

**CLOSING REMARKS BY THE HON. DEPUTY
CHIEF JUSTICE**

AT

THE HIGH – LEVEL SUMMIT ON ADR

HELD AT

MESTIL HOTEL & RESIDENCES

ON

JUNE 26TH, 2023

Your Excellency the Vice President of the Republic of Uganda,
The Honourable Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs,
The Hon. Principal Judge,
The Honourable Justices and Judges of the Courts of Judicature,
The Hon. Retired Justices and Judges,
Your Worship the Chief Registrar and registrars,
Representatives of the government ministries, departments and agencies,
Learned colleagues from the Bar,
The Country Director IDLO,
Colleagues from academia,
The President Pepperdine University and Colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen.

I am very grateful to you all for taking time off your busy schedules to attend this National Summit on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Thank you for coming and for your active participation throughout the first day of this important Summit that will last for two (2) days; today and tomorrow.

I take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to the Hon. Chief Justice who spared his time and talked to us online this afternoon.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the speakers and panelists for their dedicated time and valuable contributions during this first day of the Summit.

I would also like to thank President Gash and Vice President DeWalt for their dedication to assisting Uganda in our efforts to deliver effective and efficient justice to our people, along with Pepperdine University and its Professors Selina Schultz and Jack Coe who assisted me and my fellow members of the cohort who are currently earning our Masters of Dispute Resolution from Pepperdine. This past week, Professors Selina and Jack were instrumental in assisting us in preparing the national ADR policy and planning this historic summit on the future of ADR in this country.

From the remarks of H.E the President, we have all his support and the ball is in our hands.

Dear participants, the experiences shared amongst ourselves on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) have been diverse, interesting and educative.

We have been taken through the changing landscape of financial disputes, stake Holder and sector utilization of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). We have discussed emerging areas and trends of ADR in 21st Century, growing opportunities and role of ADR in the technological space, understanding the place of conflict management, Mediation and Conciliation for sustainable development. We have better appreciated the role of ADR in our Justice System. Practicing what we have shared would make us more efficient and effective in the administration of Justice to the Citizens of this Country.

Sharing experiences on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) with seasoned and tested members of the bar, bench and ADR practitioners has been of great benefit to all of us. In open and candid discourse, we have appreciated one other in this area of justice. This has been a worthwhile engagement.

The reason for this Summit is for us to generate consensus that as we continue to adjudicate cases using current approaches, we need to reflect and consider Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as another workable approach that will help us improve the administration of justice.

The Judiciary has developed innovations on case hearings and disposal.

Under the *Judiciary Strategic Plan V, 2021/22-2024/25*, the Judiciary has identified strategies that speak to case backlog and case disposal. The Plan identifies one of the Judiciary's strengths as innovation(s) in adjudication of cases, such as *plea bargain, ADR and small claims procedure*.

Strategic objective 2, identifies the need to strengthen Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms as a key measure in the administration of justice.

We need to continue aiming at having relevant intervention for expeditious disposal of cases.

In line with the *Strategic Plan*, the Hon. Chief Justice constituted an *ad hoc* committee on the development of an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) strategy. He talked about the membership of the committee in his opening remarks on line this morning.

The mandate of the *ad hoc* committee is first, to develop an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) strategy to guide on how the Judiciary should best approach ADR. The other functions include capacity-building and the implementation of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) approaches.

The Judiciary has been graced in the developing the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) strategy, with support from the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) and Pepperdine University. We thank them for the support they have extended to us.

The *ad hoc* committee has held a series of meetings to discuss the draft of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) strategy. A stake holders consultative meeting on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) was held on the 1st June, 2023.

This Summit gives us another occasion to discuss broader viewpoints on the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) strategy.

An Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) strategy is a useful tool that will help us administer timely and cost effective justice to the people of Uganda.

Our neighbours in Kenya have developed a similar strategy in which the Judiciary has identified Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) pathways that can be mainstreamed in the formal justice system.

I extend our gratitude to you all for the support you have given us towards developing the Judiciary Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) strategy.

Before I conclude, in a special way, I would request the Principal Judge Emeritus Justice Bamwine, Mrs. Robina Shonubi, Justice Kiryabwire, Justice Musa Sekana, and all people that have published in the area of ADR to come forward for special recognition. I encourage all of us who can, to publish and practice in this area of Dispute settlement.

I thank you all and wish you a pleasant evening and fruitful deliberations tomorrow.

Richard Buteera
DEPUTY CHIEF JUSTICE