

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

### **A CALL TO GOVERNMENT OF UGANDA TO ALLOCATE ADEQUATE VACCINES FUNDS TO SCALE UP ACCESS TO IMMUNISATION AND AVERT CASES OF PREVENTABLE INFANT MORTALITIES**

*Parliament 23 April, 2013*

This week, Uganda joins the rest of the world to celebrate the *World Immunization Week* under the global theme: 'Protect your world – get vaccinated'. Immunization remains one of the world's most powerful tools for health through vaccination or immunization of people of all ages against diseases. Globally, an estimated 1.5 million children under 5 years die every year from diseases that could be prevented by use of existing vaccines (according to WHO).

Locally, a report released by Uganda National Academy of Science (UNAS) a few days ago, indicates that Uganda has the lowest number of fully immunized children among the East African countries. This situation has been occasioned by vaccine shortages and lack of sensitization about the importance of immunization according to the report.

While I strongly commend government of Uganda through the Ministry of Health in its efforts to conduct regular and routine vaccinations; and recognize the heavy financial challenges to fund various states' institutions and programmes, I nevertheless wish to state the following:

- (a) That immunization is a right of every child! And as such immunization programme for all children must be one of the government priorities and this must be reflected in the budgetary allocation.
  
- (b) Remind my fellow leaders that immunization promotes a healthy status of the community and 'a healthy community is a result of good leadership'. Therefore, leaders of all categories have a very vital role to play not only in constantly

reminding ourselves and government when planning to prioritize health programmes for equitable access to immunization but also in mobilization of our communities to understand the value of vaccines and importance of immunizations.

- (c) That support from other health partners like GAVI Alliance can only complement the work of government and therefore the Ministry of Health must still take a lead role and not relax.

Statement made by:

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**Yumbe District, PGA Member**