

Let's consult on climate change

The world's nations are meeting again in Bonn, Germany, from November 6-17 for the 23rd annual conference of parties (COP23) under UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The aim of the meeting is to advance the objectives and ambitions of the Paris Agreement and achieve progress on its implementing guidelines. The remarkable landmark Paris Agreement in 2016 was signed by 175 countries to keep the global temperature rise below 2 degrees Celsius and if possible 1.5 degrees Celsius. Prime Minister Ruhakana Rugunda represented Uganda during the event.

With the destruction of the Ozon layer and heating of the earth, the adverse effects of climate change continue to hit vulnerable Ugandans hard. Change of rain patterns resulting in crop failures and probably hunger, floods, and mudslides, among others, lead to intense human suffering. Of recent, the media has been awash with stories of about 15 people who died after heavy rain triggered landslides in Rubanda District, more than 2,000 people were displaced by flooding after rivers overflowed in Amuru



District, and famine hit Karamoja sub-region and Isingiro District (which was once a known as the food basket in the country), etc. The point to note is that climate change is real. Therefore, climate change talks should not only stop at international level, but should also be nationalised. This requires intense action with concerted efforts from top leaders to the common man.

Recently, *Daily Monitor* reported that MPs demanded a law on climate change to regulate activities on natural resources so as to avert the effects of climate change in the country. This should be a good entry point if the climate change Bill is tabled to address the needs and

concerns of the vulnerable communities. I, therefore, call upon the MPs to think of tabling the Bill as soon as possible.

Let the government allocate funds to MPs for consultations to find solutions to climate change the way it has given Shs29 million to each MP to consult their constituents on the age limit Bill.

I implore leaders to consult their voters and find solutions to climate change as well as work with communities to explore alternative energy options, especially for cooking, to reduce the destruction of forests in the country. As for local council leaders, let them make by-laws on tree planting at household level and establish district tree nursery beds to ensure people have more than enough trees to plant.

As Ugandans, let us do the possible - plant more trees (indigenous trees are most recommendable). This does not necessarily require us to have acres and acres of land. We can think of boundary tree planting or even planting fruit trees in our compounds.

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