

Emmanuel Tumusiime-Mutebile: Expanding financial access and financial inclusion in Uganda

Speech by Mr Emmanuel Tumusiime-Mutebile, Governor of the Bank of Uganda, at the official opening of Bank of Baroda (U) Ltd's new branch, Entebbe, 2 June 2012.

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The Global Chairman and Managing Director of Bank of Baroda,
The Board of Directors, Bank of Baroda (U) Ltd,
Management and Staff of Bank of Baroda (U) Ltd,
Distinguished Customers,
Invited Guests in your respective capacities,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure this morning to preside over the official opening of the Entebbe Branch of Bank of Baroda (Uganda) Ltd.

I would like to begin by congratulating the Bank of Baroda for its foresight in extending its branch network outside of Kampala, a move which bears testimony to the fact that our economic growth is geographically broad based. With the opening of this new branch in Entebbe and another which will open in Kabale next week, Bank of Baroda will expand its network to 13 branches countrywide. Bank of Baroda began its operations in Uganda almost 60 years ago, in 1953. It has demonstrated its attachment to Uganda through good times and bad, and in doing so has built up a reputation for serving the needs of customers with dedication and reliability.

The opening of new bank branches, especially in the towns and cities outside Kampala, makes an important contribution to the goal of expanding financial access and financial inclusion in this country. It brings banking services closer to the people, reduces transactions costs for ordinary customers and enhances competition in the banking industry. As our economy develops and per capita incomes increase, demand for financial services from both the corporate sector and the general public is growing rapidly, as is demand for new types of financial products. The expansion of Bank of Baroda's branch network will strengthen the bank's capacity to meet this growing demand for financial services.

The decision of Bank of Baroda to open a branch in Entebbe also bears testimony to the very bright prospects for business and commerce in the town. Entebbe and its environs already play an important role in the tourism and horticultural industries. Both of these industries are at the forefront of Uganda's efforts to modernize and diversify its economy, through the production of higher value goods and services which can compete on international markets. To be competitive on global markets, our domestic traded goods industries, such as tourism and horticulture, need access to first class financial services of the type which Bank of Baroda can provide.

Entebbe has been chosen by the United Nations as its hub for its operations in this region of Africa; a decision which will generate more business for the town, especially in the services sector. Government also plans to build a new highway to connect Entebbe to Kampala and to the road networks which lead to the northern and western parts of this country. The new highway will ease traffic congestion, reduce travel times and thus lower costs for businesses which are located in this area or which use the facilities in this area, such as the airport. The business community in Entebbe can thus look forward to growing opportunities across a broad range of business activities, and now has a partner in the name of Bank of Baroda, one the oldest and best established banks in Uganda, with which to do business.

With these remarks, allow me to once again congratulate the Shareholders, the Board and Senior Management of Bank of Baroda (U) Ltd for demonstrating their commitment to serve the people of Uganda.

It is now my pleasure and honour to declare Bank of Baroda (U) Ltd. Entebbe Branch officially opened for banking business.

I thank you.