Award for originality and creativity says "I can't change myself into something else. It's easier to promote what you have than to create something new"





Glimpse into the Annual Uganda Diaspora Homecoming.





## Fort Patiko: Uncovering The Hidden History of Uganda's Legendary Slave Trade Stronghold

*By Hilda Victora Namulwana*

When you inquire about a typical safari in Destination Uganda, the default option tends to be a largely nature-based trip to any of the 10 national parks, 12 wildlife reserves, 5 community wildlife management areas and 13 wildlife sanctuaries. Here, you are assured of a visual feast on the Big Five + 2—lion, leopard, rhino, elephant, buffalo, chimpanzee, and mountain gorilla—as well as over 345 mammal species, 140+ reptile species, and 1,060 bird species, some of them unique to Uganda. You will be greeted by unforgettable experiences augmented by the tropical climate, unspoiled and unexplored tropical vegetation, hospitable people, and green plateaus across the country.

But this is just part of what Uganda has to offer. There is so much more beyond nature-based tourism, especially if you are willing to venture off the beaten path for some authentic cultural, historical, and heritage experiences.

This is why, when you are on your next immersion into Northern Uganda, I invite you to add a visit to Baker's Fort (Fort Patiko) to your itinerary. For starters, Northern Uganda offers numerous experiences— a diverse mix of natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and historical significance, but that is a story for another day.

Once a military structure and collection point during the era of the slave trade, this site bears the scars of an era marked by cruelty and endurance. Fort Patiko is enclosed by a 16-foot-wide and 15-foot-deep trench, which was dug purposely to prevent the slaves from escaping. The fort is neighbored by six hills; Ajulu, Ladwong, Akara, Abaka, and Labworomor in the north, and Kiju Hill in the south. The fort covers approximately 9.4 hectares. The fort owes its establishment to the exploration of the Nile, which attracted explorers, missionaries, and colonial powers with diverse agendas. Among them was Sir Samuel Baker, a renowned British explorer and abolitionist. In the early 1860s, Baker passed through this land, witnessing firsthand the inhumanity of the slave trade. Slaves were taken from here to be screened in Gondokoro (modern-day South Sudan) and transported to the Middle East, a grim trade that Baker vowed to end. In 1873, Baker overcame the brutal slave traders who had terrorized the region.

Today, the dark markings on the fort's ancient rocks are thought to be the blood of countless victims. The fort's historical features include storage spaces for millet, simsim, and an armoury used during turbulent times. Baker, supported by Egyptians, led efforts to dismantle the slave trade and served as Governor-General of the Equatorial Nile Basin (which now straddles South Sudan and Northern Uganda) from 1869 to 1873. After Baker, the Fort was used by Emin Pasha and Charles Gordon while they served as Governor of Equatorial Province. Currently, the fort is in a state of ruins and open to the public for research and educational purposes.

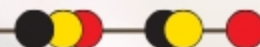
Despite the fort's dark history, it also offers visitors a chance to connect with the resilience of humanity. A visit to Fort Patiko now goes beyond history it's an experience. One can engage in activities like nature walks, hiking and arrow shooting. Join community visits to interact with locals and partake in their daily lives, fostering a deeper understanding of their culture.



*Images in this article showcase the Fort Patiko walls.*

*The writer of this article was Miss Heritage Buganda, founder of @Tribe56, cultural enthusiast, climate advocate, and Director of Women in Conservation at @HerpFunafoundation.*





## Turning Heritage into Opportunity: King Mudoma III of Bamasaba, on Culture, Tourism, and Economic Growth.

By Monica Rubombora



*Pictured: King Jude Mudoma III of Bamasaba visit to South Africa.*

What happens when tradition, tourism, and trade all come together? You get a truly inspiring conversation like the one I had the privilege of attending this past Sunday! I sat in on a vibrant radio interview with His Royal Highness, King Jude Mike Mudoma III, leader of the Bamasaba Tribe in Eastern Uganda, on “Tourism Talks” hosted by the ever-engaging Geniene P. Held in Pretoria, this wasn’t just a chat—it was a deep dive into how culture and business can (and should) go hand in hand.

The King spoke with the kind of passion that draws you in, tackling key challenges faced by kingdoms in today’s fast-moving world. His message? Culture alone can’t sustain a community—without economic muscle, even the richest traditions can struggle to survive. That’s why he’s on a mission to connect the dots between tourism, trade, education, and investment, using the incredible heritage of the Bamasaba Tribe as a springboard.

Let me paint the picture: the Mount Elgon region, or Mt Masaba as locals call it, is breathtaking. It boasts the largest crater lake in the world, with over 200 streams that flow into the River Nile (yes, the one that winds its way to the Mediterranean).

The region is also Uganda’s food basket and home to some of the finest Arabica coffee on the planet. Arabica coffee is a rare gem, grown in only a few high-altitude regions around the world, including Uganda’s Mount Elgon, where its unique flavor and aroma are unmatched.

The King’s vision? To turn this natural and cultural wealth into opportunities that drive economic growth, attract visitors, and create meaningful partnerships. But it’s not just about tourism—he’s also advocating for bridging the digital divide and transforming education on both sides of the border (the tribe spans Eastern Uganda and Western Kenya).

His message to the Bamasaba Diaspora, whom he met later at the Kara Heritage Institute, was clear: “Our culture is our strength, but our future lies in building economic pathways that sustain us.”

As I listened to the King, I couldn’t help but think about the incredible role that cultural institutions like kingdoms can play in Africa’s growth story. Imagine the possibilities when tradition meets trade and heritage sparks innovation. The King isn’t just preserving history; he’s creating a roadmap for the future—one that connects people, drives investment, and inspires pride.

*The writer of this article is a Ugandan living in South Africa*







## EALA's 14th Inter Parliamentary Games kick off in Grand Style with Spectacle and Color in Mombasa, Kenya.

The Parliament of Kenya hosted the Inter-Parliamentary Games under the theme "East African Community, Enhancing Integration through Inter-Parliamentary Games," which kicked off with a vibrant and colorful opening ceremony in Mombasa. Rt. Hon. Speaker Anita Among joined Kenya's President, H.E. William Ruto, Kenya's Speaker Hon. Moses Wetangula, and other regional leaders in the 100-meter curtain-raiser race. The event brought together members of the East African Legislative Assembly and national parliaments from all East African Community partner states.

The event kicked off with a pre-tournament conference which was graced by H.E William Samoei Ruto, the President of the Republic of Kenya and the Chair of the EAC. In attendance were the EAC Secretary General, H.E Veronica Nduva. The speaker of EALA, Right Hon. Joseph Ntakirutimana, the speakers of partner States Parliaments of EAC, Kenya's Cabinet Secretaries, the Governors of Mombasa and Kilifi counties.

In his opening remarks, President Ruto reiterated his vision for the EAC, emphasizing deeper integration, economic growth, and shared prosperity. He described the games as a "powerful symbol of unity, teamwork, collaboration, positive competition, and shared aspirations." The President also stressed the importance of removing "barriers to trade, expanding regional markets, and enhancing connectivity to unlock vast opportunities."

The event aimed to strengthen ties between EALA and national legislatures, raise awareness about the EAC integration process, and highlight the health benefits of sports. The participating teams from the Partner States' Parliaments, along with hundreds of Mombasa residents, kicked off the day with a lively procession from Treasury Square, through Mombasa city, to Mama Ngina Waterfront.



**L-R:** President William Samoei Ruto (center), Rt. Hon. Anita Annet Among (left) and Rt. Hon. Moses Wetangula(right) getting ready to participate in the 100-meter curtain raiser race at Mama Ngina Waterfront | Rt. Hon. Thomas Tayebwa teeing off at Nyali Golf course in Kenya during the Inter-Parliamentary games.





## DANA Cup Visit Showcases Uganda's Football Talent and Global African Ties.

**Kampala** – Recognizing Uganda's enthusiasm for football, the Dana Cup, one of the largest international youth football tournaments, hosted an engagement event. The event invited football stakeholders, coaches, and team representatives to learn more about the tournament, with the aim of fostering global football connections and creating opportunities for young players in Africa. It took place at Dolphin Suites Hotel in Bugolobi.

Frank Petersen, the Sales Consultant for Africa representing the Dana Cup, visited Uganda to discuss the tournament and opportunities for Ugandan teams to participate. Petersen highlighted Uganda's vibrant grassroots system, numerous academies, and a professional league, making it an ideal participant in international tournaments. This networking and idea exchange strengthened Uganda's ties with the global football community.

The Dana Cup, a global youth football tournament, showcases talent and cultural diversity, attracting teams from over 45 countries annually. Uganda, with its vibrant football culture, is an ideal fit for the tournament's expansion. The Dana Cup's visit to Kampala signifies a milestone in Uganda's football journey, offering young players a platform to compete and showcase the country's dynamic spirit, cementing its presence on the global football stage.



## Omedi Secures Third Place as Garnacho Wins 2024 FIFA Puskás Award



*Denis Omedi celebrating for his rabona against KCCA at Phillip Omondi Stadium-Lugogo.*

**Kampala**– Kitara and Uganda Cranes forward Denis Omedi was nominated for the prestigious 2024 FIFA Puskás Award, following his breathtaking reverse strike goal against KCCA in the FUFA Super 8 quarter-finals on August 6, 2024, at MTN Omondi Stadium, Lugogo. Positioned at the edge of the penalty box, Omedi delivered a moment of sheer brilliance, executing a perfect rabona that flew past goalkeeper Anthony Emojong into the top corner, leveling the match at 1-1. The game, which ended in a thrilling 3-3 draw, saw Kitara progress to the semifinals with a 4-3 aggregate victory, but it was Omedi's audacious strike that stole the headlines.

Omedi came in third place for the Puskás Award, with FIFA naming Alejandro Garnacho, the winger for Premier League club Manchester United, as the winner. Garnacho was recognized for his spectacular goal, alongside other finalists Kudus, Antonis, Al Haydos, Benzia, Bou, Dimarco, Chirinos, Onuachu, and Philogene.

Named after the legendary Hungarian striker Ferenc Puskás, the award honors the most spectacular goals scored during the qualifying period. Voting for the Puskás Award was open to fans worldwide via FIFA's official website, culminating in the announcement during the FIFA Best Awards ceremony in January 2025.

Denis's top-three finish not only highlights his individual brilliance but also shines a spotlight on Ugandan football, showcasing the talent emerging from local leagues and elevating the nation's presence on the global stage.

*Stories by Herbert Ssekatawa.*



# Spotlight Photo



The Public Diplomacy editorial team captures a moment at the Floating Island, immersing themselves in the island's eco-friendly charm and innovative design.



**Follow the conversation:**



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