



Remarks at the briefing on Joint Kenya-Uganda Cross-Border Integrated Programme for Sustainable Peace and Socio-Economic Transformation for the Karamoja Cluster.

**By Ms. Rosa Malango
UN Resident Coordinator**

Imperial Golf View Hotel, 29 May 2019

Minister for Karamoja Affairs, Hon. Eng. John Byabagambi

Minister for Devolution, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs), Hon.
Eugene Wamalwa

Your Excellencies,

The Chair of the Ateker Community, Hon. Peter Lokeris,

Members of the Local Development Partners' Group

Representatives from the Private Sector,

Representative of the UN Resident Coordinator, Kenya;

UNCT Members,

UN Colleagues;

Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the United Nations in Uganda, I would like to start by thanking the Government of Uganda through the Minister for Karamoja Affairs, for hosting us and the Minister for Devolution and ASALs in Kenya for leading the Government of Kenya delegation to deliberate on this transformational initiative known as the Joint Karamoja cluster Programme. This programme is not about nations, it's about placing people at the center of joint action to improve the quality of life, access to services, create alternative livelihoods and encourage trade.

We are here today to see how support the Karamajong people, native to remote areas in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan. In every country, their quality of life has been affected by increasingly frequent droughts, underdevelopment and isolation. Their traditional nomadic nature has made change difficult. Their shared identity represents a great opportunity to define indigenous approaches to development and prosperity. We have an opportunity to improve the quality of life of girls by keeping them in school, promoting renewable energy to light the roads, building infrastructure to support tourism and the responsible management of natural resources. We have the opportunity to transform the Karamajong cluster into a climate smart corridor where positive traditional values meet technology and smart investments.

The Joint Kenya-Uganda Cross-Border Integrated Programme for Sustainable Peace and Socio-Economic Transformation for the Karamoja Cluster will only succeed if we make it a collective effort.

Environmental stress and competition over dwindling resources such as pasture and water have repeatedly sparked conflict. Political and economic exclusion, historical marginalization as well as growing inequalities, have created a conducive environment for discontent and radicalisation. Africa is the world's youngest continent; East African nations share this demographic. The high number of young people can be an asset. They can develop drought resistant crops, e-commerce platforms to sell artistic items, small and medium enterprises to add value to natural resources such as development minerals.

Ladies and Gentlemen: The timing of this initiative is important. Uganda and Kenya are both active member states of the United Nations and ardent advocates for a more efficient UN and transformational economic growth. This Joint Programme enables us to respond to national visions, the AU 2063 agenda as well as the advancement of Agenda 2030 with its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We can bring to life SDG targets related to the elimination of poverty (1), the eradication of hunger (2),

gender parity (5) and the promotion of Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (16) among others.

Our success will depend on your continued leadership as Governments and our ability to mobilize private sector leaders, leaders of industry, development and humanitarian partners as well as cultural and religious institutions to promote peace and prosperity. We have started on a strong note. I want to thank the governments of Kenya and Ethiopia for being pioneers. I want to thank both governments and UN technical teams from Kenya and Uganda for drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and a proposed plan of work to guide our interventions. To my colleagues from UNDP, thank you for providing the catalytic funding on behalf of the UN in the amount of USD 953,707 which has enabled us to develop the Karamoja Cluster Cross-Border Programme. We look forward to the signing of the MOU between Uganda and Kenya as the formal launch of this important initiative.

Call for Action:

Hon. Ministers, Your Excellencies and colleagues,

As I conclude I would like to convey my hope that this Joint Programme will become a game changer for people like the Karamojong Irk of Uganda that will improve livelihoods, spur eco-tourism, increase cross-

border trade and sustainable development using environmentally friendly approaches. I dream of a Karamoja cluster known for digital financing, innovative approaches to development and climate smart agri-led industries.

Thank you for your attention