

# Finance ministry in agreement with ISO on wasteful expenditure

By Chris Kiwawulo

The finance ministry has concurred with Internal Security Organisation's (ISO) report, which found that government ministries and agencies were involved in wasteful expenditure, saying mergers were the solution to the challenge.

"We are not surprised by the ISO report because the finance ministry has in the past made similar calls. The Executive recently directed the public service ministry to see

how government institutions with duplicate roles can be merged," Jim Mugunga, the finance ministry spokesperson, said.

Mugunga made the remarks while responding to the ISO report, which showed that billions of shillings of taxpayers' money were being wastefully spent.

"The permanent secretary/secretary to the treasury (Keith Muhakanizi) has also been an ardent advocate of fighting duplication of roles to ensure that we avoid excesses that

create inefficiencies that erode the little resources available for service delivery," he stated.

Mugunga added that some of the excesses have occurred under the guise of bringing services closer to the people, citing the creation of new districts which come with construction of new administration blocks, salaries for new staff and other administrative costs.

According to the report released on Wednesday, by the ISO director of political affairs, Lt. Col.

Joseph Aliganyira, government's interventions in agriculture are "scattered across eight directorates, 20 departments and 37 projects across five ministries at a total annual cost of sh1.2 trillion." For instance, irrigation and water supply is under three ministries.

"Government spent a total of sh461b on skills development in 2016/17. It was duplicated by the ministries of education (sh216.3b), gender (sh178.3b) and local government (sh66.3b)," the report

says.

It adds that ministries, parastatals and agencies combined were squandering sh1.3 trillion on consultancies, travel, welfare and entertainment, fuel and lubricants, workshops and seminars, vehicle maintenance and advertising.

The report named the top money-consuming institutions as Makerere University, Uganda Revenue Authority, Kampala Capital City Authority and Uganda National Roads Authority, among others.