

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY



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

ON

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

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2014

The Chancellor of Makerere University

Honourable Minister of Education and Sports

Honourable Ministers present

Honourable Members of Parliament present

Your Lordships the Judges

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

The Lord Mayor, Kampala City

The Leadership of Kampala Capital City Authority

Chairperson and Members of Makerere University Council

Representatives of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies

Representatives of Development Partners at the National and International levels

Former Vice Chancellors

Religious Leaders

My colleagues, Vice Chancellors, Rectors and Principals of Institutions of Higher Learning

Members of Management, Senate and the entire Makerere University Community

Parents and Guardians

Graduands

The Media

All invited guests in your various distinguished capacities

Ladies and Gentlemen: You are most welcome to the 64th Graduation Ceremony of Makerere University. I thank you for gracing this occasion with your presence.

To all our Graduands today, I bring you warm greetings and congratulations from the entire Makerere University community upon successfully fulfilling the requirements for the award of degrees and diplomas of Makerere University. I thank the Graduands for staying the course to this highly memorable day of your life. Your success is indeed the joy of Makerere University.

To all the parents and guardians, we thank you for the support and sacrifices that you have made throughout the period of study of your children to make sure that they succeed. Thank you for paying tuition and other fees requirements as required by the University Tuition Policy. The best gift you can give to your children is education, and you have done so. We thank you.

In a special way, I congratulate all members of staff graduating today upon scaling up your academic achievements. We are the greatest beneficiaries because as a University we shall continue to tap into the knowledge and skills you have acquired. To the members of staff whose children, spouses and relatives are graduating today, congratulations!

I would like to thank all members of staff of Makerere University for your efforts and support in preparing these graduands. Thank you for contributing to Uganda's national development through the creation of an appropriate human resource.

I salute the supreme governing body of the University, Makerere University Council, under the leadership of Eng. Dr. Charles Wana-Etyem- for enacting policies, which have guided the University and its stakeholders to remain focused on its Vision and Mission.

I am glad to note that the University Council has a new Vice Chairperson, Hon. Irene Ovonji-Odida. Hon. Ovonji-Odida brings to the Council a wealth of experience from her distinguished service in reputable institutions at both national and international levels.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I am also happy to inform you that the University Council approved a Communication Policy to facilitate timely, effective and appropriate information flow within and outside Makerere University. We are confident that the new Policy will enhance our efforts towards efficient and effective organization and management of Makerere University's affairs.

I thank the University Senate, the Professor Ben Twinomugisha Committee, the Public Relations and Communication team, staff and students for the constructive comments during the drafting process of this policy.

Mr. Chancellor, Sir; I wish to thank you for your sustained guidance and support towards ensuring an efficient and effective organizational and management environment. We thank you for appointing the new substantive Deputy Vice Chancellors; Assoc. Prof. Ernest Okello Ogwang for Academic Affairs and Assoc. Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe for Finance and Administration. Both bring to the table a wealth of experience having served Makerere University in various capacities over the years. Dr. Okello Ogwang has been with us for 23 years and Dr. Nawangwe for 27.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, we are also grateful to you for having appointed College Principals and their Deputies. I would like to assure you that with the support of Council, Management together with the leadership of the Colleges will endeavour to achieve our vision of *being the leading institution for academic excellence and innovations in Africa*.

Allow me to extend our sincere thanks to Her Lordship Prof. Lillian Tibatemwa-Ekirikubinza, who was previously Deputy Vice Chancellor [Academic Affairs], and Prof. Sandy Stevens Tickodri-Togboa, the former Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor [Finance and Administration]. We thank both of them for their love and commitment to Makerere University. We cherish their various individual contributions to building this great institution and wish them well in their new assignments.

In the same spirit, I thank the out-going Chaplains of St. Francis and St. Augustine Chapels. Thank you Rev. Dr. Johnson Ebong and Monsr. Dr. Lawrence Kanyike. We thank you not only for your invaluable spiritual guidance but also for spearheading visible and quantifiable development in your respective communities of St. Francis and St. Augustine.

On a sad note however, Mr. Chancellor Sir; the Makerere University community lost several members of staff, former staff and students during the last academic year. These include two former Academic Registrars who contributed immensely to the development of the Department of the Academic Registrar as well as the entire University. They were part of the team that oversaw the successful implementation of the affirmative action programme for more girls to attain University education in Uganda. The late Bernard Onyango served in the Department from 1963 to 1992, first as Deputy Registrar and later as Academic Registrar. The late Gershom Eyoku served in different capacities in the Department from August 1978 to June 1996.

Quite recently in December 2013, we lost Prof. Remigius Bukenya-Ziraba a former Professor of Taxonomy and Systematics in the College of Natural Sciences who served Makerere University for over 30 years. His contribution to the development of Botany as a unit and as a subject at Makerere University will always be remembered.

Indeed we have lost many dear ones, whom I cannot mention by name. We pray that their souls rest in eternal peace.

In the same vein, the Makerere University community remembers with respect and dignity, the late Nelson 'Madiba' Mandela, an honourable Statesman, freedom fighter, and loving Father of the Rainbow Nation, whose legacy will continue to inspire many. Let us honour his memory by using our

respective professions to promote the values which he stood for, particularly peace and reconciliation for the betterment of humankind.

On a positive note, Mr. Chancellor Sir, Makerere University continues to register significant successes, for which we are thankful to our several stakeholders. Mr. Chancellor Sir, allow me to report a few of the successes:

- i. Makerere University continues to rise in academic ranking. You will recall that last January during the 63rd Graduation Ceremony, we were in 9th position on the African continent. I am pleased to note with satisfaction that as we celebrate the 64th Graduation Ceremony, Makerere University is ranked in 4th position and 2nd in terms of research output and publications. I would like to thank the entire Makerere University community for this achievement and at the same time I would like to appeal to all of us to double our efforts so that Makerere University can be number one (1) in Africa.
- ii. In keeping with our goal to be a research-led University, Senate approved a University Research Agenda for the period 2013-2018. The Research Agenda is in line with the national, regional and global development frameworks. The main areas of focus include *Health and Health Systems; Agricultural Transformation, Food Security and Livelihoods; Natural Resources Governance and Climate Change; Education and Education Systems; Governance, Culture, Communication and Sustainable Development as well as Science and Technology*. Cross-cutting areas include Biotechnology, Knowledge Translation, Gender and Human Resource Development.
- iii. Library services have been tremendously transformed with the additional 8,000 square metres of space that includes seminar rooms, research commons and access points for persons with disabilities. The library catalogue is online and visible to the world, complete with a new offline feature that allows for continued circulation of documents even when the internet is inaccessible. The Makerere University Library has also provided professional support not only to local institutional libraries but also regional libraries including the University of Juba Library and several others in South Sudan.
- iv. Mr. Chancellor Sir, I am happy to report that the International Office has been re-instated. We are hoping that this office will be a one-stop centre for all international affairs in terms of teaching, research, exchange programmes and joint degree awards. We are hopeful that we shall soon overcome the challenge of equipping the office to international standards.

- v. In 2013, the National Council for Higher Education accredited ten [10] Makerere University programmes including; i) *Master of Business Psychology*, ii) *Master of Science in Construction Management*, iii) *Master of Science in Geo-information Science and Technology*, iv) *Master of Science in Power Systems Engineering*, v) *Master of Science in Telecommunication Engineering*, vi) *Executive Master of Business Administration*, vii) *Master of Public Infrastructure Management*, viii) *Master of Public Health Disaster Management*, ix) *Postgraduate Diploma in Medical Education*, and x) the *Postgraduate Diploma in Social Justice*.
- vi. Several initiatives have been embarked on towards attaining financial sustainability and ensuring optimal utilization of the University's financial resources. We are focusing on initiating income-generating projects through Private Public Partnerships and development of idle University land. Mr. Chancellor Sir, we also have plans to renovate Halls of Residence beginning with Lumumba Hall through the Private Public Partnership model. We have engaged and will continue to engage the private sector to see these projects to completion. I am appealing to the Private Sector to take advantage of this opportunity to collaborate with Makerere University. We also call upon our alumni to generously support us in our endeavours to uplift the image of Makerere University.
- vii. In order to consolidate an ICT-enabled environment, we are working with the Research and Education Network for Uganda (RENU) to explore possibilities of connecting several universities, colleges and research institutions to an affordable countrywide high-speed fibre-backbone.
- viii. Our staff and students have won several local and international awards. We thank and congratulate them. Indeed you are the true ambassadors of Makerere University. You have ensured that our flag keeps flying higher and for that, we salute you. Keep it up.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, as I have stated earlier, we do appreciate the support of all our stakeholders who contribute to our success. Allow me to highlight the contributions of some of our Development Partners:

- i. We salute the Government and People of Sweden for investing in research and capacity building at Makerere University and other public universities. Because of this support, there has been tremendous improvement in research management, quality of supervision, teaching, research output and gender mainstreaming at Makerere University.
- ii. Mr. Chancellor Sir, we are grateful to the Carnegie Corporation of New York for supporting Makerere University and other public universities to implement a project aimed at *Building*,

Nurturing and Retaining the Next Generation of African Academics. I am happy to inform you that the Corporation awarded Makerere University a successor grant worth US \$ 2.56 million for phase II, running from October 2013 to September 2016. The grant seeks to increase research capacity in the humanities and social sciences and increase retention of the next generation of academics at Makerere University.

- iii. Makerere University continues to benefit from the generous support of the Royal Kingdom of Norway and its people. We won twelve [12] out of forty-six [46] international projects identified for full funding under the new Norwegian Programme for Capacity Building in Higher Education and Research for Development [NORHED]. With the NORHED funding worth USD \$ 26 million, Makerere University will conduct research on *Health and Equity; Natural Resource Management, Climate Change and Environment; Democratic and Economic Governance; Humanities, Culture, Media and Communication*. I congratulate all members of staff who are involved in raising the research profile of the University and wish them successful implementation of the projects.
- iv. Makerere University appreciates the generous grant from the MasterCard Foundation worth US \$ 21 million, aimed at supporting 1000 academically talented but economically disadvantaged youth from Africa to study at Makerere University. This programme is due to start this year.

We cannot forget the Government of Uganda for its continued support for projects in technology, engineering, science and veterinary medicine, through the Presidential Initiative for Science and Technology.

Additionally, the Government of Uganda is supporting Makerere University and five other institutions to benefit from the Higher Education Science and Technology project. The project will support infrastructure development, equipment, staff development and ICT facilities. We are hopeful that this project will kick-start by the end of this year.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, during the 64th graduation ceremony lasting four (4) days from 28th to 31st January 2014, a total of twelve thousand six hundred and sixteen **[12,616]** candidates will graduate with degrees and diplomas.

Out of this number, **50.3%** are female and **49.7%** are male. A total of **51** candidates of which **23.5%** are female and **76.5%** are male will graduate with doctorate degrees in different disciplines. **244** candidates will graduate with First Class degrees of which **38.5%** are female and **61.5%** are male. One thousand one hundred and ninety two **[1192]** will graduate with Masters degrees of which **38.4%** are female and **61.6%** are male.

The 64th graduation ceremony is unique in two ways. First, **67** of the pioneer students at our Jinja Campus will receive degrees in Information Technology, Business Administration and Development Studies. Of the 67, four **[4]** will receive first class degrees. We congratulate the pioneer students, the Coordinator of Jinja Campus, Professor J. B. Nyakaana together with his team. Second, ten **[10]** pioneers of the Female Scholarship Foundation [FSF] who benefitted from tuition waiver offered by the University are graduating. The Female Scholarship Foundation was established in November 2010 and as a sign of commitment and ownership, Makerere University offered 20 scholarships per year in form of tuition waiver starting with the academic year 2010/2011. This is a gesture of our social responsibility and efforts to ensure equitable access to higher education in Uganda.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, today we present to you a total of four thousand and sixteen **[4016]** candidates from the Colleges of *Health Sciences, Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources and Biosecurity, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences*. There have been several new developments in these Colleges since the last graduation ceremony. Allow me to mention a few:

The College of Health Sciences together with IDI has produced over 50 publications during the course of the year. This has greatly enhanced the research profile of Makerere University. The College has continued to undertake ground-breaking research and innovations which include among others, a study evaluating the efficacy and effectiveness of a Litmus Test aimed at aiding the rapid detection of Ebola and Marburg viruses at community level. The research team is led by Dr. Misaki Wayengera and is being funded by Grand Challenges Canada.

Additionally, a recently completed study at the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) has found that rifampicin, a key drug for treating TB, can dramatically reduce blood levels if administered together with the antimalarial drug commonly known as Coartem. The findings of this study, which have been accepted by the manufacturer (Novartis) and the United States Food and Drug Administration, have led to a change in the product label for Coartem. I also wish to appreciate the great work being done at the Infectious Diseases Institute. We appreciate and thank the Board of Directors led by Prof. Nelson Sewankambo for mobilising resources for the construction of the proposed IDI 'Learning Centre' at Makerere University, which commenced in April 2013. I congratulate Dr. Alex Coutinho, Executive Director of the Infectious Diseases Institute upon the honour of being awarded the *Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize for Medical Services* by the Government of Japan. We also applaud the School of Public Health for its numerous achievements over the course of the year especially through the USAID funded ResilientAfrica Network. I encourage other units in the University to emulate the College of Health Sciences not only in terms of publishing but also in resource mobilisation aimed at academic and infrastructural development.

The College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources and Bio-Security, together with its partners was recently recognized by the Ministry of Public Service for having the most innovative public-private partnership for the year 2013, which focuses on Stamping Out Sleeping Sickness in Northern Uganda. The College received a grant from the Wellcome Trust to lead a multi-institutional and multi-national project in the control of sleeping sickness. The project involves West, East and Central African countries and is being implemented in partnership with the University of Glasgow. Another achievement for the College is the full adoption of the Skills for Animal Production and Employment [SPEDA] programme by the Ministry of Education and Sports as a flagship education model for implementing The Skilling Uganda Strategy. The SPEDA programme is supported by the Government of Uganda through the Presidential initiative.

I am also happy to note that today, for the first time, students from Somali land who have been pursuing their studies from Sheik Technical Veterinary School with support from the College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources and Biosecurity will be awarded diplomas of Makerere University in absentia.

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences received an award from the *African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect* [ANPPCAN] Uganda Chapter in recognition of its contribution to the cause of children, and won a trophy for best performance (in acting and dance choreography) at the Third Hawler International Theater Festival in Northern Iraq. The College signed a Memorandum of Understanding [MoU] with the Federation of Uganda Employers to develop a corporate relationship aimed at improving the Human Resource function in Uganda.

It is also pleasing to note that the research portfolio of the College is growing, having signed a consortium grant contract with the University of California at Berkeley, worth US\$ 20 million. The College is the implementer of 4 out of the 12 NORHED projects that were won by Makerere University. It received two more grants from the Oak Foundation and Wellspring Advisors to support the Centre of Excellence for the Study of the African Child (AfriChild).

The College of Natural Sciences is set to benefit from a USAID funded project on '*Capacity Building in Environmental Management for the Oil Sector (EMOS)*'. The US\$ 6.6 million project will be implemented by Tetra Tech ARD and Texas A&M University to support Ugandan institutions in controlling environmental impacts from oil and gas development in the country. I am happy to report that the College, working with several other partners like the Ugandan manufacturer Astel Diagnostics Ltd, and six other implementing agencies from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, South Sudan, Sudan and Tanzania, successfully developed a new test that can accurately detect the sleeping sickness parasites in tsetse flies. The project is coordinated by Prof. John Kiboko

Enyaru of the Department of Biochemistry and Sports Science and was funded through a five-year research grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, as I conclude, I would like to once again thank all of you for being with us today. I extend special thanks to the Ceremonies Committee for ensuring that the 64th Graduation Ceremony takes place.

To our dear Graduands, as you walk out the gates of Makerere University, remember that Graduation is not the end, but it is the beginning of a new journey. Use the knowledge you have acquired here not only to improve yourselves, but also your fellow human beings including your parents and guardians, as well as the environment surrounding you. I pray that the Almighty God will continue to bless your plans and answer all your prayers. I call upon you to always remember and support this great University, which has nurtured you. Thank you and God bless you.

It is now my honour to invite our Chancellor, Prof. George Mondo Kagonyera, to address the congregation.