**STATEMENT BY HON. JOHN MULIMBA, HEAD OF UGANDA DELEGATION AND MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE 2ND EDITION OF THE UGANDA –TANZANIA FORUM**

**FRIDAY 24TH MAY 2024, JOHARI ROTANA DAR ES SALAAM**

**Rt. Hon. Dr. Doto Biteko, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy of the United Republic of Tanzania,**

**Excellencies, High Commissioners of Tanzania to Uganda and Uganda to Tanzania,**

**Honourable Members of Parliament,**

**Heads of Government Ministries Departments and Agencies,**

**Heads of the Private Sector and Captains of Industry,**

**Members of the Media,**

**Distinguished Participants,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

**Good Afternoon!**

On behalf of the Government and People of Uganda, I wish to thank you all for organizing, participating in and delivering a successful second edition of the Uganda-Tanzania Business Forum. Congratulations! Hongerani sana!

Allow me express my appreciation to the Government and the people of the United Republic of Tanzania for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation since we arrived in Dar es Salaam.

I have received very encouraging reports from my delegation regarding the well thought-out content, enlightening presentations and discussions; and constructive feedback from the facilitators and participants. It was a great honour listening to the Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Kassim Majaliwa who stressed the need for continued engagement and collaboration between our two countries both government and private sectors. We may not have achieved all that we set out to accomplish but the message is clear: we need to transform our long standing, historical, warm, bilateral ties into tangible economic benefits and improved welfare of our people.

I applaud our Diplomatic Missions in both Kampala and Dar es Salaam for working together to promote our economic and commercial interests- ***Ki Diplomasia kya Uchumi***. I am glad that two of my colleagues in Parliament, Hon. Norah Bigirwa and Hon. Fred Opolot, have actively followed proceedings of this Form. Under the Parish Development Model, we are empowering households in Uganda to add value to our agricultural products and make them more competitive in both local and regional markets. Improved production has to be matched by enhanced market access and presence as well as investments in the various sectors such as energy, transport, tourism and so forth. It is also imperative that we must continue pitching our investments.

**Mheshimiwa Naibu Waziri Mkuu,**

As Government, we pledge to continue working with the respective institutions and bilateral frameworks to remove barriers to trade, and fast track operationalization of the EAC Common Market and Customs Union Protocols on free movement of goods and services, and minimize restrictions to trade. We pledge to implement the recommendations of the Dar es Salaam Declaration.

Once again, I wish to thank the organizers of this Forum, presenters, moderators, the business community, the private sectors, the media, technicians, sponsors and the Management of Johari Rotana Hotel for delivering a successful event.

**Asanteni sana kwa kunisikiliza!**

**Mungu awabiriki nyi wote!**