



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

ADDRESS BY THE CHANCELLOR

PROFESSOR EZRA SURUMA

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 66TH GRADUATION CEREMONY

OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

TUESDAY 19TH JANUARY, 2016

The Honourable Minister of Education and Sports

Honourable Ministers present

Honourable Members of Parliament

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Your Lordships the Judges of the Judicature

Religious Leaders

Your Worship the Mayor, Kampala Capital City Authority

Representatives of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies

Chancellors and former Chancellors present

Chairperson and Members of Makerere University Council

The ViceChancellor and your Management team

Former Vice Chancellors and Management Present

Vice Chancellors, Rectors and Principals of other Universities and Institutions

Members of the University Senate

Members of Staff of Makerere University

Parents and Guardians

Graduands

The Media Fraternity

Ladies and Gentlemen:

1.1 Congratulatory Statement to graduands

It gives me great joy to congratulate you our graduands, your parents and sponsors upon your graduation today. As graduates of Makerere University, you must now go out today into a bigger world that is filled with numerous trials as well as opportunities for great triumph. Your

graduation means that you have used your time at Makerere University successfully to build a foundation on which much of your future success will depend. But a foundation is not the whole building. Your labor and creative imagination must continue to complete what you have been preparing for all the years that you have spent here.

You have shown the toughness, resilience and perseverance required to complete a great course. Now go out and prove to the whole world that your degree is not just a piece of paper but the evidence of a creative and enduring spirit and an intellect dedicated to excellence and courage in service to your family and to all mankind. The quality and quantity of your convictions, commitment and creativity will largely define the value of your contribution.

Your knowledge, your commitment and your convictions are the light to show the way for a new generation of Ugandans who yearn for a better life and a better country. Do not let them down. Do your part. Be the best and the brightest star wherever you find yourself in the length and breadth of this land. Contrary to the commonly held view, Uganda offers almost unlimited opportunity to contribute to the betterment of the human condition. If we embrace the spirit of the Uganda martyrs and all the heroes and freedom fighters whose sacrifices laid the seeds of freedom, you too will help to create a nation whose present and future justice and prosperity will be greater than what it is today. Do not look to others to build a prosperous Uganda. It is your duty and your responsibility and your graduation today has thrust you into the relatively small class of the Ugandan elite that are destined to lead.

I wish you well in this great journey beyond the great lecture halls of Makerere University.

1.2 Support to Research and Innovations

As highlighted by the Vice Chancellor in his speech, Makerere University continues to shine in as far as research and innovations, as proven by the latest rankings by the Times Higher Education. I congratulate the entire Makerere University community upon this achievement and applaud the

staff and students for continuing to come up with cutting edge research and innovations for the transformation of communities. I am confident of an even brighter future in as far as our research is concerned and with our combined efforts, attaining Makerere's vision is well within our reach.

In the same spirit, I thank all our development partners both at national and international levels for supporting research at this great institution. Your support aimed at improving not only particular areas of research but also supporting our administrative functions has been nothing short of timely. That notwithstanding the demand for quality research to influence our academic functions and national development programmes can only mean that we need more funding. I therefore call upon the Government, Private Sector and all development-minded agencies and individuals to heed our plea for greater support to research through funding.

1.3 A call to a higher purpose

I wish to encourage all teachers and students to be increasingly committed to a higher moral purpose for themselves, their country and the entire human community. I will continually pray and urge every student, every teacher and every staff to commit their hearts and lives to a better society. Academic excellence must be born out of the desire and conviction to improve society. It is not just for self or pride that we toil. We toil so that our brothers and sisters and children will have a better life. And those who are most gifted must give the most. Those who teach at Makerere and those who graduate from Makerere must lead the country in finding the solutions that are so urgently and desperately needed. This is the spirit that I would wish to see pervading the Makerere University community.

1.4 Concluding Remarks

As I conclude my remarks, I appeal to the Makerere University community to lead in advancing knowledge to find peaceful solutions to problems. The tradition of vigorous debate based on evidence should dominate academic discourse and set an example for the rest of Uganda

on how to find peaceful solutions to our problems. Opinions must be backed by evidence and not merely emotions. Above all, let us respect each other in spite of our backgrounds, religions or ethnic identities. Let us all seek to build the beloved community in which we can all peacefully and lovingly coexist in learning and harmony.

I thank you all for your kind attention, **FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY**