

**MAKERERE**



**UNIVERSITY**

**REMARKS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR JOHN  
DDUMBA-SSENTAMU**

**ON THE OCCASION OF 25 YEARS OF UNIVERSITY  
COLLABORATION BETWEEN MAKERERE AND BERGEN**

**HELD IN THE AUDITORIUM, MAIN BUILDING**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2013**

- Prof. Sigmund Grønmo, Rector University of Bergen, Norway, and your delegation
- Former Vice Chancellor of Makerere University, Professor Livingstone S. Luboobi
- The entire Makerere University Community
- All invited guests in your distinguished capacities
- Ladies and Gentlemen

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A very good afternoon to you all. I am honoured to welcome you to this occasion when we are marking 25 years of collaboration between Makerere University and the University of Bergen. This event is taking place amidst celebrations commemorating 90 years of Makerere University, which were launched on August 4, 2012, by H.E. Yoweri K. Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda. We will conclude the year-long celebrations on August 3, this year, with a ground-breaking ceremony for the establishment of a Students Centre. I wish to take this opportunity to invite all of you to the Grand Finale on August 3.

The Makerere-Bergen collaboration is historical, dating back to 1988, when Prof. Endre Lillethun first visited Makerere University. In 1991, the collaboration was formalized, followed by the signing of a 15-year Frame Agreement in November 1999. The agreement is the longest single North-South Institutional Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that Makerere University has ever signed.

Since 1999, the University of Bergen has significantly supported Makerere University's core mission of teaching and learning, advancement of research and knowledge transfer. It has enabled capacity building in the Library, as well as in the departments of finance and human resources.

The collaboration has supported more than 168 Ugandan students to study at the University of Bergen. A significant percentage of this number has been members of staff of Makerere University, who have received post-graduate qualifications, including MPhil and PhD degrees. I am glad to note that a joint degree awarding arrangement between our two Universities produced its first PhD graduate last year, Dr. Grace Ndezi, who is based at the College of Health Sciences.

I am pleased to note that beyond academic training, our collaboration has nurtured a variety of high-level scientific and multi-disciplinary research projects. The collaboration has made it possible to obtain support equipment and laboratories. For instance, in January 2012, we witnessed the launch of the Seismic laboratory and handover of other equipment, as part of the Geo-science initiative of our two Universities. This initiative is supporting the Master of Science programme in Petroleum Geo-science, under the Department of Geology and Petroleum Studies.

Our collaboration has produced refined researchers. Notably, the majority of projects under the Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU) and indeed the seed-funding phase of the new Norwegian Programme for Capacity Building in Higher Education and Research for Development (NORHED), have all involved researchers nurtured through our partnership. This has no doubt tremendously supported our goal of being a research-led University.

The achievements mentioned, among others, have been possible because of the generous financial and human resource support from the University of Bergen. The University of Bergen purchased a vehicle, a boat and several equipment to facilitate the running of the Collaboration Office and to provide backup support for joint research projects. We have greatly benefited from this collaboration and we are very grateful for all this support.

Our collaboration has contributed significantly towards the internationalization of our two institutions, an aspect recognized by both Universities. In August 2008, the University of Bergen awarded an Honorary Doctorate to Prof. Livingstone S. Luboobi. On January 20, 2010, Prof. Endre Lillethun received an Honorary PhD of Makerere University.

I take this opportunity to thank the coordinators of the collaboration for keeping the torch burning. The collaboration is currently coordinated by Prof. Edward K. Kirumira, on behalf of Makerere University; and Prof. Thorkild Tylleskar, on behalf of Bergen - with administrative support by Thelma Kraft. I would also like to thank Prof. Livingstone S. Luboobi and Professor Andreas Steigen who coordinated the collaboration before them. Special thanks go to Professor John Ssebuwufu, who was Vice Chancellor in 1997 when the Makerere/University of Bergen Collaboration Office was formalized and given a home in the Lincoln Flats.

As I conclude, allow me to point out that the current 15-year Frame Agreement ends in November 2014. We are happy to learn that with your guidance and leadership, following the meeting you had with our coordinator, Prof. Kirumira, the University of Bergen has agreed to extend the collaboration for another 10 years effective 2014. We want to assure you that Makerere University is committed and eager to take advantage of the good will expressed by your University, and we look forward to further strengthening of our collaboration.

Mr. Rector Sir and your delegation, I wish you a wonderful and fruitful stay at Makerere University. I am sure that the days you are here, however short, will be filled with activities that consolidate our mutual friendship and commitment to greater internationalization of our two universities.

Once again, you are most welcome to Makerere University.