

REMARKS OF THE ACTING VICE-CHANCELLOR AT THE FIRST
ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE AT MAKERERE
UNIVERSITY

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2015, MAIN HALL, 5:00 PM

- **The Guest of Honour**
- **Your Excellency the Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to Uganda**
- **The President of Xiangtan University**
- **Members of University Management present**
- **The Directors of the Confucius Institute at Makerere University**
- **Distinguished Guests from the People’s Republic of China and Xiangtan University**
- **Members of Staff and Students of Makerere University**
- **All Invited Guests**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen in your respective capacities:** Good evening and welcome to this event marking the first anniversary of the Confucius Institute at Makerere University.

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I wish to begin by welcoming our Chief Guest, Hon. Prof. Sandy Stevens Tickodri-Togboa, who is representing the Rt. Hon Prime Minister of the Republic of- Uganda. As Minister of State for Higher Education, Science and Technology; Prof. Tickodri-Togboa has consistently provided support to Makerere University. We thank you for this and for accepting to grace this event as Guest of Honour.

I welcome H.E. Mr. Zhao Yali, Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to Uganda. Your Excellency, we warmly welcome you and thank you for honoring this event with your presence.

I further extend a very special welcome to the President of Xiangtan University, Prof. Huang Yunqing. Makerere University sincerely appreciates your personal presence at the first anniversary of the Confucius Institute at Makerere University.

We do attach great value to our longstanding partnership with your University, which continues to support our mandate especially through capacity building programmes including student/staff exchange and training programmes at different levels.

Last year on 19th December, we gathered here to celebrate the inauguration of the Confucius Institute at Makerere University. It was an excellent function that left the Institute with a big task of living up to the expectations of many people that attended the function.

I am glad to state that Makerere University is very impressed and proud of what the Institute has achieved in its first year of existence. Today's celebration is worth making because of the good work going on at the Institute. Therefore, on behalf of University Management, I commend the Directors and staff of the Institute for your diligence, commitment and selflessness over the past year.

The Makerere University Strategic Plan specifies *Internationalisation* as a major crosscutting issue that impacts the activities of the University. It recognises that the provision of higher education today is global in nature. We therefore deliberately integrate international aspects into our core functions of teaching and learning, research and innovations and knowledge transfer partnerships and networking.

It is upon this basis that we are strongly invested in our current partnership with Xiangtan University and the People's Republic of China to further strengthen the teaching of Chinese language and culture at Makerere University. We recognise that Chinese language/culture is among the fastest growing in today's market economy and has been named among the official languages used by the United Nations during its deliberations.

I am happy to note that Makerere University offers Chinese as one of the subjects for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Social Sciences.

We now have a Confucius Institute fully dedicated to the teaching of Chinese to all students and members of the general public who may be interested in the language/culture. This has created an avenue for students and the public to acquire additional international cultural training, thereby making them more attractive and unique for today's job market.

Makerere University sincerely appreciates the efforts and generosity of the Government and People of the Republic of China in our endeavours to achieve international standards and responsiveness to global needs. We thank you for providing us a Director and eight (8) teachers for the Confucius Institute who are working with Prof. Oswald Ndoleriire, the Co-Director of the Institute. Together they have been able to move activities of the Institute. I wish to further extend sincere thanks to the Chinese Embassy in Uganda and the different Chinese companies represented here today for your continuing support to the Confucius Institute at Makerere University. I cannot forget to thank Dr. Yu. You are our colleague, friend and champion. Your continuing support is priceless to us and we thank you very much. The milestones we have been able to achieve are because of the support from you all. We therefore thank you for putting aside your resources and time to support the Institute.

Aware of the space challenges the Institute is facing due to the increasing number of the population interested in learning Chinese, I wish to state that Makerere University is ready to avail space for expansion, to set up a structure as big as the needs are. I therefore call upon the friends of Makerere University and the Confucius Institute to support us in our efforts to put up a structure that will accommodate the growing needs of the Institute.

Once again, I welcome you all to this event marking the first anniversary of the Confucius Institute at Makerere University. I wish you a nice celebration and the best in the years ahead.

Thank you. *We Build for the Future.*