



# UGANDA

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## A STATEMENT

**BY HON.KAHINDA OTAFIIRE,  
MINISTER FOR WATER, LANDS &  
ENVIRONMENT (UGANDA)  
AT THE TWELFTH SESSION OF  
THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION  
OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
NEW YORK, 29 APRIL 2004**



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The Chairman  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic of Uganda, I wish to thank the United Nations for organizing the twelfth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

The main focus of the Session is timely because we collectively need to review progress made in implementing Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) especially in attaining the Millennium Development Goals for the water, sanitation and Human Settlement sectors as the focus at this meeting.

Since 1997, my Government has been involved in reforming the water sector to ensure that services are provided and managed with increased efficiency and cost effectiveness while ensuring sustainability and equitable development with a special focus on the poor and other vulnerable groups in our society. Because of these reforms and the high priority government accords the Water and Sanitation sector, access to safe water coverage has increased from 18.4% in the early 1990s to 55% amongst the rural population and 63% amongst the urban population by the end of 2003. The necessary sector policies and legislation are in place and sector strategies are under revision in line with ongoing reforms for the better management of our water resources and sustainable services delivery with a stronger role of Local governments and the private sector.

On the part of Human Settlement, the Government is reviewing the existing Housing policy and Land reforms. A new Condominium law has been enacted, and outdated physical planning laws and regulations are under review to create the enabling environment and

ensure policies of Decentralization and Liberalization are taken into consideration.

My Government is concerned about enabling the poor access decent shelter. We are having difficulties attracting substantial private sector capital for large housing schemes.

However, Government is faced with major challenges of establishing strong mechanisms for effective, efficient and sustainable delivery of water and sanitation services to the end users. Key issues that affect the water and sanitation sector include difficulties in implementing reform recommendations and strategies due to inadequate financial and human resources to meet the investment requirements and targets in the next 15 years. Other challenges include inadequate physical planning especially for the orderly urbanization and services of the fast growing urban population as well as encouraging for urban centres.

The Uganda Government is fully committed to implementing the commitments made and adopted by the World Summit in Johannesburg through the implementation of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which are the Government's national framework for planning including the setting of priorities and allocation of resources.

This Session of the Commission therefore, gives us a unique opportunity to review progress in implementing the JPOI with a view to identifying constraints and collectively identify solutions. In dealing with all this we need to create a new world order based on partnerships and effective participation of all stakeholders within the country, regionally and globally. We have to ensure that we provide water and sanitation facilities to our populations especially the poor as part of a set of inter-related interventions for their social economic development; while protecting and using the water resources sustainably.

The financial and technical resources needed to attain the MDGs are enormous. While we appreciate the support by our development partners and other funding agencies, more resources and innovative approaches are needed. Support is also needed to enable the

economies of developing countries, like Uganda grow to enable themselves sustainably provide the badly needed services beyond Aid. Without economic growth, macro-economic considerations alone and competition by all sectors for limited resources, will make substantial increased funding for water, human settlements and sanitation difficult sectors.

I thank you for your attention.