



**REMARKS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR,  
PROF. JOHN DDUMBA-SSENTAMU**

**DURING THE SECOND ANNUAL CONVENTION OF  
THE GREAT LAKES STUDENTS' UNION (GLSU)**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 2014**

**MAKERERE UNIVERSITY MAIN HALL**

- **Our Chief Guest, His Excellency The President of the Republic of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni**
- **Ministers and Members of Parliament present**
- **The Patron and the Executive of the Great Lakes Students' Union**
- **Members of Council, Makerere University**
- **Members of the University Management**
- **The entire Makerere University community**
- **Members of the Great Lakes Students' Union**
- **All Students and Youth present**
- **Distinguished Guests in your various capacities**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen:**

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I take this opportunity to welcome you all to this great institution, Makerere University. I recognize all of you and I thank you for taking off time to join us at the Second Annual Convention of the Great Lakes Students' Union (GLSU).

At this moment, I would like to invite each one of us to join me in welcoming our Chief Guest His Excellency The President of the Republic of Uganda and Visitor of Makerere University, General Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. Your personal presence here today is a testimony of your strong support to the youth not only in Uganda but the entire region. We thank you.

Your Excellency's passionate promotion of Education, Pan-Africanism and Peace in the region is admirable. We appreciate your dedicated efforts in championing the East African Community, through which you would like to promote unity, peace and prosperity for social and economic transformation.

Allow me also to appreciate and thank His Excellency for being passionate about empowering the youth and always giving them advice and counsel on issues critical to their social wellbeing as well as to national development.

On 24<sup>th</sup> April 2014, Your Excellency launched the Students' Loan Scheme, aimed at supporting more youth to acquire higher education. I am hopeful that the under representation in higher education of students of low socio-economic status will be reversed by this Scheme. Your Excellency, achieving higher education is becoming part of one's existence for many young people worldwide. We therefore thank you for this Scheme. However, I am appealing to the Higher Education Students' Financing Board to make sure this Scheme is well implemented so that our youth can access higher education.

I am also happy to note that on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2014, The President launched the Uganda Youth innovation Centre and Export market, a national platform aimed at helping youth in Uganda to add value to local products, promote agricultural export, marketing and research among other activities.

All the aforementioned initiatives are a clear testimony of Your Excellency's commitment to promotion of youth livelihoods and development. We sincerely thank you.

As Makerere University, I would like to thank you, Your Excellency, for all the support you continue to give us in various forms especially through the Presidential Initiative for Science and Technology; as well as the assistance for infrastructural development through the African Development Bank. Through the Presidential Initiative, we have been able to produce cutting edge innovations in the fields of Technology, Design and Development, Academic Records Management, Low-cost Irrigation, Community Wireless Resource Centres, Internet Laboratories, as well as Food Technology, Nutrition, Animal Resources and Veterinary Medicine.

I must point out, Mr. President, that this support is directly benefitting the youth at Makerere University to develop innovative technologies, undertake applied research and create knowledge for the transformation of society in line with the national vision 2040. Makerere University has been and will continue to support Government programmes.

Management, staff and students of Makerere University are aware that due to other pressing National priorities, the Government is unable to fully fund all our needs. That notwithstanding, Your Excellency, Makerere University as an institution has plenty of land in prime locations which we would like to develop. We would therefore, once again, request Your Excellency's support in creating the legal and procedural environment conducive to the establishment of Public Private Partnerships to help us develop our assets into viable income generating facilities. With the establishment of Public Private Partnerships, Your Excellency, Makerere University will be able to attain financial independence and thereby reduce its dependence on Government.

Mr. President, the leadership of key constituencies in the University including staff and students is mostly comprised of youth. It is worth noting that the entire executive of the Makerere University Academic Staff Association (MUASA) led by Dr. Mohammed Kiggundu-Musoke, consists of youth. The Students Guild Executive led by Ivan Bwowe Kakungulu is a group of young people. The youth of Makerere University, who constitute about 80% of the University community, would definitely like to meet with you at a time of your convenience to share their views on matters concerning them and our country.

Allow me at this moment to thank the Patron of the Great Lakes Students' Union, Executives and the organisers of this Convention for coming up with such an important theme focusing on the role of the youth in propelling unity, peace and prosperity in the Great Lakes region.

Your Excellency, as you are aware, the youth are the majority and they do hold great potential to shape the development of our society. Therefore, it is prudent to focus particular attention on understanding, nurturing and supporting the ideas they have. The Great Lakes Students' Union is a brilliant initiative, which brings together the minds of our youth to be able to positively influence not only themselves, but also global unity, peace and prosperity. The Union gives youth the space to discuss issues that affect them and come up with solutions than take up other actions like un-coordinated and dangerous demonstrations. I therefore thank all members, the executive and the patron of the Union for this noble initiative.

I wish to confirm Makerere University's commitment to hosting this annual event and we thank you for choosing us.

Your Excellency, I take this opportunity to thank you once again for gracing this important occasion. I thank all of you for attending this convention.