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THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT • OPERATION WEALTH CREATION

Executive Brief

Cross-Border Leaders' Dialogue on the Uganda–Kenya Bilateral Instruments, the Ateker Leaders Council and the Okukaraba Settlement

11th Karamoja Cultural Festival • Moroto • 6–12 September 2026

*A four-hour session on Friday, 11 September 2026 to move three
agreed but unimplemented processes to a dated schedule of actions*

PREPARED BY

Hon. Pulkol David Bwangamoe

*Principal Strategic Policy Advisor to General Caleb Akandwanaho Salim Saleh,
Chief Coordinator, Operation Wealth Creation (OWC)*

For the consideration of the Chief Coordinator, OWC

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Ref: OWC/PSPA/KCF-11/EB-01/2026

Companion to Concept Note Ref: OWC/PSPA/KCF-11/CN-01/2026

1. The Decision Requested

Approval and funding are sought for a cross-border leaders’ dialogue on the morning of Friday, 11 September 2026 at Strikers Hotel, Moroto, within the programme of the 11th Karamoja Cultural Festival.

THE THREE DECISIONS

Approve the session. A four-hour cross-border leaders’ dialogue on the morning of Friday, 11 September 2026 at Strikers Hotel, Moroto, under the auspices of Operation Wealth Creation and the Ministry for Karamoja Affairs, feeding the afternoon high-level Ateker leaders’ dialogue.

Approve the budget. UGX 40,200,000, set out and itemised at Annex 1 of the Concept Note, or such lesser sum as the available resources allow.

Direct the follow-up. That the report and resolutions of the dialogue be transmitted to the Office of the Chief Coordinator and thereafter to the Office of the President, for action on the outstanding bilateral and institutional matters.

The dialogue brings together the political, administrative, cultural and security leadership of the Turkana and West Pokot of Kenya and the Karimojong and Sebei of Uganda, with leaders of the Toposa, Lango and Didinga of South Sudan and the Nyangatom of Ethiopia attending to share lessons. Attendance is planned at 250 participants from four countries.

2. The Position in Short

Three processes concerning Uganda, Kenya and the wider Ateker region have been negotiated, initialled or adopted at the highest level. None has been carried into effect. The texts are agreed; what they still want is signature, inauguration and a set of dates. That is what this session is for.

The three also hold each other up. Uganda and Kenya have envisaged the signing of the bilateral instruments and the Okukaraba ceremony taking place together at Moroto, so the delay in one keeps the other waiting. The Ateker Leaders Council is the platform through which both would be carried into the communities, and its membership cannot be completed while Uganda has no gazetted Karamoja-wide cultural institution to anchor a national chapter.

MATTER	WHERE IT STANDS	WHAT IS HOLDING IT
Bilateral MoU and Resource Sharing Agreement	Negotiated clause by clause and initialled at Nairobi, 24–26 September 2024; reaffirmed by both Presidents in the Joint Communiqué of July 2025.	Neither instrument has been finally signed. The Presidential Summit at Moroto has not been convened, and the RSA takes effect only six months after signature.
Ateker Leaders Council	Constitution adopted and signed at Lodwar, 11 December 2025; Secretariat seated at Lodwar; Kenya’s national chapter inaugurated.	Uganda and South Sudan have not launched their chapters, so membership is incomplete. Uganda has no gazetted Karamoja-wide institution to anchor one. Ethiopia declined to sign.

MATTER	WHERE IT STANDS	WHAT IS HOLDING IT
Okukaraba / Akibut blood settlement	Accepted by both Presidents as the pathway. Uganda has communicated the amount payable per affected family, computed on an Attorney-General-guided methodology.	Kenya's response is awaited. The delay holds the release of the ten detained herders, the reparations, the reconciliation ceremony and the Presidential Summit itself.

One regional matter belongs on the same agenda. Uganda is asking Kenya to sign a bilateral resource-sharing agreement while standing outside the IGAD Protocol on Transhumance, which governs the same movement and which Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan and Sudan have signed. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is preparing a roadmap to signature; the dialogue should note the position and recommend that the roadmap be concluded.

3. Why a Festival Rather Than a Ministerial Forum

Among the pastoral Ateker, the akiriket — the assembly of initiated elders — is the court of final appeal for communal boundaries, grazing allocation, access to water and the settlement of blood. An instrument signed at ministerial level and never put before the akiriket carries little weight at the water point. Clans run across the political map instead of sitting inside it, so the same lineages are found on both sides of the border, and what is agreed through them travels where an administrative decision does not.

The festival brings that authority into the same room as ministers, governors, district chairpersons, divisional commanders and the security leadership of four countries. There is no other week in the calendar when all of them are in Karamoja together.

4. What the Session Will Produce

The morning dialogue should close with papers on the table rather than a general exchange of views. It is expected to deliver:

- a status report on the Resource Sharing Agreement and the bilateral Memorandum of Understanding;
- an agreed roadmap for operationalising the Ateker Leaders Council and inaugurating the outstanding national chapters;
- agreed next steps for concluding the Okukaraba settlement at community level, including which elders will officiate;
- a date for the Founding General Assembly of the Karamoja Cultural Union, and the objections to be settled before it sits;
- a consolidated list of pending actions, each with a responsible institution and a date by which it falls due;
- recommendations for the afternoon high-level leaders' dialogue; and
- resolutions for inclusion in the final outcomes of the 11th Karamoja Cultural Festival.

The findings go to the afternoon high-level dialogue, which consolidates them with the reports of the women's, youth, children's and elders' sessions into the principal resolutions of the festival.

5. Why This Falls to Operation Wealth Creation

The request rests on the link between peace, access to shared natural resources and the region's economic transformation. Karamoja now hosts mineral exploration, cement production, renewable energy investment and tourism, and none of it settles while the border corridor does not.

The livestock economy is the plainest measure of what is at stake. Karamoja carries 40.4 per cent of Uganda's sheep, 16.7 per cent of its cattle and 15.2 per cent of its goats — the largest share of each of any sub-region — and generates roughly UGX 1.6 trillion, about USD 444 million, in annual direct-use value. That herd depends on movement across the border the two unsigned instruments are meant to regulate. The Karamoja Regional Development Plan approved by Cabinet commits some UGX 15.1 trillion over ten years to 2035, and its returns turn on whether the border corridors are safe, settled and commercially active, with former raiding routes converted into trading routes.

Operation Wealth Creation would support the morning session. The afternoon high-level dialogue would be supported jointly by Operation Wealth Creation and Herders of the Horn.

6. The Cost of Not Convening

The Resource Sharing Agreement commences six months after signature and runs for an initial five years. Every month of delay pushes that commencement date further out, and with it the mapping of grazing areas and water points, the manning of the six gazetted transhumance corridors, the joint patrols and fusion arrangements, and the community structures meant to hold it together.

Meanwhile ten Turkana herders remain in Kitalya Prison, reparations to five bereaved Ugandan families are unpaid, the reconciliation ceremony and the national prayers are unscheduled, and Turkana grazing in Uganda stays restricted. All of it waits on Kenya's reply and on the agreement at community level that this session is meant to reach.

The four delegations will already be in Moroto for the week, so the session costs nothing to convene beyond the costs set out at Annex 1 of the Concept Note. If it is not held on 11 September, the next occasion that assembles the same leadership is the Presidential Summit, which has been postponed once and is itself waiting on the Okukaraba settlement.

7. Recommendation

The Chief Coordinator is respectfully requested to:

1. Approve the holding of the cross-border leaders' dialogue on the morning of Friday, 11 September 2026 at Strikers Hotel, Moroto, under the auspices of Operation Wealth Creation and the Ministry for Karamoja Affairs.
2. Approve the indicative budget of UGX 40,200,000 set out at Annex 1 of the Concept Note, or such lesser sum as the available resources allow.
3. Direct that the report and resolutions of the dialogue be transmitted to the Office of the Chief Coordinator, and thereafter to the Office of the President, for follow-up on the outstanding bilateral and institutional matters.

Submitted for your consideration,

Hon. Pulkol David Bwangamoe

*Principal Strategic Policy Advisor to General Caleb Akandwanaho Salim Saleh,
Chief Coordinator, Operation Wealth Creation (OWC)*

This Executive Brief summarises Concept Note Ref: OWC/PSPA/KCF-11/CN-01/2026, to which it should be read as a companion. The full background, the programme of the festival, the budget at Annex 1, the draft agenda and the schedule of documents relied on are set out there.