



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

## **MINISTRY OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT**

**REMARKS BY**

**THE HON. MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT**

**AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICAL  
AND MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE COMMITTEE  
(NAMSARC)**

**16<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2022**

**Hon. Members of Parliament;**

**The Permanent Secretaries**

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

**The Chief Executives**

**Members of the Press**

**All Protocol observed;**

I am privileged to be here today to officiate at the inauguration of the 1<sup>st</sup> National Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Committee and I would like to express my warm congratulations to the appointed Members of the Committee.

Before I can proceed, I would like to request that we take a minute of silence to honor our dear ones whom we have lost due to tragedies on all modes of transport. **May their soul rest in Peace.**

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Government of Uganda is a member State of both the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). These are specialized International Organizations of the United Nations responsible for regulating transport safety and security of aviation and maritime sectors globally.

These two Organizations have together developed a joint ICAO/IMO International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual

whose primary purpose is to assist Member States like Uganda in meeting their own Search and Rescue needs.

As you may be aware, Search and Rescue operations have been ongoing in Uganda and approximately 3,000 passengers involved in incidents on water have been rescued over the last 5-10 years by mostly fishing communities, Marine police, UCAA and Volunteers.

Some of the recent cases for Search and Rescue activities in the Transport sector include;

- i) Accident by MV Templar which capsized on Lake Victoria on November 24, 2018 where 33 people died and at least 26 people were rescued.
- ii) Incident of emergency landing which was made by a student at Soroti Flying School who landed in a swamp on one of the Satellite lakes on Lake Kyoga, and was rescued by a patriotic team of the people of Obutet in Pallisa district led by the LC 3 Chairman after conducting a Search and Rescue activity in the swamp and rescued the student who had been involved in the incident.

While we appreciate such efforts in providing Search and Rescue services, these have been majorly adhoc and as a country and member State of ICAO and IMO, Uganda has obligations to formulate a National Search and Rescue Plan for coordinating Search and

Rescue activities to meet domestic needs and international commitments.

The obligations are derived from the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention of 1944), the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS, 1974), and the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (1979).

Therefore, my Ministry has prepared a National Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Plan which will be used as a practical tool for Search and Rescue operations in Uganda.

Some of the current and planned operations include the following;

- I. Establishing a National Entity to provide Search and Rescue services on 24-hour basis to ensure that assistance is rendered to persons in distress.

You have heard from the Permanent Secretary that UCAA has a 24/7 Search and Rescue operation and the Ministry through the Maritime Administration Department has also set up a Maritime Rescue Call Centre at Fisheries Training Institute (FTI) to receive distress toll free calls using 110 Code.

- II. Designating Search and Rescue units; Construction works for the establishment of nine Search and Rescue Centres are planned to commence in the coming Quarter.

III. Coordinating Search and Rescue operations with MDAs and the neighboring States in the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in order to have a sustainable National Search and Rescue system, there is need for Inter-Governmental coordination and team work at all levels.

I am happy that the National Search and Rescue Plan which has been prepared has addressed this concern and provides for effective use of all available resources, mutual assistance and most importantly, establishment of the Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Committee which we are inaugurating today.

The Permanent Secretary has highlighted the roles and responsibilities of the Committee and also guided on the structure.

I have noted that the Committee shall be responsible for advising the Minister of Works and Transport on policy matters required to achieve an efficient Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Organization; and also coordinating of efforts of the relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies and pooling of resources for Search and Rescue operations.

I have also noted that the Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Committee will have a **Steering Committee** chaired by the **Permanent Secretary** of Ministry of Works and Transport, and a **Technical Committee** chaired by the **Director of Transport**.

I am confident that the Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Committee we are inaugurating today has the necessary competency and expertise to ensure an efficient Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Organization and save the lives of our people.

I would like to assure the Committee that my Ministry will continue to lend its support in all possible ways to enable you achieve the challenging tasks that lay ahead of you.

With these few remarks, it's my pleasure to officially inaugurate Members of the 1<sup>st</sup> National Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Committee in Uganda and declare this workshop open.

Thank You all

For God and my Country