

**REMARKS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROF. JOHN DDUMBA-  
SSENTAMU AT THE HIGH-LEVEL POLICY DIALOGUE ON  
UGANDA'S ECONOMY [DIRECTIONS, PROSPECTS AND  
CHALLENGES]**

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2015, MAIN HALL**

- **The Country Director, United Nations Development Programme, UNDP**
- **The Permanent Secretary/Secretary to the Treasury, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development**
- **Our Keynote Speaker and Deputy Governor of Bank of Uganda, Dr. Louis Kasekende**
- **The Head of Delivery Unit, Office of Prime Minister, Dr. Ezra Suruma**
- **Members of University Management**
- **College Principals Present**
- **The Dean, School of Economics**
- **Distinguished Panelists**
- **Scholars present in your respective capacities**
- **All Invited Guests**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen: I do recognise each one of you.**

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I greet you and extend warm regards from the entire Makerere University community. We are honoured by your presence at this event and thank you for reserving your precious time to be with us.

I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP]; the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the School of Economics, Makerere University, for organising this policy dialogue bringing together experts from Academia, Government, Development Partners and the Private Sector. This debate on our economy is very important because it connects those with ideas to those with the resources and ability to transform them into solutions and strategies for transformation of our society.

Uganda is reported to be among the fastest growing economies in the world having registered an average GDP growth rate of 7% over the course of the past two decades.

This is quite impressive. However, there is still need for broader understanding of the macro-economic dynamics and socio-economic factors shaping Uganda's development agenda, which remains critical. As the nation struggles to achieve the desired Vision 2040, there is urgency in the need and demand for evidence-based research that informs formulation of pro-poor policies. This is the kind of research that will promote sustainable human development in Uganda.

This Policy Dialogue on *Uganda's Economy with regards to Directions, Prospects and Challenges* is subsequently timely. It is aimed at bridging the gap between formulation and implementation of the national development agenda as enshrined in the revised National Development Plan II and the national Vision 2040. Today's debate seeks to examine the relationship between policies, their implementation and usefulness to society towards overall transformation of livelihoods.

It is my view that Uganda has adequate and well-researched policies, which are in line with our national prospects. However, we still have challenges. There is poor implementation of the policies, inadequate monitoring mechanisms and poor governance at various levels characterised by lack of public accountability.

In designing policies, it is my view that we need to focus more efforts on human resource development. Indeed, research shows that countries with low human resource capacity have reduced ability to develop and prosper. As a country, we need to re-focus our efforts towards building a strong and quality human resource base that will contribute to overall improvement of livelihoods. I must point out that there is need to develop an effective incentive system to attract and retain our human resources. It is well known that where incentive structures are poor, particularly in our public sector, service provision is equally insufficient. We therefore need to transform the incentive system in order to push for effective policy implementation.

As stakeholders, we have a responsibility to ensure that the policies developed are in line with national priorities. These policies should aim at addressing today's challenges and opportunities. It is us to take the lead in setting the development agenda and design policies and programmes to transform Uganda.

It is therefore my expectation that the proceedings from this debate will inform Government on how to effectively implement the current national agenda in order to attain the new global Sustainable Development Goals.

Once again, I extend our most sincere thanks to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] for partnering with Makerere University in this endeavor. We need to organise more of these debates and I strongly urge the School of Economics to be at the forefront of such endeavours. We are most grateful for the financial support, which facilitated successful preparation of this event, and we look forward to continued partnership. I further take this opportunity to thank Dr. Louis Kasekende, Deputy Governor of Bank of Uganda, for accepting to deliver today's keynote address.

We look forward to learning from your wide experience and expertise in the banking sector. May I also use this same opportunity to thank you for donating a variety of books to the Makerere University School of Economics. We are grateful.

It is now my pleasure and honour to declare this dialogue officially opened.

*We build for the future.*