MPs should serve with purpose, principle

BY the end of today, all elected Members of Parliament (MPs) for the new five-year (2026-2031) term will have been sworn in, marking the beginning of a new political term. The three-day swearing-in ceremony represented both celebration and responsibility.

For some MPs, this is a fresh beginning; for others, a return after years in political wilderness; and for a few, a continuation of service. Regardless of experience, the bottom line remains unchanged: they were elected by constituents to legislate for the people, not for self-aggrandisement or deal-making at the expense of those they represent.

The Constitution is clear about the role of an MP: to make laws, oversee government expenditure, and represent constituents' interests.

Therefore, all MPs must remember that true leadership is servant leadership. Parliament must prioritise deepening economic participation amongst ordinary Ugandans, while intensifying oversight to fight corruption.

Politics should return to a contest of ideas, where MPs question why certain legislation has failed to improve the lives of Ugandans and find genuine solutions. They should spend the majority of their time in the House fulfilling constitutional duties rather than pursuing personal agendas.

Many MPs were elected on specific promises. These pledges must translate into reality within their time in office, because delivering on promises builds trust.

No matter the party one subscribes to, the contest in the august House should be about ideas and building the nation.

President Yoweri Museveni was clear earlier this week: in his inaugural address after being sworn in, he laid out an ambitious and wide-ranging agenda for his seventh term in office, calling on all Ugandans to fully utilise government programmes, create wealth, and transform the country from a raw material exporter into an industrialised economy.

The President said the next five years would focus heavily on wealth creation, job creation, value addition, industrialisation, skills development, and regional economic integration, arguing that the Government had already laid the foundation through peace, infrastructure, markets, and social services, and that citizens must now take advantage of those opportunities.

So, as the 12th Parliament convenes, MPs must remember they serve at the pleasure of the people who elected them.

They must always place national interest above personal ambition and sensitise the electorate to the livelihood-improvement opportunities in place.

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