

CHECKER CAME TO REPRESENT TRUMP, AT THE INAUGURATION

By Vision Reporters

President Yoweri Museveni has called on the US and other global partners to support Africa's industrialisation and value addition efforts in order to expand the continent's economy and create more jobs for its rapidly growing population.

The President made the remarks yesterday at State House, Entebbe while meeting Nicholas Checker, the US senior bureau official for African affairs, who paid a courtesy call ahead of official engagements in Uganda. The delegation was accompanied by the US Ambassador to Uganda, William W. Popp.

Checker came to represent the US President Donald Trump, at the swearing-in ceremony scheduled for today at Kololo Independence Grounds.

The President had earlier on met with South Sudan President Salva Kiir Mayardit, whom they held high-level discussions on strengthening the brotherly ties and co-operation between the two countries.

In the meeting with Checker, Museveni said Africa's economy remains small compared to other global economies because the continent largely exports raw materials without processing them into finished products.

MUSEVENI WELCOMES US ENVOY



Museveni (left) interacting with Checker at State House, Entebbe, yesterday

"Our advice to the US and the rest of the world is that Africa needs support in value addition. We should not continue exporting raw materials without processing them."

He noted that Africa's Gross

Domestic Product (GDP) is still far below that of major economies such as the US and China, despite the continent's huge population and natural resources.

According to recent International Monetary Fund

estimates, Africa's combined nominal GDP stands at about \$3 trillion while the US economy exceeds \$30 trillion.

The President explained that exporting unprocessed products, such as coffee, crude oil and minerals denies Africa greater earnings and employment opportunities.

"If you export coffee without processing it, you lose a lot of money. The same applies to oil and minerals. Value addition is the key to increasing Africa's purchasing power and prosperity," he said.

"Africa's population is expected to reach nearly 2.5 billion people in the next 30 years. We need bigger economies and more purchasing power for our people," he added.

He said Uganda remains committed to private sector-led growth and industrial expansion, noting that sectors such as dairy production have greatly improved over the years.

"When the NRM came into government, Uganda did not have enough milk. Today, milk production has greatly

increased because of organised production and value addition," he said.

On regional security, Museveni said Uganda has continued to play a frontline role in peacekeeping and stabilisation efforts in countries such as Somalia, South Sudan and the DR Congo.

US ENVOY SPEAKS OUT

Meanwhile, Checker conveyed greetings from Trump and commended Uganda for its contribution to regional peace and stability.

"I want to thank Uganda for the important role it continues to play in peacekeeping efforts in the region, especially in South Sudan and the DR Congo," he said.

He also welcomed ongoing co-operation between Uganda and the US in areas, such as health and economic development.

Popp said the US looks forward to strengthening its long-standing relations with Uganda in trade, investment and regional security co-operation.

ATTENDEES

The meeting was also attended by Okello Oryem, the state minister for foreign affairs, Robie Kakonge, the Ugandan Ambassador to the US, among others.

BETWEEN THE LINES

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