

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR CHRISTOPHER ONYANGA APARR AT A
MEETING ON TRADE IN IDEAS HELD AT WTO PREMISES ON 26 NOVEMBER 2018

Mr Moderator,

Thank you for giving me this opportunity for my delegation to share its views concerning this very important subject of “Trade in Ideas” for economic development. Uganda has taken keen interest in this project, and has made efforts to participate in it fully. Uganda has taken part in the pilot study which has produced some good results.

A central issue of concern in Uganda, according to the pilot-study survey results, are awareness when it comes to patenting, licensing, the international patent market, and related issues. This appears to be the number one issue for all developing nations but most pronounced in the LDC countries. Broad awareness building is needed in the whole society calling for an equally broad and deep educational effort for businesses, government policy makers, and researchers.

Uganda has served as the “Education Hub” of East Africa for decades, building on the English Schools left at independence. One of the oldest Universities in Africa, Makerere University, is a leading Institution in education and scientific research on the continent. (In most cases the education level in Uganda is higher than the market demand – according to findings in the pilot-study – and there is thus an opportunity gap.)

We propose that Uganda join the follow-on projects in this area and provides this awareness building, and other, at Ugandan Universities at the MBA/Master and PhD levels to serve not only Uganda but the East African Region. If such an initiative is welcome, cooperation could well be established not only in the education side but also in the thus enabled technology cooperation in the economic region through the proposed patent markets.

One key approach discussed and of great importance is to try and incorporate and integrate the concept of trade in ideas into current economic policy. This would mean sensitization of the stakeholders leading to a dialogue being opened with inventors and international partners in areas of technology used in the policy areas. In that way local human capital formation can be engaged resulting in increased productivity.

Nevertheless, the education hub initiative can provide the essential water for growth of the already germinating seeds, building a stronger economic future for Uganda and East African countries in general

For the above project to materialize there will be need for funding is very essential. I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to our development partners to assist in funding the project. The donor countries that may be interested in supporting such a forward-looking initiative and are in a position to do so should come forwards and donate accordingly.

Thank you.