



## **Speech by APRM Uganda National Focal Point-Hon David Bahati on 20 November 2019 at Uganda Media Center at 10am.**

As you may be aware, the APRM is a self-monitoring mechanism established in 2003 by Heads of State and Government, to which member states of the African Union (AU) voluntarily accede.

Uganda is the second AU member State to have completed a second governance review under this mechanism. This took place during the 27<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Committee of Participating Heads of State and Government (APR Forum) in January 2018 (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia).

The APRM thematic has four thematic areas; Democracy and Political Governance, Economic Governance and Management, Corporate Governance, and Sustainable Socio-economic Development.

Member countries are guided by the APRM Base Document and the APRM Questionnaire to conduct Reviews based on the principles of the APRM, which are to conduct review exercises in participating states that are technically competent, credible and free of manipulation. The principle of sharing knowledge on mutually agreed upon policies, standards and practices is also recognized in the founding documents of the APRM, as are the principles of inclusion and participation of all members of society in the APRM process as part of national ownership.

So far, thirty-five countries have voluntarily acceded to the APRM since its inception in 2003, while 17 of them have been peer reviewed completing their first cycle of reviews. The review uses an APRM Questionnaire provided by the APR Panel, which is domesticated by each country, to conduct competent self-assessment exercises, based on the 4 thematic pillars namely: Democracy and political governance; Economic governance and management; Corporate governance and Socio-economic development.

Uganda was one of the Pioneer countries to be peer reviewed under the mechanism on the basis of the 7<sup>th</sup> Country Review Report in 2009. The APRM National Programme of Action was implemented over the period 2010-2014 and annual reports to the APRM Forum (participating Heads of State and Government) were presented by H.E the President of Uganda. These reports are prepared independently by the Uganda APRM Governing Council (NGC) composed of government, Civil Society, Academia, and Private Sector. A copy of this report was also presented by Uganda to the Pan African Parliament in 2015 completing the First Cycle of the Peer Review.

Uganda is now in the Second Generation of APRM, with the NGC that led the preparation of the Second Country Self-Assessment Report based on the APRM Questionnaire and the Principles of the review.

The APRM structure, as guided by the Base Document, is in place to ensure the APRM process is effective as per the principles. Uganda APRM Structure includes: the National Focal Point, NGC, APRM Secretariat, a Cabinet Subcommittee for APRM, Parliamentary Committee for APRM, MDA Focal Points, CSO and Private Sector Focal Points.

The National Focal Point Minister who liaises with the NGC to ensure the Executive is involved through the APRM process. At Cabinet level a sub-committee for APRM is in place that ensures Cabinet is engaged, and at Parliament the Committee on Foreign Affairs ensures that Parliament is involved throughout the process.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development ensures that the Programme of Action is integrated in the National Budgeting cycle through the Budget Call Circular.

The National Planning Authority ensures the integration of the APRM in the National Development Plans. A Committee of APRM Focal Points in Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA) of government ensure actions assigned in the National Programme Action are included in the National Budget, implemented and reported on to the NGC annually. The NGC is composed of Uganda NGO Forum; Private Sector Foundation of Uganda; Academia; Parliament of Uganda with both the ruling party representative and the opposition represented recommended by leader of opposition; and government as Ex-Officio member.

All Reports produced under the mechanism are prepared in a participatory manner with consultations at both national and regional levels in the country, with consensus built among the parties on the actual state of governance, what

needs to be improved, how, by whom and by when in the National Programme of Action.

This second APRM Country Review Report highlights areas of strengths and challenges. We thank the Panel for highlighting several commendable governance policies and best practices in Uganda that have been selected for their perceived potential to be of use to other APRM countries facing similar challenges.

1. Medico-Legal Services for Victims of Gender-Based Violence.
2. Youth Representation in National Parliament.
3. The Uganda Investment Authority's One Stop Centre.
4. Uganda's Approach to Management of its Oil Resources.
5. The AskYourGov.org web site which helps members of the public to get the information they want from Uganda public authorities.
6. Refugee Integration.

#### Cross-cutting Issues

The cross-cutting issues underlined by the Panel as particularly important for Uganda are:

1. Management of Diversity covering a range of identity-related matters including ethnic minorities, refugees, religious groups and the like
2. Gender as a major issue that cuts across all thematic areas and brings entrenched cultural prejudices and damaging stereotypes face to face with progressive gender equality policies and laws.
3. The State of the Public Service the challenge applies to public services general, its impact is particularly severe at local government level.
4. Land being a critical and emotional subject and central to its socio-economic development
5. Youth Unemployment as a critical challenge facing Uganda.

As a government we take note of these and will strengthen the commendable practices further and also address the shortfalls identified. We strongly believe that this process is good for us to generate creative solutions to African Governance challenges, as we strive for the betterment of our Continent, Africa.

During the 25th APRM Summit on August 2016, H.E the President raised some pertinent areas that should be incorporated in reviewing the APRM Questionnaire so that it is focused, which included the following strategic bottlenecks hindering Africa's development, these included:

1. Ideological disorientation;
2. Interference with the private sector;
3. Under-developed Infrastructure;
4. Weak states, especially Army, Police, etc;
5. Fragmented markets, Market Access and Expansion;
6. Lack of industrialization and low Value addition;
7. Under-development of Human Resources (lack of education and poor health);
8. The under development of Agriculture
9. The under-development of services sector (banking, insurance, tourism etc.)
10. The attack on democracy.
11. Unresponsive Civil Servants (This was subsequently added in one of our Cabinet Retreats).
12. Lack of Domestic Resource Mobilization, with a focus on the Fiscal Revenue generated from the Continent's Natural Resources;
13. Structural inequalities in access to opportunities.

This was adopted by the African Union and now Uganda will pilot this targeted review along these strategic bottlenecks hindering Africa together with four other countries.

Join me to welcome the APRM Chief Executive Officer- Prof Eddy Maloka to share with you a brief on the Second Country Review Report.