

# MUSEVENI URGES LAWYERS TO SUPPORT INTEGRATION

PHOTO BY KENNEDY ORYEMA

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Political integration is the only insurance that will save African countries from future colonialism, President Yoweri Museveni has said.

Museveni, who was addressing lawyers during the East African Law Society 22nd annual conference at Imperial Resort Beach Hotel in Entebbe on Friday, said even if African countries develop, they can still be colonised, provided they do not guarantee their security.

"For the last 50 years, we have been asking lawyers to include the idea of political federation in your discussions. You can be integrated economically, but you are different if you are politically integrated," he said.

"How can Africa insure itself against future colonialism? It is time for you to think about the insurance for Africa," Museveni added. The conference was attended by lawyers from Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi and Zanzibar,

## COLONIALISM

"Why were we colonised? Are we maggots? The issue for our leaders was to get back our independence. After independence, they sought to get democracy for our people because there was no democracy during the time of kings and colonialists," Museveni said.

During colonial times, Museveni noted that leaders such as South Africa's Nelson Mandela, Tanzania's Julius Nyerere, Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah and Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta had these five



Museveni talking to members of the legal fraternity as Byaruhanga (centre) looks on before the East African Law Society annual conference at Imperial Beach Resort Hotel in Entebbe on Friday

strategic goals in mind.

## INTEGRATION

The President urged lawyers to support the East African political integration so as to widen their legal market.

This was after Uganda Law Society president, Francis Gimara and the East African Law Society president, Richard Mugisha, requested him to push for liberalisation of the legal market in East Africa.

But Museveni tasked the lawyers with passing a resolution upon which he would defend their request among EAC (East African Community) member state leaders. With independence and democracy in place, Museveni said African leaders should strive to ensure prosperity because independence and democracy

are not an end in themselves, but a means to an end. The President explained that prosperity does not come from prayer or begging, but through hard work. "I hear some people going to church to pray to become prosperous. Are you going to spend hours praying and shouting for prosperity as if God is deaf?" he asked.

Museveni gave his own example, where he produces milk for sale to generate wealth, but the consumption among Ugandans is still low.

"I am a milk producer. I am not a parasite. I produce wealth. In 1986, the production of milk in Uganda was 200 million litres per year," he said.

"Today, it is at 2.2 billion litres per year after we encouraged people to improve on production. But the problem is that Ugandans are not drinking

enough milk."

"If we did not have the East African market, all that surplus would have gone to waste and the industry would have collapsed," Museveni explained.

Museveni said the legal market in East Africa was fragmented yet if they were operating freely in a bigger market, their chances of becoming prosperous would be high.

Without integration, Museveni said lawyers were practicing *ngumba* (barren) legalism, which cannot enable them to prosper.

The Attorney General, William Byaruhanga, hailed Museveni for promoting the rule of law in Uganda, and requested him to use his position as EAC chairperson to do the same in the entire East African region.