AT NATIONAL LEVEL UNBS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR METEROLOGY AND STANDARDS

BULISA

Strong standards critical ahead of Uganda's first oil

By Peter Abaanabasazi

Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) executive director James Kasigwa has underscored the need for collaboration in developing comprehensive standards and metering systems as Uganda moves closer to oil and gas production.

According to officials from the Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU), most of the infrastructure required to deliver the country's first oil by July 2026, has already been completed.

However, Kasigwa said as Uganda moves toward this milestone, there is a need for closer co-operation with relevant institutions, including PAU, to ensure comprehensive standards and metering systems are in place to accurately measure crude oil before it is transported to the market.

Kasigwa made the remarks during a field monitoring visit in the Albertine Graben. He said the oil and gas sector represents the country's largest investment and that standards are critical in ensuring these investments create lasting value for the economy.

During the visit, the team toured the Tilenga Project operated by TotalEnergies in Buliisa district, Kingfisher oil field operated by CNOOC Uganda in Kikuube district, Kabalega Industrial Park, East African Crude Oil Pipeline project in Hoima district and waste management facilities operated by EnviroServ and Luwero industries.

The visit was aimed at enhancing standardisation, quality assurance, testing and meteorology for the sustainable development of Uganda's oil and gas sector.

Kasigwa said oil and gas are a shared resource and that metering must be prioritised to guarantee transparency and accountability in resource sharing.

"At the national level, UNBS is responsible for meteorology. We are making sure that all the parties in this partnership will get a fair share of the resource, to ensure that meters are approved and calculated, for a litre or barrel goes for a litre and not one and a half," he said. Kasigwa said there is also a need for players in the oil and gas sector to observe quality standards as they implement different activities in the region.

He reiterated that the sector represents the country's largest investment and that standards are essential in ensuring these investments generate long-term economic value.

"As we ramp up production of oil, we have to make sure that our crude oil meets minimum international standards so that as we pump it to the market it will be going to, it meets standard," he said.

He added that quality standards will not only apply to crude oil, but will also be critical for the petrochemical industry. Kasigwa further revealed that to support this vision, UNBS plans to establish an office, laboratories and testing facilities in the oil region dedicated to supporting oil and gas development.

"As we build the refinery, we hope to make products out of these oil resources, products like practice, fertilisers among others. We ensure that those meet the requirements quality and safety," he

Joseph Kobusheshe director of environment and safety at PAU, said are working closely stakeholders in the sect

"In conjunction with U we have developed stan for local suppliers of good services, but also for stand which are not in place or which we have no time develop," he said.

Kobusheshe said mos the infrastructure needed deliver the first drop of o July 2026 has been achieved

He noted that the flowlin for both CNOOC and TotalEnergies have been completed. He added that CNOOC has also comp feeder pipelines and Central Processing Facility (CPF).

Kobusheshe said the minimum number of wells required for first oil has also been achieved, noting that out of 420 needed oil wells, 210 oil wells have so far been drilled.

He said the current focus is on the Tilenga Project's CPF, whose progress now stands at 50% to 60%.

He noted that in an effort to complete the CPF at the Tilenga project, three shifts of eight hours each were introduced, enabling the contractor to register 1.5 to 2% progress every week.

He added that all these infrastructures will enable the country to produce its first oil within the set timeframe.

PHOTO BY PETER ABAANABASAZI



Kasigwa (second-right), alongside UNBS board members and PAU officials, listens as TotalEnergies publicist Christopher Ocowun (left) explains key aspects of the project

BETWEEN THE LINES

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