

NAMIBIA PLEDGES STRONGER **BILATERAL** RELATIONS

By Isaac Nuwagaba

The Republic of Namibia has pledged to strengthen bilateral relations with Uganda, with a focus on oil exploration and co-operation in the energy sector.

This commitment was made by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia, Elijah Ngurare, at International Hotel 2000 in Muyenga, Makindye division in Kampala shortly after attending the swearing-in ceremony of President Yoweri Museveni at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds on Tuesday.

JOINT CO-OPERATION

Speaking on behalf of Namibian President, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Ngurare pledged to elevate bilateral relations by establishing cooperation in agriculture, youth empowerment, quality education, health, energy, water and environment sectors.

"God endowed Namibia and Uganda with oil resources and many other mineral wealth, which we must exploit together as one African continent to develop its people. We need to fight for economic independence if we are to have ownership and control of our resources," Ngurare said.

OIL PARTNERSHIP

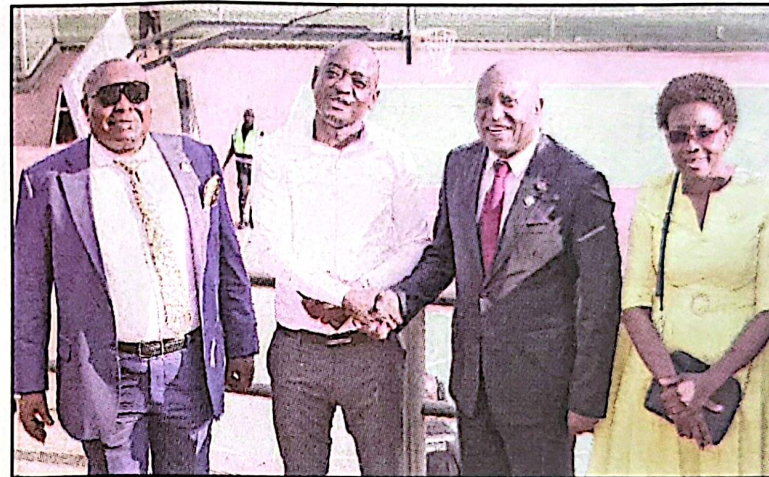
Namibia's premier Elijah Ngurare believes that the partnership between Namibia and Uganda could see the two countries sharing expertise and resources in oil exploration.

He said Uganda, with its estimated 6.5 billion barrels of oil reserves in the Lake Albert basin, is an attractive partner for Namibia's oil exploration ambitions. "Namibia, through local and foreign companies, is already making strides in exploring its own oil and gas resources, particularly in the Kavango basin."

BENCHMARKING UGANDA'S JOURNEY

"If Uganda has oil, Namibia should buy from the fellow African and own petrol stations in sister countries for easy marketing of our own products. We are benchmarking Uganda's journey after the oil pipeline construction and we are soon joining Uganda in oil and gas resource exploitation," he added.

Ngurare highlighted the growing interest in collaboration on energy resources exploitation, investment in



L-R: Kirumira, Kiggundu, Ngurare and health minister Jane Ruth Aceng during a guided tour of Hamz Stadium, Nakivubo on Tuesday

agriculture, engineering, health and communications technology.

INVEST IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S DREAMS

"We must invest in our people because they are a precious resource of Africa who must benefit from their resources. President Museveni today pledged to fight corruption and this should help all African countries reflect on how we exploit copper, cobalt, iron ore, gold, uranium and coltan to the benefit of our people," Ngurare noted.

PHOTO BY ALFRED OCHWO

provide concessional and collateral-free loans with flexible repayment terms to young entrepreneurs, focusing on sustainable skills and agricultural development," he said.

NEGATIVE CRITICISM

Hamis Kiggundu called for local investor support, asking Africans to believe in their own people for the holistic development of ideas and execution.

"Negative energy and criticism from the public is affecting local investors mentally, yet these are national facilities we would wish to construct in all the regions of Uganda," he said.

The honorary consul of the Republic of Namibia to Uganda, Godfrey Kirumira, is committed to strengthening the economic, cultural and social ties between the two countries.

"I pledge to work closely with both Namibian and Ugandan business enterprises and government agencies to promote trade and investment in the areas of mutual interest," Kirumira said. By fostering stronger ties between the private sectors of the two countries, I believe we shall unlock significant economic opportunities and contribute to the growth and development of our people."

Reflecting on what Hamis Kiggundu, a prominent businessman and director of Ham Enterprises Limited, has achieved through government support in the construction of Nakivubo war memorial stadium in Kampala, Ngurare urged African governments to invest in the dreams of young people.

Ngurare emphasised the importance of youth empowerment in driving the country's economic future.

"African governments need to