

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY



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

ON

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

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

The Chancellor of Makerere University

Honourable Minister of Education and Sports

Honourable Ministers present

Honourable Members of Parliament

Your Lordships the Judges

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

The Leadership of Kampala Capital City Authority

Chairperson and Members of Makerere University Council

Chairperson and Members of Appointments Board

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: On behalf of the Makerere University community, I welcome you to the second day of the 64th Graduation Ceremony of Makerere University. Thank you all for gracing this occasion with your presence. Our dear Graduands today, warm greetings and congratulations upon successfully fulfilling the requirements for the award of degrees and diplomas of Makerere University. To the parents and guardians who have supported the Graduands and made sacrifices throughout the period of their study to this day, thank you. Thank you for supporting and looking

after your children by paying tuition and other fees requirements of the University.

I congratulate all members of staff graduating today upon scaling up your academic achievements. Special congratulations go to the staff graduating with doctorate degrees. Your success is ours too because as a University we shall benefit from 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 dedicated service despite the challenges we face. You have played a positive role in the development of higher education as well as the transformation process of this country.

I salute the 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 recognise and congratulate Hon. Irene Ovonji-Odida for being appointed Vice Chairperson of Makerere University Council. Council and the entire Makerere University will definitely benefit from your wealth of experience.

Mr. Chancellor, Sir; I wish to thank you for your continuous guidance and support to Makerere University. 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 for more than 23 years.

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 endeavor to achieve our vision of *being the leading institution for academic excellence and innovations in Africa*.

On a sad note however, Mr. Chancellor Sir; the Makerere University community has since the last graduation lost several members of staff, former staff and students. These include among others, two former Academic Registrars - The late Bernard Onyango who served Makerere University for 29 years and the Late Gershom Eyoku who served for 18 years.

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.

We have lost many others, whom I cannot mention by name. We pray to the Almighty to grant them eternal peace.

On a positive note, Mr. Chancellor Sir, Makerere University continues to register significant successes. Allow me to report a few of the successes:

- i. Makerere University continues to rise in academic ranking. I am pleased to note with satisfaction that as of today, Makerere University is ranked in 4th position. This is attributed to more research output and publications, as well as innovations taking place here at Makerere University. 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. 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.

- v. In order to improve our financial situation, we intend to develop idle University land and renovate Halls of Residence through the Private Public Partnership model. I appeal to the Private Sector to take advantage of this opportunity to collaborate with Makerere University. I also call upon our Alumni to generously support us in our endeavours to uplift the image of Makerere University.
- vi. 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.
- vii. Mr. Chancellor Sir, I am happy to report that 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, 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. 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 Makerere University received a grant of US \$ 2.56 million 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 is also fortunate to have received a grant of US \$ 21 million from the MasterCard Foundation. The grant will support 1000 disadvantaged youth from Africa to study at Makerere University. This programme is due to start this year.

We cannot forget to thank the Government of Uganda for its continued financial support to Makerere University in general and specifically to the fields of 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 be kick-started by the end of this year.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, during the 64th graduation ceremony, which started yesterday and will end on 31st January 2014, a total of **twelve thousand six hundred and sixteen [12,616]** candidates will graduate with degrees and diplomas of Makerere University.

50.3% of these 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 three ways: **One**, 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 are receiving diplomas of Makerere University in absentia. We congratulate the College for this initiative. **Second**, **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. **Third**, 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 **two thousand three hundred and eighteen [2318]** candidates from the *College of Business and Management Sciences and the College of Computing and Information Sciences*. I am happy to note that the best student in the Sciences is graduating today. **Ms. Sarah Kimala obtained a CGPA of 4.83** in the Bachelor of Information Systems programme offered by the College of Computing and Information Sciences. We congratulate her upon this achievement.

The two Colleges presenting students for graduation today have continued to undertake research relevant to the needs of society.

The College of Business and Management Sciences [CoBAMS] is undertaking a collaborative study on *Gender and Enterprise Development in Africa* with two other Universities, one in Ghana and the other in Kenya. The study's objective is to investigate the differences if any, in enterprise growth and performance between female-owned and male-owned household enterprises. The Center of Population and Applied Statistics (CPAS) continues to conduct research and to contribute to capacity building and enhancement of partnerships and networking for research in the fields of population science, statistics, actuarial science, quantitative economics and business statistics. The College of Business and Management Sciences [CoBAMS] is engaged in collaboration with ACCA in pursuit of the Accounting profession. The ACCA is honouring the best performing candidate in Bachelor of Commerce Accounting option. The candidate is Yiga Henry Matovu, who obtained a CGPA of 4.53.

The College of Computing and Information Sciences [CoCIS] has continued to develop innovative solutions for the improved well-being of society. Students of the College of Computing and Information Sciences have developed several new solutions, which address needs of the society. Our students received the top prize in the 2013 Orange Innovation Awards.

In addition, the College together with a number of education institutions in the region and Norway received funding from the Norwegian Programme for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development (NORHED) to boost its research and innovations in line with the country's development agenda. Through NORHED, the College is implementing two projects:

- HI-TRAIN; Health Informatics Training and Research in East Africa for Improved Health Care. It is aimed at realizing self-sustainable, replicable and scalable Health Informatics training and research programs in East Africa, to help meet the rising Health Informatics capacity and research needs in the region. Under this initiative, 17 staff members from Makerere

University will receive training at PhD, Masters and postgraduate level. This project is based on the premise that health service delivery in the region is still poor yet Health Informatics can play a vital role by enabling better service delivery through ICTs. This study will be conducted in collaboration with the University of Bergen (Norway) and Moi University (Kenya).

- The second project is about improving weather information management in East Africa for effective service provision through the application of suitable ICTs. It is aimed at establishing a Centre for Appropriate Weather Information Management (CAWIM) that will design, implement and supervise improvement in Timeliness, Accuracy and Access of Weather Information in the East African region. This project will go a long way in helping the country address the problems of climate change. The study will be implemented in collaboration with the University of Bergen, University of Juba (South-Sudan), Dar-es-Salaam Institute of Technology (Tanzania) and KTH Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden).

Mr. Chancellor Sir, as I conclude, I would like to thank the entire congregation for choosing to be a part of today's ceremony. Special thanks go to the Makerere University Ceremonies Committee.

To our dear Graduands, your graduation today is the foundation stone for your success in life. The journey towards your success is grounded in the education you have attained. But do not relax your efforts; you have miles ahead of you. The world is yours to conquer just as long as you master the art of appropriately applying the knowledge you have acquired. You will survive and reach your goals in life through continued hard work, flexibility and integrity. I wish you all the best and pray that the Almighty God continues to bless you and your families.

I now have the great pleasure to invite the Chancellor, Prof. George Mondo Kagonyera, to address the congregation. Thank you.