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Ireland pledges increased support to tackle climate change

By Agnes Nantambi

The Ambassador of Ireland in Uganda, Donald Cronin, has pledged to increase support for developing countries to help them tackle climate change.

He said this is part of Ireland's commitment made at the Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris to scale up climate finance by providing accumulative total of at least 75 million Euros in public funding by 2020.

Speaking during the Community Based Adaptation Conference (CBA11) at Royal Suites in Kampala, Cronin said Uganda is showing its commitment to securing a prosperous future for its nationals by implementing the agreement and working to achieve national determined contribution.

"This is to re-affirm that we shall continue to increase support for developing countries by more than 36 million Euros per year," he said.

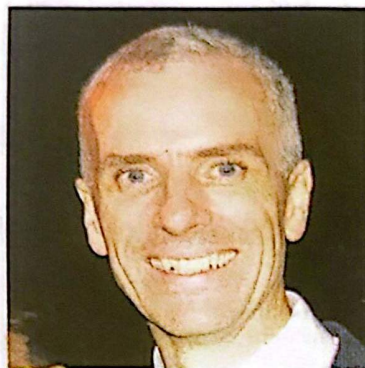
Cronin, however, regretted the unilateral decision by the United States administration to withdraw from the Paris agreement, which was adopted by 195 countries to protect

the environment to sustain life and in particular to adapt to the impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable people.

The conference, which was organised by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), Ministry of Water and Environment, Makerere University Centre for Climate Change Research and Innovations (MUCCRI) and the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), was aimed at enhancing the capacity of practitioners, governments and donors to scale up and support community-based adaptation.

The water and environment minister, Sam Cheptoris, who officiated at the opening, said climate change poses the greatest threat to development, not only in Uganda, but in almost all the developing countries and the entire globe.

"There is no longer any doubt that the global climate system is changing and the very existence of communities in countries such as Uganda is threatened by the erosion of their natural resource capital," Cheptoris said.



"We shall continue to increase support for developing countries by more than 36 million per year" Irish envoy

He applauded IIED's initiative to mobilise policy and decision-makers, academicians, researchers and climate change adaptation practitioners to discuss the important subject that focuses on empowering communities to use their knowledge and decision-making processes to take action on climate change.

The minister noted that the theme of the CBA11, "harnessing natural resources and ecosystems for adaptation", was directly relevant to the host country, Uganda, whose economy and livelihood

of her rural communities largely depends on its natural resources especially its climate. The vice-chancellor Makerere University, Prof. John Ddumba-Ssentamu, in his submission, observed that the theme of the conference is in line with the global development agenda agreed on by world leaders to build resilient societies.

"The global development agenda as implied in the sustainable development goals is geared towards transforming society. It is gratifying that the sustainable development

goals have included education broadly as a proven vehicle for sustainability. As academic institutions, we are committed to adapt our training to address these issues related to sustainability," he promised.

Ddumba noted that a bottom-up approach to adaptation enables local knowledge and practices to be shared among communities, academics and project managers so that those most exposed to the impacts of climate change are better able to adapt.

The director IIED, Clare Shakya, said the role of non-state actors such as sub-national governments, municipalities, businesses and NGOs are proving to be more important than ever in climate adaptation.

She, however, said despite the fact that businesses recognise that climate change affects their bottom line, action is still too slow.

"Some governments are uncertain about what their adaptation priorities should be. Many donors are nervous about what adaptation and what development is. They are uncertain what they should invest in and this is most visible in the Green Climate Fund," she said.