



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

STATEMENT BY

**SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
UGANDA,
RT. HON. EDWARD K. SSEKANDI**

AT

**THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 10TH ANNUAL
CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF
PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES OF EASTERN AND
SOUTHERN AFRICA (APLESA).**

AT

HOTEL AFRICANA, KAMPALA.

ON

MONDAY, 25TH MAY 2009

- The Executive Committee of APLESA,
- Delegates from APLESA member countries,
- Conference Resource persons present,
- Guest Speakers,
- Invited Guests,
- Distinguished participants ,
- Ladies and Gentlemen

I feel honoured to preside over the official opening of the 10th Annual Conference of the Association of Parliamentary Libraries of Eastern and Southern Africa (APLESA). I welcome you all to the conference. To the delegates from outside Uganda, first of all I welcome you particularly to the Parliament and Uganda in general. It is our esteemed pride as a country to host such an important regional meeting.

According to the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU)'s good practice guidelines for Parliaments, it is stated that a well resourced Parliament will have a comprehensive library information service to provide required

information. Also, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures recommend that "Members and staff of the Legislature shall have access to sufficient research, library and ICT facilities". At this juncture I wish to inform you that Uganda is doing very well in these areas and I take this opportunity to thank Mr. Innocent Rugambwa and his staff for the good work done in this area.

In a parliamentary democratic system, the representatives of the people should have access to objective, factual and timely information with a view to making informed decisions and ensuring executive accountability to the legislature. Today, we are in an age of rapidly changing technological developments; it would be surprising if Parliaments, as central institutions of democratic representation, were not to undergo change. Remarkable of these developments is the field of information management where each and every time that goes the technologies are changing in the advancement direction, hence calling for the ever changing users like the legislators.

I am aware that APLESA was founded in Harare, Zimbabwe, in October 1994 in response to the need for Parliamentary Librarians to achieve the objectives as below;

- Establish effective information exchange programmes.
- Foster cooperation among the Parliamentary Libraries in the region so as to provide concise, timely and adequate information.
- Keep abreast with advancements in the field of Information Management.
- Share experience, knowledge and problem solving, and promote networking.
- Promote the establishment of libraries and research services as a fundamental component in the development of democratic legislatures throughout the world.

I believe that this regional association will promote cooperation between legislatures and especially their libraries because of the growing need for legislators to

be well informed concerning developments worldwide; and enhance the potential of the individual member Parliaments to deliver services to their clientele.

We are aware that Parliamentary libraries serving individual Parliaments do not have all the resources they need in order to deliver efficient and effective information services to their clients. Nevertheless, to benefit from each other's experiences and insights and to share best practice is an integral part of developing sound legislative libraries.

You should not forget that the global trend has dictated that no man is an island; resulting from a variety of integrations and association in the provision of both products and services. On that basis therefore i wish to urge you that every time you meet like today, you should add a brick to build a strong foundation of the APLESA for its sustainability to stand a test of time.

I am informed that this particular conference would not have been possible without the support by the member

Parliaments; and the International Network for Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP). Please accept our appreciation for the invaluable assistance you have accorded this association to organise such a wonderful event.

Without taking much of your time, allow me to once again express our sincere gratitude upon your presence in Uganda and to wish you a nice stay and fruitful deliberations.

I now declare this conference officially opened.

For God and Our Country!

I thank you.