



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOURTH SESSION OF THE ETHIOPIA-UGANDA JOINT MINISTERIAL COMMISSION (JMC) KICKS OFF IN ADDIS ABABA

Following a six-year break, the Ethiopia-Uganda Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) kicked off today, 3rd April and will conclude on 4th April 2025 at the Skylight Hotel in Addis Ababa.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Odongo Jeje Abubakhar will lead a large delegation of Ministers and technical officials from key sectors of trade and investment, transport, immigration and customs, energy and natural resources development, defence and security, among others.

The Ethiopia-Uganda JMCs, are expected to be held biennially on a rotational basis in accordance with the Agreement establishing the Joint Ministerial Commission JMC in 2011. In 2019, the two countries held the 3rd Session of the Joint Ministerial Commission in Kampala. Post-Covid19 pandemic, the Fourth Session will run from 3rd-4th April 2025.

Speaking at the opening of the Senior Official's meeting this morning, Amb. Richard Kabonero Head of the Department of Regional Economic Cooperation and representing the Permanent Secretary Mr. Vincent Bagiire, highlighted the historical bonds between Ethiopia and Uganda dating back to years of exceptional cooperation and mutual understanding. He recognized the strategic significance of the Joint Ministerial Commission since its establishment in 1993 and recalling the Third JMC held in Kampala in 2019.

"These engagements highlight Uganda's dedication to fostering bilateral cooperation and advancing shared interests, including economic partnerships and peace initiatives," he said, adding, "this Fourth Session provides an invaluable platform to review achievements, address emerging challenges, and chart the way forward."

Amb. Zerinu Abebe, Ag. Director-General for African Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, noted that this JMC will enhance longstanding cordial relationship between Kenya and Uganda, noting that Ethiopia and Uganda have deep bilateral and multilateral engagements, which will enhance cooperation in various sectors, hence enhancing relationships. "I believe today's deliberations will allow us to reflect on the areas of

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cooperation that we are already committed to and to further explore new areas of possible cooperation,” he said.

Negotiations underway are taking place in an expectant and cordial atmosphere with Ethiopian Ambassador to Uganda H.E. Etsegenet Bezabih Yimenu underscoring the importance of concluding bilateral MoUs to serve as frameworks to strengthen the relationship, seeing it as an opportunity to deepen collaboration in defence and security cooperation.

Uganda’s Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union and Economic Commission to Africa H.E. Rebecca Amuge Otengo underscored the importance of regular JMCs in offering opportunities to review the progress of the bilateral relationship. She emphasized the role of the respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs in ensuring that the decisions are implemented but also that the relationships flourish.

In this JMC, the two sides will pursue initiatives of cooperation that will focus on three key clusters:

- i. Political and Diplomatic Affairs – Enhancing diplomatic consultations, regional peace and security cooperation, transboundary water management, and immigration matters.
- ii. Defence and Security Cooperation – Strengthening collaboration in defense, justice, law enforcement, and border security.
- iii. Economic Development – Expanding partnerships in trade, energy, minerals, tourism, agriculture, and transport infrastructure, including roads, railways, and air transport.

Key contentious issues such as trade barriers and market access and immigration cooperation, have been identified for resolution underscoring the commitment to overcoming challenges and fostering mutual benefits.

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