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**Key note address by the Hon. Minister of Works and Transport
on the launch of the CoST Uganda 3rd Assurance report at Golf
course, 22nd January 2020**

Ambassadors and Heads of Delegations present,
Hon. Members of Parliament,
Heads of Government Agencies and Departments,
Permanent Secretaries,
Engineer in Chief MoWT,
Senior Government Officials,
Members of CoST MSG Uganda,
Members from the Private Sector and Civil Society,
Citizens of Uganda;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am pleased to officiate the CoST Uganda's 3rd Assurance Report on 13 infrastructure projects being implemented across Uganda in key sectors of Government such as Health, Education, Water and Environment, Roads and Bridges and Energy.

Infrastructure projects are critical to national development and this explains why a significant proportion of government expenditure is dedicated to key projects such roads, bridges, hospitals, schools, hydro-electric power dams, and railway. Yet, design and execution

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Mission: To promote adequate, safe and well maintained Works and Transport Infrastructure and Services for Socio-Economic Development of Uganda.

of these projects quite often is faced with serious challenges like mistrust, secrecy, inefficiency and corruption all of which undermine performance and value for money.

My Ministry has been a Champion of CoST since September 2014 carrying on from UNRA to scale up CoST work to the national level, and has since continued to promote the CoST agenda to “Better Lives from Better Infrastructure”

With the intervention of CoST, transparency and disclosure of project information has improved, while public participation is brought forward with useful information to Procuring Entities and Government. Perhaps one of the key benefits we have observed is improved trust between public sector, contractors and citizens.

My Ministry will seek to build a strong foundation for sustainable benefits from CoST by promoting the newly globally launched Open Contracting for Infrastructure Data Standard (OC4IDS). My Ministry will work with PPDA and other line agencies to ensure that this standard is mainstreamed within our systems for infrastructure transparency.

A growing share of our experiences and interest in implementing CoST are now taking root through the Assurance Process. Through this process, technical data is validated, verified and expressed into plain language and issues of concern, areas of good practice are identified to help stakeholders understand the main issues that act as a basis for engagement and or project improvement. With this, we are driving for improved public infrastructure that is appreciated, owned and monitored by everyone.

This year's CoST Assurance report provides examples that demonstrate CoST's potential in informing the transformation we want as a country, despite the big challenge of delays in data retrieval affecting timely completion of this important milestone in the sector, and the lack of commitment by some procuring entities; it is my **Ministry's commitment that Government will take keen interest and action to enhance full disclosure of public infrastructure projects, take action on reducing time and cost overruns, enhance project planning, monitoring and supervision, and improve citizen engagement at all project delivery stages.**

I am also encouraged to learn that, CoST Uganda is finalizing development of an online **Infrastructure Monitoring Tool**, I invite all Government entities and stakeholders to embrace this tool for better project performance monitoring and timely action on concerns.

I am also glad to learn that, CoST Uganda has been strengthening the capacity of stakeholders and citizens to use disclosed data to engage with duty bearers, and is today launching its second Infrastructure Journalism Awards competition, this will help reduce subjective reporting but also encourage media to write more objective journalist pieces to the public.

Across the world, CoST is known to be a catalyst for positive change in public infrastructure, so it is our interest that the MSG continues to publish several assurances reports every year; and with the recent FIDIC, G20 and C20 endorsements of CoST approach to better infrastructure delivery, we strive to achieve the

maximum impact through implementing CoST and delivering better infrastructure.

The report on these 13 projects is significant and a demonstration that when government agencies work with the private sector and civil society, good results like the findings and recommendations in this report can be made and implemented by concerned stakeholders in Government agencies.

Government feels trusted by the private sector (Contractors and Consultants), citizens and development actors in the delivery of public infrastructure projects and thus; we are pleased that CoST's objectives are aligned with those of Government.

My Ministry will ensure that CoST International's relationship with Uganda is strengthened and formalized within our Government structures to address challenges associated with securing engagements with entities.

We continue to work together and receive recommendations on the 3rd Assurance Process that speak to disclosure and designation of officials to constantly update public disclosure platforms across the different PEs; inclusion of infrastructure data points in the Government Procurement Portal, issuing guidelines to Procurement Entities on disclosure of infrastructure data (Formal Disclosure Requirement);

Government through PPDA and other relevant agencies will monitor compliance with procurement guidelines, local content and gender inclusion; enhance project planning and construction management quality, citizen engagement, addressing land acquisition constraints, ensure safety of works and site users; we

will also work with professional bodies to build their capacities in procurement and project management, compliance with contractual obligations, regular site maintenance, and strengthen site supervision.

We strive to achieve maximum impact with resources entrusted to us by Government, tax payers and development partners through implementing CoST and delivering better infrastructure. We invest in evaluating our work by independent bodies such as CoST so that we can continue to learn from what we do and to improve further; these confirm our relevance and efficacy.

Colleagues, Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for attending this event and may it be fruitful for the public infrastructure projects in Uganda.

It is now my honor to launch the 3rd Assurance Report findings and receive the recommendations to inform our policy framework. I also launch the 2nd Infrastructure Journalism award competition, and invite all stakeholders to use this report to engage in improving performance of infrastructure projects.

For God and My Country

**HON. GEN. EDWARD KATUMBA-WAMALA
MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT &
CoST UGANDA CHAMPION**