



REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

STATEMENT

BY

**BETTY AMONGI ONGOM (MP)
MINISTER OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

OF

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

AT THE

112TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

10th JUNE, 2024

GENEVA

[Please check against delivery]

**The President and Vice Presidents,
The Director General,
Distinguished Delegates.**

Uganda aligns with the NAM statement.

I congratulate the President and Vice Presidents of this session upon their election.

I thank the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director General for their reports to the Conference.

This conference is being held against the backdrop of global political polarization, geopolitical instability and extreme environmental impacts; challenges that place the greatest burden and risks on women and workers.

Uganda is committed to advancing the social contract because we believe that it is our duty and responsibility to ensure that our citizens access basic services, employment and social protection. To this end, my Government has put in place socio-economic programs to address these issues.

Let me share some of the ongoing programs:

1. Free universal primary and secondary education (UPE and USE) in Government schools;
2. **Wealth Creation Programs:** Aimed at providing affordable capital for businesses owned by women, youth, and farmers, under which approximately 2 billion USD is allocated annually to support agricultural production services; For example, the Parish Development Model (PDM) provides grants at the household level for economic empowerment;
3. Our current program, GROW, supports women entrepreneurs with a grant of USD 217 million targeting business development services and access to affordable capital at 10% interest rates per annum to expand their businesses;

4. Special grants of USD 50 million annually have been established for people with disabilities and older persons;
5. The National Social Security Fund which provides efficient social security coverage;
6. A Social Assistance Grant for older persons of 80 years and above which provides monthly cash payment;
7. We have invested in the Higher Education Students Loan Scheme, to cater for students from poor backgrounds; and
8. Our **Technical Skills Development Programs** are revitalizing structured apprenticeship programs in which learners, primarily women and youth, acquire technical skills and workplace experience, and are **provided with tools and equipment** to start their own businesses.

In implementing these programs, my government prioritizes partnerships with our social partners, with our Constitution protecting fundamental human rights, including equal opportunities, economic and social rights, and affirmative action for all vulnerable groups. This includes workers electing MPs to represent their interests as a special interest group in Parliament.

It is essential that we enhance the North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation to support national endeavours aimed at eradicating poverty and hunger, as well as fulfilling the pledges outlined in the Philadelphia Declaration.

Furthermore, there is a need for global solidarity and responsibility sharing, with the developing countries, being supported through fairer trade terms, a reformed financial architecture and investments that can accelerate the social and economic transformation of these countries.

Finally, I reaffirm my Government's commitment renewed social contract and reassure the Director-General of my Government's cooperation and support.

THANK YOU