

# Oil refinery company appoints manager

By Samuel Sanya

The Uganda Refinery Holding Company (URHC) has appointed a British educated Ugandan, Dr Michael Nkambo Mugerwa as its general manager, bringing a near six-month search to a close.

The Uganda Refinery Holding Company is a private subsidiary of the Uganda National Oil Company. It is one of the new companies that the Government has set up as Uganda prepares to start commercial oil production in 2020.

Irene Batebe, the board chairperson for URHC, noted in a statement that as the first general manager, Mugerwa, a chemical engineer with over 20 years' experience in the oil refining industry, will lead the

structuring and development of the \$4.3b (about sh15.6 trillion) expected to produce 60,000 barrels per day.

"He has built competency in technology, business and innovation and has experience in start-ups in the oil and gas sector. The URHC will benefit from his leadership, international network and strong technical and project management skills," Batebe said.

Dr Mugerwa describes himself as a project development professional with project management and project control skills.

He has studied and worked in western Europe, North America and East Africa.

Mugerwa holds a PhD, masters of science and bachelor of science in chemical



**URHC hopes to benefit from Mugerwa's leadership, international network and technical skills**

engineering, all obtained from the University of Manchester, in the UK.

He joins the Uganda Refinery

Holding Company at a time when the Government is searching for a developer after Russian RT Global resources

**6,000**  
■ The construction of the oil refinery is estimated to create 4,000 to 6,000 temporary jobs.

walked away from the project after it had been selected as the preferred bidder for financing and construction refinery, alongside VT Bank, also from Russia, and a South Korean conglomerate GS.

Corti Paul Lakuma, a research analyst at Economic Policy Research Centre at Makerere University, said the investments in oil infrastructure wells, processing facilities and

pipelines worth over \$8b (about sh29 trillion) will have a positive impact on the oil and the non-oil production sector.

"The refinery is expected to cushion against the impact of fluctuation in global oil prices. Although the first barrel of oil is expected to flow in 2020, there are questions about the readiness of some infrastructure (roads, pipeline, airstrips) pursuant to the short timeline," he said.

The project will contribute to economic gains for Ugandans as the construction of the refinery alone is estimated to create 4,000 to 6,000 temporary jobs. On completion, ongoing refinery operations are expected to create over 650 permanent jobs.