



**ADDRESS BY THE HON. JUSTICE DR SINGIZA DOUGLAS
KAREKONA**

CHAIRPERSON: JUDICIAL SERVICE COMMISSION

**AT THE SWEARING-IN SESSION OF MEMBERS OF THE 7TH
COMMISSION,**

KAMPALA, 8 APRIL 2025



The Right Hon. DCJ/Ag. CJ

The Honourable Principal Judge and DCJ Designate

The Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs

The Honourable Attorney General and the Ex officio member of the JSC

Justices and Judges of courts of judicature

The members of the incoming 7th Commission

Ladies and gentlemen,

On the 3rd March 2025, I received the news that I had been nominated by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda as the Chairperson of the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). As many other people were, I was pleasantly surprised (to say the least), but also profoundly humbled. The fact that I caught the attention of the Appointing Authority a few months after having been confirmed as a judge of the High Court is a ringing endorsement; it also bestows a weighty mantle of trust and responsibility on me – one which I must strive to live up to.

In facing this task, I am not alone: the judiciary has a pool of many able people of high repute. A case in point is our deputy Chairperson (Lady Justice Rosette Comfort Kania) who, like me, is newly appointed to the Commission. As judicial officers, we are ready to answer the call and demonstrate the skills and competencies that are required of us as senior members of the 7th Commission. The two of us are honoured to be joined by Commissioner Frank Musingwire, whose expertise in human resource development is unblemished. We now join the other members of the 7th Commission in earnest to serve the people of our country, as is our duty.



As I noted in my exit message to the judiciary's various WhatsApp groups after I was vetted by the Appointments Committee, the judiciary will always be my home, for it has nurtured me. Here, I must remember the late Justice AN Karokora with gratitude for the contribution he made to my career. I also thank the retired Lady Justice Flavia S Anglin for the strong support she gave me when I was but a young judicial officer. More widely, I give my wholehearted thanks to the leadership of the judiciary – and in particular Hon. Justice Dr Flavien Zeija (the incoming deputy Chief Justice) – for believing in me and for supporting me in my journey. The Appointing Authority has granted me an immense opportunity, and, today, in the presence of everyone here, I give you my promise that I will be faithful in my duties and fair to all in the service of this country that we love so much.

Now, let us look briefly to the future.

For the last month I have read a great deal about the JSC. I have been honoured with a detailed handover report of the 5th and 6th Commissions. From this report, it is possible to gain a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities available to the JSC as well as the challenges it faces. In turn, such an understanding makes it clear what has to be done on the road ahead.

The call of the 7th Commission is to build on the success of the 5th and 6th Commissions so that our judiciary can go from strength to strength. To that end, I acknowledge the strong foundation that the 5th and 6th Commissions have laid: the improved pay, the better structures, the improved budget, and the modern office space are clear for all to see. At the same time, against the backdrop of these successes, the Commission must now confront two main, overarching challenges:



- The first is the perception that judges, other judicial officers, and support staff are corrupt. We as the 7th Commission intend to confront corruption head-on.
- The second challenge is the inadequate use of new technologies, particularly in the recruitment of people seeking to join the judicial services and in disciplining those who may have to be sanctioned.

We hope that the adoption of appropriate technology will not only make processes like these more transparent, but also help to eliminate those persons who are unfit to continue in the judicial service. To address these two challenges, we need specialised skills to make better, stronger use of new technologies. Equally, there will be a need to increase the budget of JSC as well as increase its human resources, given the large number of staff that have to be supervised.

This is my maiden speech. It is required that, in my speech, I must immediately transition from the office of a judge to my new executive role in the JSC. It is also required that I do not say too much and keep things short – hence, I make just a few closing, and cautionary, notes:

- The constitutional role of the 7th Commission is to advise the Appointing Authority in the process of appointing justices, judges and registrars. This Commission will continue as well to appoint other categories of judicial and non-judicial staff as expected of us, a mandate we shall execute truthfully and honourably.
- Public education and research are key components of the JSC's work. At the 7th Commission, we shall, in addition, take bold action – for instance, by sanctioning evidently errant judicial officers of whatever level – and



this will send a message with a stronger educational impact than 20 *barazas* or 10 research reports could ever achieve.

Thank you.