REMARKS BY CPA RONALD MUTUMBA, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE INSTITUTE OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS OF UGANDA, AT THE 3RD C-SUITE FORUM, ON 14 MAY 2025, AT SHERATON KAMPALA HOTEL

SALUTATIONS

Members of Parliament present,

Leaders from the Central Government,

Our Guest Speakers, CPA Professor Samuel Sejjaaka, Principal and Team Leader at MAT ABACUS Business School and CPA Patrick Ayota, Managing Director at the National Social Security Fund, and our moderator, Mrs Jackie Namara Rukare, the CEO of Iguru Consult,

Members of the ICPAU Council,

Members of Committees of Council,

Board Executives,

Distinguished CEOs, university leaders and Heads of organisations present,

Chief Financial Officers,

The Media Teams,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

WELCOME REMARKS

With great pleasure, I welcome you to the 3rd C-Suite Forum, organised by the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Uganda (ICPAU).

This is not just a gathering; it is a powerful assembly of leadership, insight, and responsibility for those who occupy the highest levels of decision-making in our institutions.

Let me take this opportunity to sincerely thank all of you for honouring our invitation. Your presence reflects a shared commitment to shaping the future of our organisations and our country.

PRELIMINARIES

1. NSSF

I take this opportunity to recognise CPA Patrick Ayota, the Managing Director of the National Social Security Fund (NSSF). His position is an opportunity to reflect steadfast leadership, strategic foresight, and an unwavering commitment to the Fund's growth and long-term sustainability.

CPA Ayota's journey, from Chief Finance Officer to Chief Executive Officer, epitomises the very essence of the C-Suite Forum. It is a powerful affirmation of the synergies we continue to promote between the CFO and CEO roles, that financial stewardship is not just a back-office function, but a springboard for transformative leadership at the highest level.

I also take this opportunity, ladies and gentlemen to recognise CPA Professor Samuel Sejjaaka, the Principal and Team Leader at MAT ABACUS Business School. Prof. Sejjaaka has over time mentored many an Accountants in driving transformative change as an accountant, a teacher, a mentor and an entrepreneur. He has taken the role of the Accountant to the Boardrooms where he has chaired a number of boards and continues to mentor CFOs through the CFO Leadership Academy at MAT Abacus. We are proud to associate with him as together, we build the accountancy profession.

2. CFO Leadership Academy

Ladies and Gentlemen, in fulfillment of our supportive role to financial managers, we have the CFO Leadership Academy, an initiative that is shaping the future of strategic financial leadership.

The course equips Chief Finance Officers and Senior Finance Professionals with the skills, insights, and networks required to thrive in today's dynamic business landscape. It is a space for critical reflection, peer learning, and personal transformation.

I am excited to share that the next cohort begins this month. Additionally, tomorrow, 15 May, we'll celebrate the graduation of the current cohort, a group of exceptional finance leaders who have completed this intensive journey of growth and excellence.

I therefore take this chance to invite you to be part of this transformative experience. If you, or someone in your organisation, is ready to elevate their leadership and create lasting value, then the next cohort at MAT Abacus Business School, is the perfect opportunity.

3. Gratitude to CEOs for supporting Professional Accountancy

I also take this opportunity to extend our sincere gratitude to all CEOs and business leaders present, for your continued support to the accountancy profession. Through your commitment to paying membership dues and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) fees for your CPAs, you both uphold professional standards and invest in ethical and future-focused financial leadership. Your support sustains the integrity and growth of the profession in our country, and for that, we thank you.

4. Advocacy

As we look ahead, I call upon all leaders here to continue partnering with us on key professional platforms of the Institute, such as the Economic Forum, the Annual Seminar, and the FiRe Awards. These are not mere events but platforms that offer immense value to your organisations, through the profession, by promoting thought leadership, visibility, and networking with the best in the industry.

The Institute takes this opportunity to reaffirm the enduring value of CPAs. They are trained, regulated, and held to the highest standards of ethics and competence. I urge you to protect their professional space by ensuring that all accounting roles within your institutions are occupied by qualified CPAs. But, for finance staff who are not yet CPAs, we ask for your support in helping them professionalise through recognised pathways. This is how we build strong institutions and a resilient economy.

DRIVING TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE IN UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

Our theme this year is Driving Transformative Change in Unprecedented Times. We live in an era of unpredictable economies, technological disruptions, climate uncertainty, changing global politics, and increasing demands for transparency and accountability. The old ways of doing things no longer work. As C-suite leaders, we must not only react to change but also stay ahead and lead the way forward.

THE CFO: A CREATOR OF VALUE

Among the important players in this evolving leadership landscape is the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Today's CFO is not merely a custodian of financial information but a creator of value. In these unfamiliar times, CFOs are co-pilots to CEOs, offering insights that are not just financial but visionary.

CFOs are helping organisations adapt quickly, use resources wisely, manage risks early, and make informed decisions. They are leading efforts in sustainability, accountability, technology and building trust with stakeholders.

Organisations with strong CFOs involved in planning have handled crises better, recovered more quickly, and stayed more flexible during tough times.

ICPAU AS A PARTNER TO THE C-SUITE

At ICPAU, we understand that we must evolve to support transformative leadership. Our commitment is to continually empower professional accountants with the tools and ethics provided through our thought leadership and masterclasses required to thrive in such times.

ICPAU remains committed to providing high-quality continuing professional development to enhance executive decision-making, support the adoption of international best practices in financial reporting, risk management, and sustainability, promote ethical leadership and integrity, and advocate for accountants in leadership to ensure that financial insight is always available where strategy is being discussed.

CLOSING REMARKS

As we deliberate today, I urge us all to reflect deeply on what transformative change truly means.

On behalf of the ICPAU Council and Secretariat, I once again warmly welcome you. Thank you for walking this journey with us as we build a future of accountable, adaptive, and transformational leadership.

I wish you fruitful discussions and lasting connections.

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