



**MINISTER OF ICT AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE'S
REMARKS AT THE LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL ICT JOB
FAIR AT KOLOLO CEREMONIAL GROUNDS.**

17TH OCTOBER, 2023.

**Our Chief Guest, H.E Yoweri Kaguta Museveni,
The Chinese Ambassador, H.E. Zhang Li Zhong,
The Managing Director, Huawei Uganda, Mr. Sunrise Xie Qiuxiang,
All Dignitaries present in your different capacities,
Esteemed colleagues,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

I am honoured to host you today on behalf of the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, alongside our partners with whom we have worked to see that this event comes to life. The National ICT Job Fair, serves as a testament to our unwavering commitment to harnessing the power of information and communication technology for the benefit of our nation and its people.

Uganda's demographic dividend lies in its youthful population, with over 70% of our citizens falling within the youth category. However, we acknowledge the challenges that our youth face, particularly when it comes to unemployment. The youth unemployment rate, though at 10.3%, is still a matter of concern. As the custodians of our nation's development, it is our responsibility to provide our young people with opportunities that will not only empower them but also contribute to the growth of our country.

The ICT sector is pivotal in this endeavour. It has witnessed remarkable growth, thanks to the government's efforts to create a conducive environment for its development. Investments in ICT infrastructure and

initiatives like the National ICT Initiatives Support Programme (NIISP) have propelled this sector forward. Yet, a crucial challenge persists, and that is the skills gap. Many of our youth, despite their education, lack the practical skills required by the industry.

To bridge this gap and unlock the potential of our youth, the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, in collaboration with Huawei Technologies Uganda and other stakeholders, have organized the second National ICT Job Fair 2023, after a successful inaugural event in August last year. This event provides a unique platform for job seekers to engage with multiple employers, access training and internship opportunities, and gain insights into the dynamic world of ICT. The fair is a vital step towards reducing youth unemployment and enhancing the growth of the ICT industry in Uganda.

In addition to addressing unemployment, the National ICT Job Fair also fosters dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders in the ICT sector. It serves as a forum for private and public entities to showcase their brands and products, connect with potential employees, and build networks.

Moreover, the fair emphasizes the importance of partnerships between educational institutions and the ICT industry, which is crucial in closing the skills gap.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the success of the previous job fair, where over 1,000 opportunities, including jobs, internships, and training programs, were provided to our youth. Last year's event had a

tangible impact on the lives of many young Ugandans, and I commend all the organizations that participated and contributed to this success.

This year, we have so far registered over 10,163 opportunities including:

- 1626 jobs
- 274 internships
- 554 apprenticeship
- 7709 training/scholarship opportunities

As we embark on this year's National ICT Job Fair, I encourage all stakeholders to actively participate and support our youth. This event is not just a job fair; it is a platform for the realization of dreams and aspirations. It is a testament to our commitment to building a brighter future for Uganda.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all participating organizations, institutions, and individuals, and I have every confidence that this year's job fair will be a resounding success.

Thank you, and may the National ICT Job Fair be a beacon of hope for our youth and a catalyst for the growth of not only our ICT sector, but the whole Ugandan economy.

I therefore take this opportunity to welcome you, Your Excellency, to give your remarks and officially open this year's National ICT Job Fair.

For God and my country.

HON. DR. CHRIS BARYOMUNSI
MINISTER FOR ICT & NATIONAL GUIDANCE