



## Progress Statement No. 1

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### STATEMENT ON THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTION'S FIRST 100 DAYS IN OFFICE

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I assumed office as Director of Public Prosecutions on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 and have marked 100 days today. In my inaugural speech, I pledged to consolidate the gains registered by my predecessors and to meet planned targets, in particular, internal structural re-organization and staffing, re-tooling and re-skilling staff, among others.

Together with the Top Management, Senior Management and staff, the Office has registered a number of achievements in spite of the challenging times, particularly, in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Some of the outstanding areas include: -

#### Internal structural re- organization and staffing

a) The Top Management structures of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) were on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020 re-organized as follows;

- ▣ Re-designation of Membership of the Top Management team. It is now comprised of the DPP, Deputy DPPs and other members as co-opted by Top Management.
- ▣ Establishment of a Senior Management team. It is now comprised of Heads of Departments, Divisions, Sections and Units.
- ▣ Designation of Legal Managers for the DPP and the 4 Deputy DPPs.
- ▣ Development of Terms of Reference for the Top Management, Senior Management and Legal Managers.

b) The accelerated promotion of 29 Chief State Attorneys was fast tracked. This process commenced in 2019 spearheaded by the Deputy DPP, Management and

Support Services, Mr. Vincent Wagona and the Human Resource Department. The promotional interviews were held between 24<sup>th</sup> June and 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

c) Specialized Units have been established and existing ones re-organized and their reporting mechanism streamlined in order to ensure that the institution has the right skills placed in the right places.

- ▣ The Cybercrime Unit established under the Anti-Corruption Department, headed by Ms. Marion Carolyn Acio (Senior State Attorney).
- ▣ The Homicide Unit created under the Department of General Casework, headed by Ms. Margaret Nakigudde Kato (Assistant DPP).
- ▣ The ODPP Administrative Sanctions Enforcement Unit, headed by Ms. Angom Harriet (Senior State Attorney).
- ▣ The Asset Recovery Unit has been put under the International Cooperation Department now headed by Mr. John Baptist Asiimwe (Senior Assistant DPP).
- ▣ The Plea Bargain Unit headed by Ms. Margaret Nakigudde Kato is to report to the Head of Department of General Casework.
- ▣ The Wildlife and Environment Crime Unit, headed by Mr. Jatiko Thomas (Assistant DPP) is to report to the Head of Department of Land Crimes.
- ▣ The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Unit, headed by Ms. Rachel Bikhole (Assistant DPP) is to report to the Head of Department of International Crimes.

d) Special assignments and Task forces have been created to handle and execute urgent assignments, and improve efficiency.

- ▣ The Task Force to Update the Guidelines for Coordination in Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions, headed by Mr. Elem-Ogwal (Deputy DPP/Prosecutions).
- ▣ The Mentorship Team, headed by Mr. Andrew Odiit (Senior Assistant DPP).
- ▣ The High Public Interest Cases Team, headed by Mr. Sam Oola (Senior Assistant DPP).

Mr. Jonathan Muwaganya, a Chief State Attorney has been assigned as a liaison officer with the Attorney General's Chambers to handle all civil cases which involve the DPP or arise out of ODPP cases.

### Re-tooling and re-skilling staff

Setting up of the Prosecutors Academy is at the forefront of the ODPP's mandate and priorities. Staff skills enhancement is the crux of effective and efficient performance of any institution. The ODPP intends to benchmark from other institutions that have Training Institutes / Academies. However, in the meantime, the Directorate of Inspections, Quality Assurance, Research and Training headed by Ms. Alice Komuhangi Khaukha has been tasked to operationalize the idea. Accordingly, the ODPP has engaged the Judicial Training Institute and set up avenues to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Judicial Training Institute to provide training facilities.

A training needs assessment has been commenced by the Directorate of Inspections, Quality Assurance, Research and Training and plans are underway to mentor staff in a bid to improve their performance.

A Mentorship Team headed by Mr. Andrew Odiit (SADPP) has been put in place. Working together with the Directorate of Inspections, Quality Assurance, Research and Training, the team will spear head the mentoring, coaching and provision of hands-on support to the prosecuting staff.

### Management of case backlog

A number of innovative ways have been earmarked to tackle the monster of case backlog which has dogged the judicial system for so long. Some of these ways include;

#### a) Plea bargaining sessions/camps

During the months of June and July 2020, the ODPP was involved in plea bargaining camps at Masindi, Nakasongola, Gulu, Mbarara and Masaka Prisons. The Plea Bargain Camps were organized by the Judiciary and officially launched by the Honourable the Principal Judge, Dr. Flavian Zeija. The plea bargaining

sessions resulted into 503 convictions from all the five regions visited. To put this into perspective 503 convictions could have taken 12 High court sessions over many months to achieve. Other plea bargain sessions have been held in Soroti, Lira, Kabale and currently Entebbe (Kigo and Kitala Prisons).

The Top Management appreciates the effort of the head of the Plea Bargain Unit and all the ODPP staff who participated and handled the plea bargain cases.

## b) COVID 19 Cases disposed of

A high-level stakeholders' meeting was convened by the DPP, aimed at harmonizing the response to handling the COVID-19 related cases by criminal justice agencies (the ODPP, Police, Judiciary and Prisons) under the auspices of the Justice Law and Order Sector Secretariat. As at 16 June 2020, the office had registered about 1,955 cases arising from the enforcement of the COVID-19 directives and measures, while the prisons had received 2463 remands some of whom were subsequently convicted.

In a bid to decongest the prisons and reduce case backlog, a task force was constituted to handle all COVID-19 related cases. The aim was to review registered cases, weed out those concluded by plea bargain or otherwise, determine the petty offences for disposal through diversion.

Most of these cases have since been disposed of. The ODPP expresses gratitude to the Judiciary for organizing a mobile court that sat at Kitalya Prison in order to handle and dispose of the cases involving the 2463 remand prisoners, and the Commissioner General of Prisons for giving us unlimited access to the Prison facilities. Most of these had been arrested on COVID-19 related charges such as Disobedience of lawful orders contrary to Section 117 of the Penal Code Act and Doing a negligent act likely to spread infection of disease, contrary to Section 171 of the same Act.

## c) Pre-trial review and weeding out committed cases

A taskforce was set up comprising members of Top Management, Regional Officers and Legal Managers to review committed cases and weed out undeserving ones. The team has so far handled the committed cases of Jinja (338 cases where 38

were withdrawn), Kampala (486 cases where 14 cases were withdrawn). The team is currently handling Masaka Region cases and will later review Mbarara Region committed cases. The exercise ensures that only deserving cases remain in the system and hence reduces case backlog. The team led by Ms. Samali Wakooli (Assistant DPP) is appreciated for a job well done.

#### d) Case census

The exercise headed by Mr. William Byansi (Senior Assistant DPP) was kicked off in June 2020 to ascertain how many cases are in the system, determine which cases should be given priority and fast tracked, and which ones should be weeded out. A report has been made. The report is due for consideration by Top Management. Mr Byansi and team are appreciated for a job well done.

#### Streamlining the registry file management and complaints handling system

A very senior officer, Ms. Betty Khisa, Principal Assistant DPP, has been put in charge of the Complaints Handling System. She will be assisted by Ms. Faith Turumanya, Assistant DPP and Ms. Sharon Akandwanira, Chief State Attorney to ensure that the Complaints Handling System works seamlessly.

The office sought for support in business process re-engineering from the Ministry of Public Service. The Ministry nominated four officers to provide technical support in the ODPP's business process re-engineering efforts.

#### Development of data collection and reporting templates/format

A new performance reporting template was created for reporting on performance under each departmental objective and target under MPS, SIP, JLOS, Cross cutting issues, other activities etc. A circular has also been issued making it mandatory to submit performance and activity reports to the Policy and Planning Unit. This will ensure that all reports including session reports are received, utilised and acted upon.

#### Finalization of the ODPP Bill

This exercise was spear headed by the Deputy DPP, International Affairs, Mr. Odumbi James Owere. The draft bill was reviewed and updated by the Legal Managers and presented to Top Management on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 for their approval. The bill has been flagged off as a priority with the Speaker of Parliament, Public Accounts Committee, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, and Attorney General. Further discussions are to be held to ensure that the ODPP Bill is fast tracked and passed by Parliament.

### Use of official email

The ODPP has revamped the electronic mail system to a unified messaging and communication system whose services include email, messaging, chats and calls, tasks, work groups, drive, calendar, time and report, workflow, meeting and briefings. The system will act as a secure platform to protect official communications among the staff of the ODPP. The IT team headed by Mr. Denis Odongkara, Principal Systems Analyst is appreciated for all the innovations.

### Corporate image and rebranding

This has been spearheaded by the Public Relations Team under the stewardship of the Public Relations Officer, Ms. Jacquelyn Okui. The process of corporate image and rebranding kicked off with re-organization of the boardroom, corridors, and the reception area. Banners and portraits were adorned along the corridors and lift area to make the vision and mission of the ODPP more visible to staff and members of the public. The Public Relations Team is appreciated for the innovations and improvements in the corporate image and visibility of the ODPP.

### Strategic engagements and institutional collaboration

The ODPP has had a number of engagements with donors and other stakeholders who are so crucial in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic to forge a way forward post-Covid. These include; the Irish Ambassador, His Excellency William Carlos, the Austrian Embassy led by the Head of Office, Dr. Roswitha Kremser, the Kingdom of the Netherlands Ambassador, His Excellency Henk Jan Bakker, the Honourable the Principal Judge, Justice Flavian Zeija, the Uganda Police Force, The Uganda Prisons Service, JLOS, UN Women led by Ms. Edekemi Ndieli, the Deputy Country Representative UN Women, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights led by Mr. Robert Ayeda Kotchani, the Country

representative, the Manager Prosecutions, Uganda Revenue Authority Ms. Hilda Bakanasa, UNICEF led by Ms. Laura Fraggiocomo, the Child Protection Specialist and the Honorable Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs Mr. Ephraim Kamuntu.

These meetings have yielded fruitful results including but not limited to opening opportunities for capacity building and enhancement for ODPP staff, tooling, support and provision of Personal Protective Equipment for the ODPP staff during this COVID pandemic, among others.

### Launch of the ODPP Newsletter

It is with great pleasure that today I issue the first ODPP Newsletter. The purpose of the Newsletter is to profile and publicize the activities and engagements undertaken by the ODPP for the public to know what the office does for them. The Newsletter will be issued quarterly.

### Conclusion

I thank members of the Top Management, Senior Management and the staff for their cooperation. I also thank our stakeholders for their contributions to the realization of the mandate and vision of the ODPP. Together we can make it.

Provision of Criminal Justice requires concerted effort. The ODPP cannot effectively execute and deliver on its mandate in the absence of the Executive, Parliament, Judiciary, the Police, the Prisons, Advocates among others. In this regard, on my behalf and on behalf of Top Management, Senior Management and the staff of the ODPP, we express gratitude to all ODPP partners including, the Government of Uganda, JLOS institutions, the JLOS Secretariat, Children at Risk Action Network (CRANE), UN Women, UNICEF among others. We wouldn't be able to deliver without you.

**Jane Frances ABODO**  
**DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS**  
**FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY**