STATEMENT DELIVERED BY HON. HENRY OKELLO ORYEM, ACTING MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA, AT THE 13TH UNITED NATIONS CRIME CONGRESS: DOHA, QATAR, APRIL 2015

His Excellency, the President of the 13th UN Crime Congress,
His Excellency, the Secretary General of the UN,
His Excellency, the President of the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly, Compatriot Hon. Sam. K. Kutesa,
The Executive Director of UNODC,
Excellencies and Distinguished Participants;
All Protocols Observed.

On behalf of the Government and people of Uganda and on that of my delegation here present, I wish to convey our deep appreciation to the host Government of the State of Qatar for the hospitality extended to me and my delegation thus far. We also commend the organizers of this very important Crime Congress, which takes place every five years, for a job well-done.

Mr. President,
The presence of my delegation at this important event underscores the commitment of the Government of Uganda to the Rule of Law in all its multi-faceted dimensions. The observance of the key tenets applicable in the quest for Rule of Law, democratic governance and observance of fundamental human rights are cornerstones in the Constitution of Uganda; and are the bed-rock of our conduct of international relations.

The theme of this Crime Congress: “Integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations’ agenda to address social and economic challenges and to promote the rule of law at national and international levels, and public
participation" is indeed timely and fitting. We are confident that the Draft Doha Declaration, once adopted at the end of our Congress, will build on the gains made from the Salvador Declaration adopted five years ago in Brazil.

In the context of the broad spectrum of crime prevention and criminal justice, Uganda is a signatory to most of the key International Legal Instruments and scrupulously abides by the State Party obligations respectively stipulated thereunder. These Instruments include the International Drug Control Conventions, UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; and the UN Convention against Corruption – to mention but a few.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates,
The matter of drugs, in its multi-faceted dimensions, is one of the leading collective challenges of our times. We must undertake concerted collective action with the aim of containing the demand and supply challenges; cutting the links to money-laundering and narco-terrorism; etc.

In recent times, my country has participated actively in the meetings of the respective Commissions under the auspices of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and looks forward to a successful outcome of the various works in progress. I wish, in particular, to single out the preparatory work for the UN General Assembly Special Session on Drugs (UNGASS 2016) which is expected to take place in April next year.

My delegation looks forward to a successful UNGASS 2016 and hopes that the question of drugs and the nefarious threat it poses to the world will be addressed honestly, creatively and free of the trappings of blame games and ideological prevarications; which only serve to perpetrate the attendant evils. The anticipated
solutions must be fully encompassing of social, economic, cultural and security interests of all concerned; taking into account the experiences identified from the on-going debate on the graduation from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These lofty manoeuvres must not in anyway, compromise the sanctity of fundamental human rights.

Mr. President,
My statement would be incomplete if I did not mention the tremendous challenges faced by developing countries like mine in our efforts to realise peace, security, stability and sustainable socio-economic development. In this regard, I wish to highlight the need for joint and yet several efforts in combating crime. This is inclusive of information - sharing across the board to boost our counter-terrorism efforts; combating illegal arms trafficking—especially small arms and light weapons; trafficking in drugs; human trafficking (in particular women and girls); illicit trade in human parts; and trafficking in wild fauna and flora and products therefrom.

We call upon our more developed partners to increase technical and other forms of assistance and support to us—all in the name of our common security and well-being. Such technical assistance should be inclusive of border and immigration control systems; countering cyber-crime in its ever-evolving nature; identity and data management techniques; and other related fields. Any wavering on these self-evident and very serious threats to our very human security and survival, will surely cost this and future generations very dearly.

In the specific field of Law Enforcement, my delegation calls upon the UNODC to lead the way in soliciting, assembling and
disseminating world-wide best practices in the investigation, prosecution and control of errant or deviant Law Enforcement Officials whose criminal activities compound the very effort for which they are recruited, trained, equipped and remunerated. Left unchecked, our national and international endeavours will come to sad naught.

Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,
Today, no country is insured against the negative consequences of terrorism, narco-trafficking, organized crime, unemployment and their insidious consequences to us all.

Together we can win if we remain focused, steadfast and ahead of the criminal elements; always act fast and in a concerted manner.

I thank you for your kind attention and wish you all a very successful Crime Congress!