

**MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**



**ADDRESS BY THE CHANCELLOR**

**PROFESSOR GEORGE MONDO KAGONYERA**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 64<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY  
OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

**THURSDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2014**

**Your Excellency, The Vice President of the Republic of Uganda**

**The Honourable Minister of Education and Sports**

**Honourable Ministers present**

**Honourable Members of Parliament**

**Members of the Diplomatic Corps**

**Your Lordships the Judges of the Judicature**

**Religious Leaders**

**Your Worship the Mayor, Kampala Capital City Authority**

**Representatives of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies**

**Chancellors and former Chancellors present**

**Chairperson and Members of Makerere University Council**

**The Vice Chancellor and your Management team**

**Former Vice Chancellors and Management Present**

**Vice Chancellors, Rectors and Principals of other Universities and Institutions**

**Members of the University Senate**

**Members of Staff of Makerere University**

**Parents and Guardians**

**Graduands**

**The Media Fraternity**

**Ladies and Gentlemen:**

## **1.1 CONGRATULATORY STATEMENT**

I am pleased to preside over the 64<sup>th</sup> Graduation ceremony of Makerere University during which a total of **12,616** students will be graduating. At the second session held yesterday, I conferred degrees and awarded diplomas to 2,318 graduands. The Makerere University Convocation also recognised the best overall student **Ms. Kimala Sarah**, who obtained a CGPA of **4.83** in the Bachelor of Information Systems. Congratulations Sarah for doing your parents and Makerere University proud.

Today's **third session** of the 64<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony is dedicated to the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology, the College of Education and External Studies and the School of Law. The Vice Chancellor has presented a total of

**2,488** Graduands for the conferment of degrees and award of diplomas of Makerere University. Congratulations!

I congratulate all the students who have excelled by attaining First Class degrees. Please do not take these achievements lightly. You are expected to maximally exploit your ability for the service of mankind. I also congratulate all other Graduands and wish you the best as you go out into the world to contribute to the welfare of your communities. You must realize that success in your future performance does not depend on the class of degree alone.

I pay special tribute to the members of staff who have prepared our students during their stay here. I also thank the parents, guardians and sponsors who have made your stay here possible through their selfless dedication to meeting all your tuition requirements and living costs.

Today you graduate into a community faced with multiple opportunities and challenges. Your success or failure will depend on how you view the world before you. To a great extent your destiny lies squarely on your shoulders. When faced with challenges, quickly ask yourself how you can use your knowledge and skills to turn them into opportunities.

Likewise, when you encounter opportunities, ask yourself how you can harness them to serve humanity at large and not just your own interests. Often people do not realize that service to others leads to personal satisfaction. I am happy and proud to note that Makerere University's biggest contribution to the region and beyond has been the ability to produce key human resource to serve humanity both at political levels and in large corporations. Graduates of Makerere University have distinguished themselves in the business world.

## **1.2 MAKERERE'S RANKING AND STUDENT'S EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATIONS**

I am happy to note that Makerere University was ranked the fourth best University in Africa. I appreciate the fact that in addition to teaching and learning, our staff and students have actively focused on undertaking research projects which have resulted into innovations and products aimed at transforming lives.

As clearly reported by the Vice Chancellor, I salute the staff and students in the three Colleges and the School of Law for continuing to come up with innovative products that are of great benefit to our society.

The College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences is at the forefront of the providing innovative solutions to our community. This College has continued to release new varieties of soya bean and sweet potatoes that are not only drought and disease resistant, but are also high yielding. This is very commendable especially as our farmers continue to seek new methods of adapting to climate change.

As you are all aware the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology is working very hard to produce Uganda's first solar electric bus.

However, I am glad to note that the college is also reaching out to the Small and Medium-scale Enterprises (SMEs) which employ over 2.5million people and constitute up to 90% of the private sector, according to 2010 research. Having recognized the cramped and often dangerous working conditions of our people, the College established the **Regional SME Industrial/Business Park**

**project.** This project will enable SMEs to acquire properly designed and serviced premises to improve on their working conditions and foster their survival and growth. We commend you for reaching out to the entrepreneurs especially the youth.

I wish to commend the College of Education and External Studies for continuing to train teachers for tomorrow's generations. The two-time former Vice Chancellor of Makerere University the late Professor William Senteza Kajubi was an exceptional teacher who loved his profession and in so doing excelled both nationally and internationally. I encourage us all to emulate his great example of hard work, integrity and professionalism. I also commend the college for continuing to seek ways of using mobile phones to support distance learning. This innovation will help improve the access by teachers and students in remote locations to world-class education at Makerere and I pray that you receive maximum support to help implement this great innovation.

The majority of ordinary Ugandans out there are still struggling to understand recently passed bills like the Anti-Pornography Bill and the yet to be signed Anti-Homosexuality Bill. Whereas both these bills seek to deal with vices that are alien to our society, the academic and political debates that surround them in most cases leave ordinary citizens more confused than before. I am a strong believer that good laws are necessary, especially in societies of diverse constitution. However, I am even stronger believer that morals are better. He or she that is disciplined and respectful of self has no need of a law to police them.

I therefore commend the School of Law who through the Public Interest Law Clinic (PILAC) continue exposing our students to the day-to-day cases of people who have been confronted by the Law. I encourage the Graduands and Students of Law to use this opportunity to become better Lawyers, whose key value is the integrity to defend the defenseless and shun the corrupt. Members of the Legal profession have tremendous responsibility to maintain justice that is essential for maintaining harmony in our society. Therefore, justice must always be administered and be seen to be so.

### **1.3 MOBILISATION OF RESOURCES**

I urge the University to continue to be innovative in resource mobilization and wealth creation.

In this connection you must move quickly to develop all the land you own into wealth creation facilities. There are institutions ready to partner with you. Let there be no excuse for not moving forward.

### **1.4 FUNDING FROM THE ALUMNI**

As alumni of Makerere you should always be interested in the affairs of Makerere. Your involvement in the development of our University can play a very critical role in where Makerere heads. As Chancellor, I am doing my part personally to forge linkages aimed at mobilising resources from alumni in the East African region. I therefore appeal to the alumni; both past and those graduating today, to passionately support development activities at your Alma mater. I reiterate the Vice Chancellor's request for you to generously contribute to the construction of the Makerere University Students' Centre. We are Building for the Future.

The Makerere that you see here today is a combined result of the British Government's 1922 decision to allocate resources and subsequent efforts from our partners. Over the years, development partners have put up buildings such as the extension of the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology; the Pharmacy Department Building, Block A of the College of Computing and Information Sciences, to mention but a few.

Most of you have enjoyed these facilities and the Students' Centre Project is the perfect opportunity for you to now give back. I am happy to note that pledge cards for the Student's Centre have been given out. I appeal to you to give generously.

### **1.5 FUNDING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH**

A lot of money has been mobilized by groups and individuals. It is proper for us to recognize and thank them for what they have achieved. At the time of our independence in 1962, Uganda was at the same stage of development as South Korea. However, the South Korean Government's support to family-owned businesses over the decades has led to the emergence and flourishing of global brands such as Samsung and Hyundai.

Furthermore, a 2010 Research and Development (R&D) survey by Elsevier; a global provider of science and health information, revealed that South Korea invests about 3% of her GDP in research. By 2013, the South Korean economy was the third largest in Asia and the 13<sup>th</sup> in the world. It is therefore an open secret that investment in Research and Development activities is the key to transforming our own and indeed Africa's economy.

As Makerere University is a public-funded institution, I appeal to the Government of Uganda to increase funding to 100% of the wage bill as per the request from the Vice Chancellor. We also appeal to the Government to increase funding to research and development activities at Makerere and all public universities.

We appreciate and thank the Government and development partners for funding research at Makerere; although the bulk of it is from our development partners, and in the same spirit, appeal to the Government to increase funding to research.

### **1.6 APPRECIATION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF UGANDA-PEACE IN UGANDA**

i) I thank the Government of Uganda led by H.E Yoweri Kaguta Museveni for ensuring that this country is free from war. I commend the efforts and sacrifices made in the liberation of the war in Northern Uganda. We do not hear of Cattle Rustling in Karamoja. This peaceful environment brought about by the Government has allowed people to exercise their ability, hence the over thirty Universities in the country. Everyone should know that Makerere University has continued to grow and registered the breakthroughs in research and innovations as reported by the Vice Chancellor because we have peace in this country.

ii) I commend the Government especially H.E. The President for the timely intervention in South Sudan and Somalia. Our gallant sons and daughters have continued to make the utmost sacrifice of life for the good of our neighbours and ourselves. I have no doubt in my mind that the Government of Uganda deployed our troops there for selfish reasons. We should continue to recognize the sacrifices made by our soldiers in South Sudan.

## **1.7 TAPPING INTO THE YOUNG INTELLIGENT BRAINS**

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, a country that does not value knowledge is doomed. I appeal to the Government of Uganda to come up with a Strategic Plan focused on tapping into the brains of intelligent young men and women. Your Excellency, the management of the developed world have what they call Centers of Excellence. These are often joint efforts by Governments, the Universities and the private sector, where young men and women go for highly specialized training for transformation of their countries' economies. We need to emulate countries like India.

## **1.8 THE CHALLENGE OF UNEMPLOYMENT**

Unemployment is a problem in the world. Many countries are grappling with this problem. The Government of Uganda has come up with strategies including the youth fund to try to address this problem. We cannot look at the Government alone. We all have a role to play including the private and business sector. I advise the graduands not to fix your minds on what you have studied. You should be open minded and use the knowledge and skills that you have acquired to seek opportunities in various fields so that you become self reliant.

Take off time to read the inspiring stories from youths, entrepreneurs and low income earners who have over the years turned into billionaires. Every week, various Media houses publish inspiring stories about Ugandans who live under the same conditions as you do and yet have managed to excel and stand out in society. However, I strongly advise you against inspiring, creating or joining any schemes that will make you rich at the expense of the wellbeing and life of others.

## **1.9 SPECIAL MESSAGE TO GRADUANDS**

As a country, our hope for a better tomorrow undoubtedly lies in you; the younger generation. I urge you to guard against greed wherever you may go and in whatever field of endeavour you may engage. I encourage you to always be disciplined and observe proper time management.

Even as you set out to be self-employed, you must always be disciplined and also manage your time so that you propel yourself and all those you may be fortunate to lead into the right direction. I encourage you to also acquire soft skills in addition to the degrees you have acquired today. Technical ability is good but technical ability with the social skills to match is even better.

I once again congratulate you upon this milestone as reached today and urge you to make both your parents and Makerere proud wherever life may lead you after today. I thank you.

Prof. George Mondo Kagonyera  
**CHANCELLOR**