

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY



ADDRESS BY THE CHANCELLOR

PROFESSOR GEORGE MONDO KAGONYERA

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

WEDNESDAY 29TH 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:

1.1 CONGRATULATORY STATEMENT

I am pleased to preside over the 64th Graduation ceremony of Makerere University during which a total of **12,616** students will be graduating. At the first session held yesterday, 4016 Graduands were conferred degrees and awarded diplomas.

I am happy that at this **second session** dedicated to the College of Computing and Information Sciences and the College of Business and Management Sciences, the Vice Chancellor has presented a total of **2,318** 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 students in the College of Computing and Information Sciences for realizing that in this era of information and technological advancement, they are duty bound to come up with innovative products that will benefit societies.

Listening to the Vice Chancellor's speech, I was filled with joy that our very own students have come up with ICT products/devices and software to help farmers monitor their crops for high yields; coming up with devices to monitor the heartbeats of babies in their mothers' wombs; and also ensuring that ICT is incorporated in the treatment of tuberculosis, malaria and other diseases! This is great.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this means that our students in the College of Computing and Information Sciences have recognised that one of the biggest challenges faced by this country is the last mile delivery of services. You all know that Academicians and Scientists come up with valuable knowledge, but it cannot be accessed by the communities. Information that is beneficial to farmers or health services may exist, but due to the poor road network, widespread poverty and the expensive rates tagged to the delivery of these services, the majority of the population especially in rural areas cannot access this knowledge or services crucial to their well being.

Many innovations continue to take place at Makerere, as it should be. Students in the College of Computing and Information Sciences and the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology have come up with the Matibabu mobile phone application. These students recognized the trauma that is associated with pricking the human body to draw blood samples for Malaria tests and decided that Ugandans had suffered enough. They also recognized that there was a shortage of

skilled manpower to conduct these tests, the poor record-keeping notwithstanding. I therefore commend these students innovative and proactive approach to solving our most pressing problems. Congratulations.

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. 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.

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 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.

Two issues I would like to comment on: First is the environment brought about by the Government. This has allowed people to exercise their ability, hence the over thirty Universities in the country. Secondly I want to commend 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.

1.6 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.

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