

**SPEECH BY**  
**EUNICE KABIIBI MUTUNGI**  
**FOR COMMISSIONER, COFFEE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES**  
**AT THE**  
**INTERNATIONAL COFFEE DAY 2026 COMMEMORATION**  
**HOIMA CITY, BUNYORO SUB-REGION**  
**8TH OCTOBER 2026**  
**THEME**

***“WEALTH FOR ALL: EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES IN COFFEE IN THE BUNYORO  
OIL-RICH SUB-REGION”***

The Rt. Hon. Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda, Guest of Honour,  
The Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries,  
Honourable Ministers of State,  
The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries,  
Members of Parliament,  
The Omukama and the leadership of Bunyoro-Kitara Kingdom,  
Resident District Commissioners, District Chairpersons, Mayors and Local  
Government leaders,  
The President and leadership of the Uganda Coffee Federation,  
Representatives of the oil and gas sector, development partners and financial  
institutions,  
Coffee farmers, nursery operators, processors, traders, roasters, exporters and  
baristas,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

## OPENING

It is my great honour, on behalf of the Coffee Development Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, to welcome you to Hoima City for Uganda's 2026 International Coffee Day commemoration. We are gathered under a theme that is both timely and practical: **“Wealth for All: Exploring Opportunities in Coffee in the Bunyoro Oil-Rich Sub-Region.”**

This year's commemoration has added global significance. In 2026, the United Nations General Assembly formally recognized 1<sup>st</sup> October as International Coffee Day, strengthening the global platform for recognising coffee's economic, social, cultural and environmental importance. Uganda's celebration here in Bunyoro therefore joins a wider international conversation about the people, businesses and communities behind every cup of coffee.

For us, however, this must be more than a celebration. It must be a working session. We should leave Hoima with a clearer understanding of what the market is telling us, what farmers need to do differently, what Government and the private sector must deliver, and how Bunyoro can build a competitive coffee economy alongside the rapid development of oil and gas.

## WHERE UGANDA'S COFFEE SECTOR STANDS

Ladies and Gentlemen, Uganda's coffee sector remains one of the strongest pillars of our agricultural economy, but the latest figures also remind us that success cannot be measured by volume alone. In the twelve months from September 2025 to August 2026, Uganda exported about 8.1 million 60-kilogram bags valued at approximately USD 2.2 billion.

That contrast is important. It tells us that farmers and businesses cannot rely on high international prices to do the work that productivity, quality, efficiency and value addition should do. The International Coffee Organization estimates world production for coffee year 2025/26 at 183.6 million bags, up 4.4 percent, while the market is

projected to return to a surplus after four consecutive years of deficit. In a market where supply is increasing, Uganda must compete more deliberately on quality, reliability, traceability, differentiation and cost.

Our recent export performance should therefore give us confidence, but not complacency. The next stage of Uganda's coffee story is not simply to produce more bags. It is to make every acre more productive, every bag more valuable and every market relationship more durable.

## **WHY BUNYORO MATTERS**

The decision to bring International Coffee Day to Bunyoro is deliberate. This sub-region is one of Uganda's emerging Robusta frontiers. It is estimated that Bunyoro already contributes about 300,000 sixty-kilogram bags annually, with coffee expanding across Hoima and neighbouring districts, including Kakumiro, Kagadi, Kibaale, Masindi and Kikuube.

Bunyoro also presents a development context that is different from many other coffee-growing regions. Major oil and gas investments are changing infrastructure, urban demand, employment patterns and the wider business environment. Our task is not to choose between oil and agriculture. Our task is to make the two sectors reinforce each other. Roads, power, logistics, hospitality, finance and a growing urban market can strengthen the coffee value chain if we deliberately build those linkages.

I would like us, for example, to see more locally roasted Ugandan coffee served in hotels, offices, restaurants, camps and hospitality facilities across the Albertine region. I would like local entrepreneurs to invest in aggregation, processing, roasting, packaging, coffee shops, equipment services, quality testing and logistics. I would like the infrastructure and commercial activity associated with oil development to lower the cost of doing coffee business rather than displace productive agriculture.

## **OUR FIRST TASK: PRODUCTIVITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE**

For farmers, the first priority remains productivity. Expanding acreage without improving yields can increase costs without creating the household wealth we want. The foundation is good planting material, correct field establishment, soil fertility management, moisture conservation, pruning, shade management where appropriate, timely control of pests and diseases, and rehabilitation of ageing or unproductive trees.

The Ministry is already supporting interventions in Bunyoro that include Coffee Wilt Disease-resistant planting material, rehabilitation through stumping, farmer training in climate-smart agronomy, better post-harvest handling and farm mapping. These interventions must work as one system. A good seedling will not compensate for poor field management. Higher yields will not compensate for careless harvesting. A good harvest will not compensate for poor drying and storage.

Climate resilience must also become part of normal farm management. Water conservation, soil cover, shade and agroforestry, appropriate varieties and better soil health are not optional environmental messages. They are production practices that protect yield, bean quality and farmer income when weather becomes less predictable.

## **OUR SECOND TASK: QUALITY FROM FARM TO CUP**

The second priority is quality. Uganda cannot spend heavily on production and then lose value because cherries are harvested immature, coffee is dried on bare ground, different qualities are mixed, storage is poor, or processing equipment is badly maintained. Quality is created step by step and can be destroyed at any stage.

To our farmers, harvest mature cherries and dry them properly. To our traders, do not reward practices that undermine quality. To hullers and processors, maintain clean facilities, properly calibrated equipment and accurate records. To exporters and buyers, provide clear feedback to producers so that the market signal reaches the farm. To our extension teams, post-harvest handling must receive the same seriousness as agronomy.

This year Uganda launched the national coffee brand, “UGANDA COFFEE: IT’S IN OUR NATURE”, at World of Coffee Brussels, where Uganda was the 2026 Portrait Country. That brand gives us a stronger identity in the global market, but a brand is a promise. Every bag that leaves Uganda must support that promise through consistency, traceability and cup quality.

### **OUR THIRD TASK: TRACEABILITY AND MARKET READINESS**

The third priority is traceability. Europe remains a major destination for Ugandan coffee, and the European Union Deforestation Regulation will apply from 30 December 2026 for large and medium operators in the EU. Those operators will need reliable information showing where coffee was produced and that the relevant requirements have been met. Uganda’s exporters therefore need supply chains that can provide credible farm-level information.

The Ministry’s farmer registration, geolocation and national traceability work is designed to protect market access, improve sector planning and make it easier to link farmers to services and buyers. This is not paperwork for its own sake. Traceability is becoming part of the commercial infrastructure of coffee.

I therefore appeal to every farmer who has not yet been registered or mapped to cooperate with the authorised teams. I ask district leaders, cultural leaders, cooperatives, exporters and extension staff to intensify mobilisation. We cannot allow a farmer who has produced good coffee to be excluded from a premium market because the farm cannot be properly identified in the supply chain.

### **OUR FOURTH TASK: MORE VALUE AND MORE MARKETS**

The fourth priority is to retain more value in Uganda and diversify our markets. Our national coffee brand must be supported by aggressive market development. During 2026, Uganda has showcased its coffees in Brussels and in Shenzhen, and in September an agreement was signed to supply coffee to a South Korean company, with the first shipment already moving to that market. These efforts matter because market

diversification reduces dependence on a narrow set of buyers and gives our exporters more commercial options.

But market expansion must begin at home as well. Domestic consumption creates demand for roasting, packaging, cafés, barista skills and hospitality services. For Bunyoro, this is particularly relevant because Hoima is growing rapidly. A region that produces coffee should also know its coffee, serve its coffee and build businesses around its coffee.

I encourage young people and women to look beyond coffee production alone. There are businesses in nurseries, pruning and stumping services, irrigation, aggregation, transport, machinery maintenance, roasting, packaging, digital traceability, cafés, tourism and waste utilisation. The value chain is much bigger than the farm.

## **WHAT THE COFFEE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO DO**

As the Coffee Development Department, our responsibility is to coordinate and regulate the value chain in a manner that protects the farmer, strengthens quality and makes Uganda more competitive. We shall continue to work with Local Governments, research institutions, the Uganda Coffee Federation, farmer organisations, exporters, development partners and other Ministries to strengthen extension, planting material systems, quality assurance, traceability, market intelligence and investment promotion.

We shall also continue to use data more effectively. Registration and mapping should help us know where coffee is grown, where old trees require rehabilitation, where extension gaps exist, where disease pressure is increasing and where investments in processing or aggregation are justified. A modern coffee sector must be managed with evidence, not estimates and assumptions alone.

For Bunyoro specifically, I would like this celebration to produce a practical regional agenda. We should identify the production constraints that need immediate attention, the processing and market investments that are commercially viable, the infrastructure

bottlenecks that can be addressed jointly, and the areas where oil and gas companies can support local content and enterprise development around coffee.

## **A CALL TO EVERY ACTOR**

To the farmer, treat coffee as a business and protect quality from the tree to the buyer. To Local Governments and extension workers, make technical advice visible at farm level. To traders and processors, build transparent relationships and maintain standards. To financial institutions, develop products that recognise the coffee production cycle and the working-capital needs of the value chain. To the oil and gas sector, look at coffee as part of local economic development and local procurement. To our development partners, continue to invest with us in productivity, climate resilience, traceability and farmer organisation.

And to the people of Bunyoro, the opportunity before you is significant. Oil can accelerate regional transformation, while coffee can spread income through thousands of households and enterprises, season after season. If we manage the two wisely, Bunyoro can become a model of how natural-resource development and productive agriculture can advance together.

## **CONCLUSION**

Ladies and Gentlemen, International Coffee Day should leave us with more than speeches and photographs. It should leave us with better-informed farmers, stronger business relationships, clearer investment decisions and specific commitments that can be followed up after we leave Hoima.

I thank the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister for honouring this occasion, the political leadership of the Ministry for its guidance, the Permanent Secretary and Ministry team, the Bunyoro-Kitara Kingdom for hosting us, the Uganda Coffee Federation and private sector for their partnership, our development partners for their support, and the organising committee for the work that has brought us together.

To our coffee farmers, who are the foundation of this industry, I thank you for your work. Let us produce more, but let us also produce better. Let us protect quality, prove origin, add value and build markets that reward the people who make Uganda coffee possible.

I wish you all a productive International Coffee Day 2026. May God bless the coffee farmers of Bunyoro, and may God bless Uganda.

**For God and My Country.**