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PRESS RELEASE

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**“WE ARE ALWAYS READY TO COOPERATE WITH IRAN,” SAYS
H.E PRESIDENT MUSEVENI AS HE WELCOMES HIS
COUNTERPART H.E DR. SYED EBRAHIM RAISI TO UGANDA.**

President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni has welcomed H.E Dr. Syed Ebrahim Raisi the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Uganda with assurance to him of Uganda’s readiness to continue the cooperation and the good relations that have existed since the Islamic revolution.

“We are always ready to cooperate with Iran and this area of cooperation is straight,” President Museveni said, adding that the cooperation is due to Iran's Anti-imperialism position, a reason he has visited Iran many times and most of the Presidents of Iran have in the past visited Uganda.

President Museveni told his Iranian counterpart and his delegation that there is nothing Uganda cannot produce because of her good climate. He mentioned items especially food; bananas, maize, coffee, cocoa and fish adding that the problem has always been access to markets and Iran's cooperation comes in handy.

“We can do a lot of trade together. Iran has got experiences which we don’t have,” H.E Museveni added.

President Museveni appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for motivating him to develop Uganda's oil resources especially constructing an oil refinery in Uganda.

“We have some little oil here which we discovered a few years ago. I had some people discouraging us not to build an oil refinery saying it’s not profitable,” H.E Museveni said, wondering why many countries continue to have refineries if they were not profitable! Gen Museveni said added that when he visited Iran, he was informed that the Islamic country had nine oil refineries and in advanced stages of constructing more.

“So, when I came back, I put my foot down and constructed an oil refinery and develop a petrochemical industry. So, you can see the areas of complementarity and I would urge the ministers to take this matter seriously,” H.E Museveni said.

On his part, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran thanked President Museveni for the warm welcome to Uganda on their mission to further expand their bilateral relations with friendly and aligned African countries in economic diplomacy and political relations. Dr. Raisi said Iran is ready to share experiences with Uganda in areas such as Energy, Oil and Technology.

He also commended President Museveni for standing firm against Homosexuality, saying it’s not only against the culture and family values but also human race. President Raisi said Iran is ready to walk with Uganda in this fight.

He also hailed President Museveni for championing peace and stability on the African continent by getting involved in the fight against terrorism and extremism and other forms of human rights violations.

On the same event, the two countries Uganda and Iran signed five memoranda of understanding (MoUs) on Agriculture, Foreign Affairs and on establishment of a Joint Permanent commission.

At the official welcoming ceremony on Wednesday at State House, Entebbe, the visiting President Dr. Syed Ebrahim Raisi inspected a guard of honor, and a 21-gun salute was also performed in honor of the of the President and his delegation.

Later, the two Presidents and members of their high-ranking delegations took photos as UPDF brass band played Anthems of the two countries.

H.E Ebrahim Rais becomes the 3rd President of Iran to visit Uganda following H.E Mahmoud Ahmadinejad who was here in April 2010. Also, another Iranian President H.E Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani visited Uganda in 1996.

This rare Africa tour by Iranian President after 11 years is a new turning point which will bolster economic and trade ties with African nations.

The ceremony was attended by high-ranking delegations of both countries that included Ministers and service chiefs.

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