

MAKERERE



UNIVERSITY

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 66TH GRADUATION
CEREMONY OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

FRIDAY, 22ND JANUARY, 2016

FREEDOM SQUARE

- **Hon. Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Sports**
- **Hon. Ministers present**
- **Hon. Members of Parliament**
- **Your Lordships the Judges**
- **Members of the Diplomatic Corps**
- **Religious Leaders**
- **The Chairperson and Members of University Council**
- **The Chairperson and Members of the Appointments Board**
- **Fellow Vice Chancellors, Rectors and Principals of Institutions of Higher Learning**
- **Former Vice Chancellors**
- **Members of University Management, Senate, Staff and Students**
- **Parents and Guardians**
- **Our Graduands**
- **Members of the Media Fraternity**
- **Distinguished Guests in your Respective Capacities**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen:** I warmly welcome you to the final day of Makerere University's 66th Graduation Ceremony, which started on Tuesday. I would like to thank you for honouring our invitation and being with us through the four days of the ceremony.

On Monday, January 18, 2016, we held the installation ceremony of our new Chancellor, Prof. Ezra Suruma. Prof. Suruma is a distinguished scholar and statesman with a wealth of experience in the fields of economics, finance and banking. He is a Professor of Economics with a doctorate degree.

As Makerere University, we are excited to welcome yet another distinguished personality to this great institution. Prof. Suruma comes from the world of academia and has a wealth of experience as a leader at various levels of society, both nationally and internationally. He therefore brings with him unique insights and perspectives, from which Makerere University is eager to learn as we continue on our journey in search of excellence towards achieving our vision "*To be the leading institution for academic excellence and innovations in Africa.*" Prof. Ezra Suruma, you are most welcome.

I extend a very special welcome to our graduands today, from the College of Business and Management Sciences and the College of Computing and Information Sciences. Congratulations on reaching this day of achievement! The knowledge you have acquired is for the benefit of yourselves; it is for the benefit of your families; it is for the benefit of your communities and; it is for the benefit of the nation at large. Graduation is not an end. It is the first milestone in your life. You owe your success to your parents, guardians and sponsors who have financed your studies and have been there for you. I therefore take this opportunity to sincerely thank them for their support both financial and moral.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, over the past three days, we have been privileged to update you on some key developments in the University, in relation to our three core functions of *Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovations* as well as *Partnerships and Networking*. These

developments and indeed all our efforts serve to fulfill the goal of Makerere University's current strategic plan. The strategy is to reposition Makerere University by utilising her competencies to boost governance, financing and human resources development, in order to support our mission of providing innovative teaching, learning, research and services responsive to national and global needs.

Amidst the several challenges facing the higher education sector in Uganda, particularly inadequate financing, Makerere University has remained consistent in delivering her mandate. Mr. Chancellor Sir, I wish to note that we are currently ranked in third position on the African continent, according to the latest Times Higher Education University Rankings.

80% of the research output in Uganda is from Makerere University. The top five most published and cited researchers in the region are from Makerere University. This is because our staff have always remained focused on their different roles and responsibilities even amidst difficulties. I therefore wish to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all members of staff of Makerere University for working together to keep us among the leading universities in the region.

Allow me at the same time, Mr. Chancellor Sir, to congratulate all members of staff from the two Colleges presenting graduands today, who have attained different academic and professional achievements over the course of the past year. We congratulate you on your milestones and I strongly encourage others to do the same.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, by the end of this 66th graduation ceremony, which ends today, a total of **Fourteen Thousand, Three Hundred and Eighteen (14,318) students will receive degrees and diplomas in various disciplines. 49.6% of these are female and 50.4% are male.** We are happy to note the increasing equality in the number of female to male graduands this year. It is also important to note that our students have continued to excel in their studies, with a total of **286 attaining first class degrees this year.**

I am happy to announce that the overall best student in the sciences is Mr. Aine Brian Willy from the College of Computing and Information Sciences. He is graduating today with a Bachelor of Science in Information Technology in which he attained a Cumulative Grade Point Average of 4.84. Mr. Aine Brian Willy, congratulations to you and your parents upon this excellent performance. I further congratulate the College of Computing and Information Sciences for your diligent work, which has led to this achievement.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I wish to update you on a few developments in the two colleges graduating students today. I am pleased to inform you that in February 2015, Makerere University launched the proposed Mwai Kibaki Endowed Chair in Economics to be housed in the School of Economics under the **College of Business and Management Sciences.** It is meant to promote research in the field of economics. It is expected that it will serve as a conduit through which resources can be generated for financial viability of the College. During the

same occasion, the School of Economics, on recommendation of University Council, was officially renamed as the Mwai Kibaki School of Economics.

Last year in October 2015, the University also launched the Professor Emmanuel Tumusiime-Mutebile Distinguished Chair (MDC) in Monetary Policy, Banking & Finance and the Tumusiime-Mutebile Center of Excellence (TMCE) for private sector development. The endowed Chair will be hosted in the School of Economics under College of Business and Management Sciences in collaboration with Makerere University Private Sector Forum. I take this opportunity to thank the Makerere University Private Sector Forum for its efforts in creating linkages between academia and the private sector.

In November 2015, the School of Economics hosted a high-level policy dialogue on “*Uganda’s Economy, Challenges, Directions and Prospects*”, aimed at strengthening the links between academia and policy makers. I am glad to inform you that going forward, this will become an annual event. I take this opportunity to thank the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for partnering with us.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the College of Business and Management Sciences has established several new strategic partnerships, for different purposes of research, training, internships, staff and student exchanges as well as knowledge transfer.

- i) The College has a partnership with the World Bank Uganda country office through which researchers from the School of Economics will co-author one of the World Bank’s flagship publications titled *The Economic Update*. This follows the School’s participation in authoring the 6th Economic Update, which was launched in September 2015.
- ii) It has an agreement with the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences of Stellenbosch University, South Africa, for collaboration in teaching, learning, research, academic exchange and outreach events. Through this collaboration, Makerere University will receive two PhD scholarships annually for the next five years to support staff development.
- iii) Additionally, the College has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies of Kobe University in Japan to promote joint research; exchange of faculty members and researchers.
- iv) It also has a partnership between the School of Economics and the Ministry of Local Government to implement and evaluate the *Inclusive Sustainable New Communities* (ISNC) project.

- v) There is collaboration between the School of Statistics and Planning and Iowa State University for research on “The Improvement of the Collection and Management of Data from Administrative Sources”.
- vi) In the course of the year, the Development Bank of Southern Africa has provided funds to the tune of US\$ One million to support the Pan African Master of Public Infrastructure Management (MPIM) programme.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the college has continued to benefit from financial support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Nairobi, the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) based in Namibia, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) in Harare and the World Bank.

I am further pleased to inform you that the African Development Bank has provided a grant of US\$ 350,000 to the School of Statistics and Planning for data needs in the priority areas of infrastructure development, regional integration, private sector development, governance and accountability, skills and technology development, among others. We sincerely appreciate and thank the College for these achievements. I would also like to thank our development partners for assisting the College.

The College of Business and Management Sciences will present One Thousand Six Hundred and Seventy Nine (1679) candidates for graduation today. Two (2) will receive doctorates and Two Hundred Twenty Seven (227) will be awarded masters degrees.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, **the College of Computing and Information Sciences** continues to undertake a number of collaborations and mentoring staff and students in developing applicable solutions relevant to national and international development. These innovations cut across e-Health, e-Agriculture, e-Government and e-Education.

The College is undertaking various research in the areas of Machine learning, Security, ICT for development, Model and web based systems, E-Learning, Mobile computing and communication, Documentary Heritage, Records Management Education, Information Policy and Publishing, Knowledge Management and ICTs for Libraries, among others.

I am pleased to inform you that among the numerous efforts of the College is the development of mobile applications that allow for emergency response, access to information services and reporting of cases of violence against women. The College is also working on an automated system using smart phones to capture images, diagnose disease with computer vision techniques and provide real time map information, as well as extensions into banana diseases and automated pest survey. We congratulate the College upon these achievements.

The College of Computing and Information Sciences will be presenting One Thousand Four Hundred Fourty Four (1444) candidates for graduation of whom One (1) will receive a doctorate. One Thousand Three Hundred and Sixty One (1361) will be awarded masters degrees.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, as I conclude, I would like to once again congratulate the graduands on attaining your degrees and diplomas. This is your foundation on which your success in life will be built. You should know that not everyone has the opportunity to receive the quality of training you have undergone while here at Makerere University.

I urge you to keep on with the hard work as you begin your next journey. The cycle of life is such that one must continuously be proactive, while exercising great patience and diligence, in order to achieve desired success. You should remember the people who have always supported you, especially you parents and guardians. Have respect for them.

As you get out of the gates of Makerere, always remember your alma mater. I wish you God's blessings and his continued guidance.

I wish to extend sincere appreciation to all our stakeholders who support us tirelessly. These include the students, parents and guardians, development partners, Government, the media fraternity and all members of civil society, all friends and well wishers. We thank you and value the trust you place in us to provide quality higher education.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I wish to extend appreciation to the numerous parties that have ensured the success of the 66th graduation ceremony. On behalf of University Management, I sincerely thank the Ceremonies Committee chaired by Prof. Anthony Mugisha for all the preparatory groundwork and actions throughout the ceremony. I am aware that there were some challenges but we were able to overcome them.

I thank the Academic Registrar, Mr. Alfred Masikye Namoah and your team for supporting the graduation process. In a special way, I would like to pay tribute to the ICT division in the Department of the Academic Registrar led by Mr. Michael Barongo and the Certificates and Ceremonies division led by Mrs. Margaret Etuusa for a job well done. Similarly, I thank Makerere University Printery and specifically Mr. Joseph Edmund Kirabo, for all the work you put into producing the paperwork and materials for this graduation ceremony. We sincerely appreciate your support.

I thank the Chairperson of Makerere University Convocation, Dr. Tanga Odoi, and his team for supporting the graduation ceremony. I extend special thanks to the Chancellor's procession including the Chairperson of University Council, Eng. Dr. Charles Wana-Etyem and the Chairperson of the Appointments Board, Mr. Bruce Balaba Kabaasa for being with us throughout the 66th graduation ceremony.

We thank the Uganda Police Band and our students from the School of Liberal and Performing Arts for adding colour to the graduation ceremony with wonderful music and performances. I further thank the Uganda Police Force and in particular the Chief Security Officer, Mr. Jackson Mucunguzi for ensuring that we have a peaceful ceremony.

Allow me also to thank the Inspector General of Police, Gen. Kale Kayihura, for the role he has played in making sure that there is peace in Makerere University.

Finally, Ladies and Gentlemen, I congratulate Prof. Ezra Suruma upon successfully presiding over his maiden graduation ceremony as Chancellor of Makerere University. Prof. Suruma, thank you very much indeed for your exceptional performance of the 66th graduation ceremony of Makerere University.

Sir, it is with great honour and privilege that I now invite you to make your address. ***We Build for the Future.***