

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY



ADDRESS BY THE CHANCELLOR

PROFESSOR GEORGE MONDO KAGONYERA

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 64TH GRADUATION CEREMONY
OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

TUESDAY 28TH JANUARY, 2014

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:

CONGRATULATORY STATEMENT

I am pleased to preside over the 64th Graduation ceremony of Makerere University. I congratulate the graduands for this academic achievement. I wish to thank all parents, guardians and sponsors who have made your stay here possible through their selfless dedication to meeting all your tuition requirements and living costs. I also thank the Almighty God for ushering us all into the year 2014, in which we hope to use our abilities only for the better.

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.

GOVERNANCE OF THE UNIVERSITY

Makerere University now has a complete team of top Management. Irene Ovonji-Odida is the new Vice Chairperson of Council, Ernest Okello Ogwang is the new Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs and Barnabas Nawangwe is the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration. All the Colleges have substantive Principals. The University, Government and the community at large expect you to work as a team for the purpose of serving Makerere University. I wish to congratulate you on your elevation to the high positions within the University.

RETENTION OF THE NEXT GENERATION OF ACADEMICS

I am pleased to note that Makerere University continues to play a leading role in producing quality graduates in various professions and other fields. Your emphasis on postgraduate training has enabled us to have the highest concentration of PhDs in the region. I am told that Makerere still ranks highly in African Universities. Keep it up and do more.

MAKERERE AS A GLOBAL PLAYER

Your collaboration with Universities all over the world deserves to be noted. Knowledge and information have made the world one village. For you to maintain a high stand you need to continue pursuing opportunities of collaboration and experience. There are many examples of your distinguished achievements in this endeavour.

STUDENT PROJECTS

I wish to congratulate our students for your continued success in the various activities you are involved in. You know of the electric car project in the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT).

In the School of Public Health, you may wish to know that under the ResilientAfrica Network (RAN) project, one of our students competing with others from six leading American Universities won the top prize. Mr. Brian Gitta who defeated students from Universities like MIT, UC Berkeley, Texas A&M, must be mentioned by name. Congratulations! The ResilientAfrica Network Project came into being following competition by the School of Public Health with American Universities from 49 States and 33 other countries.

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.

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. 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.

FUNDING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

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 13th 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.

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO GRADUANDS

Lately, I have been reflecting on the regional developments especially in light of the ongoing instability in Southern Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and other parts of the region. I have asked myself the question, *'As an academic institution, what should be our contribution in averting such happenings in favour of peaceful mechanisms for settling our differences?'* We need to be seen to do more than just writing articles in the press.

I realized that I did not have to look very far for an answer. Academic Institutions are better placed to nurture strong leaders, with a focus on instilling in them not only a humanitarian spirit but also a desire to positively contribute to society. As you graduate in your respective disciplines today,

Makerere has played her role in ensuring that you have attained the requisite knowledge meant for your academic level. Human conflict has various origins which academia seeks to address through the various courses on offer.

Therefore, as you go out into the world, I want you to challenge yourself to see how you can contribute to peace all over the world, in your own humble discipline-specific way. It is no secret that the African continent is still plagued by political instability. However, we have to remember that the desired change starts with us.

I therefore urge you to guard against tribal, racial and gender-based insensitivity and stereotypes in all that you do. Remember that your Alma Mater, Makerere University, *Builds for the Future* irrespective of tribe, race, gender or economic background. We are optimistic that your actions will reflect the desirable behavior. Do not be quick to point out Government officials who are corrupt, and yet your own actions and intentions are shrouded in mystery and motivated by self-actualization. Remember the stick in your eye rather than the speck in your neighbour's. It might be as simple as offering a bribe for a service, but it will definitely speak volumes about your personal integrity.

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.

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.

Those who have gone through the gates of Makerere before you, like the late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, left inalienable marks of good deeds, because they drank full from the cup of integrity. Seek to follow only such great examples and none else. 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.

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