

**SPEECH BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY,  
PROFESSOR JOHN DDUMBA-SENTAMU ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
INAUGURATION OF THE RENOVATED GARDEN HILL ROAD AT  
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

- **The Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Sports; Hon. Maj. (Rtd.) Jessica Alupo**
  - **Your Excellency the Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China in Uganda; Mr. Zhao Yali**
  - **The Manager of Zhongmei Engineering Group; Mr. Hang Dongling**
  - **Members of University Management present**
  - **Staff and Students of the Confucius Institute**
  - **Distinguished Guests in your respective capacities**
  - **Ladies and Gentlemen: Good evening.**
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I warmly welcome our special guests, the Hon. Minister of Education and His Excellency the Chinese Ambassador to Uganda for honoring our invitation. In the same spirit, I welcome you all to Makerere University and sincerely thank you for gracing us with your presence this evening.

In the pursuit of the Makerere University mission ***to provide innovative teaching, learning, research and services responsive to national and global needs***, Makerere University continues to be a dynamic institution that is open to change and innovation. We are therefore conscious of the demands in the global arena, and as such, we have partnered with reputable bodies/institutions to align our academic programmes to the national and global demands. We strongly value the partnership with the People’s Republic of China and Xiangtan University.

I am pleased to mention that 19<sup>th</sup> December 2014 will always remain a special day for Makerere University. It is on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2014 that the Vice President of the Republic of Uganda officially inaugurated the establishment of the Confucius Institute at Makerere University. The event was witnessed by Your Excellency Zhao Yali and various distinguished guests in the Makerere University Main Hall.

We are indeed grateful to the Confucius Institute Headquarters in Beijing, popularly known as Hanban, for having chosen Makerere University as the only university in Uganda to host the Confucius Institute. We also deeply appreciate the special relationship that we are enjoying with Xiangtan University in China. It is because of the above partnerships that we are here today to witness the fruits of our mutual cooperation. Today we will witness the inauguration of the newly renovated Garden Hill Road and the Award of Certificates to our students at the various levels of learning Chinese as a short course.

The Garden Hill road has been renovated by Zhongmei Engineering Group, a company from the People’s Republic of China on behalf of the

Confucius Institute. I extend my special thanks therefore to Zhongmei Engineering Group for loving the Confucius Institute, Makerere University and Uganda in general. We thank you very much.

I wish to congratulate you our dear Confucius Institute students upon studying the Chinese language. This is a valuable investment; you have acquired knowledge, basics on the Chinese language as well as the Chinese culture. I particularly congratulate the members of staff of Makerere University, the Government officials and our students who fruitfully used the long holiday to gain an additional language. This is what is needed in today's competitive world where jobs are scarce and where knowledge of an international language is always an added advantage. I encourage you to go through all the levels of learning the Chinese language in order to gain fluency.

Aware of the Chinese investments in Uganda, I encourage Makerere University students to study the Chinese language and culture in order to tap into the vast opportunities that are bound to come with such partnerships. I take this opportunity to invite all our students and the general public to learn the Chinese language, which is being taught at an affordable cost here at Makerere University. It would definitely be a worthy investment for you.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this structure housing the Institute was formerly my residence as University Professor before becoming Vice Chancellor. When the opportunity arose for the establishment of a Confucius Institute at Makerere University with a need for a home to house it I was very happy to recommend the allocation of this house. However, this space is not sufficient and is only for the beginning. I therefore wish to urge all our partners to continue mobilising resources to help us construct a structure, which will accommodate the increasing number of students coming to study Chinese. Space for expansion is available at free cost. I thank you in advance.

I commend the good job done by the Chinese Embassy in Uganda. Thank you, Your Excellency, for your regular support to the Confucius Institute and indeed to Makerere University. Allow me to pay special tribute to our Hon. Minister of Education, for your continued support to Makerere University. We cannot thank you enough for all the support you give to us.

May I also congratulate the Directors and staff of the Confucius Institute for the good work going on here. University Management greatly appreciates your efforts.

Ladies and Gentlemen; I thank you all, as *We Build for the Future*.

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY.