



## Press Release

THE JUDICIARY

Plot 2, The Square High Court Building  
P. O. Box 7085, Kampala Uganda

IN ANY CORRESPONDENCE ON  
THIS SUBJECT PLEASE QUOTE NO.

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### We welcome partners in the corruption fight – Chief Justice

**KAMPALA:** The Chief Justice, Bart M. Katureebe, has welcomed efforts by sections of the media to expose acts of bribery and corruption tendencies in the courts.

“The Judiciary concedes that the problem of corruption is real and is exploring all solutions to tackle it,” the Chief Justice said, while speaking from his chambers at the Judiciary headquarters in Kampala.

“We have not shied away from talking about corruption in the Judiciary. We have lived with this corruption problem for many years and our goal is to have a corruption-free Judiciary. Anyone talking about it with a view of solving the problem is welcome.”

A media campaign by the Vision Group dubbed “Justice at a Price” has so far helped identify the mysterious persons in the corruption chain and regrettable incidents involving individuals in compromising engagements in the precincts of courts.

The Chief Justice said his administration will ensure that any court staff captured receiving a bribe will be dealt with in accordance with the law.

“What has been happening is people say that they have paid money for court services, but they are usually not willing to bring the evidence to us, I think, because they know that when you give a bribe, you have equally committed an offence,” he said.

The Chief Justice has, however, cautioned against sensationalization of the issue of corruption in the courts, adding that court users and the public shall continually be encouraged to use the available fora to come out and give evidence for firm action to be taken against the errant officers.

“We encourage such audits in all courts, including the Supreme Court, and we are willing to do it as a partnership. If such campaigns come in good faith with a view of solving the problem, we welcome it. The aim here should be to take action on the culprits by the Judicial Service Commission as opposed to just displaying it for fun.”

Through its policy of zero-tolerance to corruption, the Judiciary has instituted a number of short-term, medium, and long-term measures to eliminate corruption in the courts.

“You may recall that as soon as I was appointed Chief Justice in 2015, I introduced anti-corruption SMS Hotlines attached to my chambers for the public to report incidents of corruption and malpractices against judicial officers and court staff. Some

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of the complaints made have been forwarded to the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) for proper investigation,” said Justice Katureebe. “Recently, we upgraded this facility into a toll-free telephone facility (0800-111-900) – linked to the Inspectorate of Courts – as a way of strengthening Judiciary’s complaints handling mechanism.”

Other measures include: the introduction of wearing of identity cards with branded lanyards by court staff; phased installation of CCTV cameras in strategic court locations; the no-cash payment policy for court fees, fines and bail deposits; creation of information desks; regular public awareness campaigns; Court user meetings and Court open days at different courts in the country.

“What we are working on now is how to eliminate human contact between the litigating public and Judicial Officers through the automation of court processes. Government has committed to finance the digitalization of courts which will minimize petty corruption at all levels,” he said. He added that cases of missing files will be a thing of the past since each litigant will be given a unique identifier that will enable them monitor their case at every level.

Amidst the corruption allegations, the Chief Justice said the majority of judicial officers continue to perform their duties professionally, which has led to an increase in the filing and disposal of cases over the years. “This is an indicator that there is judicial work which is going on and people are satisfied with it in spite of the few bad apples,” said the Chief Justice.

“What we have been asking for is evidence, and we commend the efforts made by the New Vision. Such efforts by the media has successfully happened in Ghana and led to major reforms in the Ghanaian Judiciary. We look forward to working with such partners to minimize corruption tendencies in the Judiciary and the Country as a whole.”

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