



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NEW WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) REPRESENTATIVE PRESENTS LETTERS OF CREDENCE TO HONOURABLE ORYEM HENRY OKELLO**

On February 4, 2025, the newly appointed Uganda Country Representative of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Kasonde G. Mulenga Mwinga formally presented her Letters of Credence from the UN Secretary-General to the Hon. Oryem Henry Okello, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in Charge of International Affairs, marking the official commencement of her tenure in Uganda.

During the ceremony, Dr. Mwinga expressed her dedication to enhancing bilateral relations and fostering cooperation, particularly within the health sector. Minister Okello Oryem warmly welcomed the new representative, emphasizing Uganda's ongoing commitment to strengthening multilateral partnerships. "This occasion underscores the mutual resolve between Uganda and the international community in addressing global challenges, with a specific focus on public health", said Okello.

The two discussed Uganda's holistic approach to managing and mitigating disease outbreaks, a priority concern for the nation. Hon. Okello elaborated on Uganda's efforts to fortify her health sector, hinting at possible increase in the national health budget. "An increase would signal the government's intent to improve health infrastructure, enhance disease outbreak response capabilities, and overall healthcare services, thereby strengthening the country's ability to address emerging health threats and enhance public health preparedness," he added.

Dr. Mwinga praised Uganda's proactive and transparent strategies in managing infectious diseases, including Ebola and COVID-19, recognizing the country's resilient health system. She commended Uganda's commitment to combating HIV through comprehensive, multifaceted initiatives, as well as the country's immunization efforts. In response, Hon. Okello highlighted President Museveni's military-style response, emphasizing swift emergency actions, community engagement, and collaboration with international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO). He also referred to the President's successful approach in reducing HIV prevalence from 30-40% to 6%, within a short period.

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Additionally, Hon. Okello recollected the viral video of President Museveni exercising during the Covid19 Pandemic, which sparked a nationwide health movement, encouraging individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles through increased physical activity.

Through sustained international partnerships and ongoing efforts to enhance health system infrastructure, Uganda remains resolute in its commitment to addressing disease outbreaks, bolstering resilience, and contributing to global health security and continues to be a central figure in combating health crises and fostering international collaboration for the containment and control of infectious diseases.

As Dr. Kasonde Mwinga commences her diplomatic tenure in Uganda, the formal presentation of credentials signifies the initiation of a new phase in the cooperation between the World Health Organization (WHO) and Uganda. This highlights the acknowledgement of the significance of diplomatic relations not only in fostering trade and cultural exchanges but also in advancing mutual objectives in the realm of public health. **END**

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