

**MAKERERE**



**UNIVERSITY**

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 66<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION  
CEREMONY OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

**WEDNESDAY, 20<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2016**

**FREEDOM SQUARE**

- **The Chancellor, Prof. Ezra Suruma**
- **The Hon. Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Sports, Hon. Maj (Rtd) Jessica Alupo**
- **Honourable Ministers present**
- **The Katikiro of Buganda, Ow’ekitibwa Charles Peter Mayiga and your wife**
- **Honourable Members of Parliament present**
- **Your Lordships the Judges**
- **Members of the Diplomatic Corps**
- **H.E Archbishop Augustine Kasujja - The Apostolic Nuncio to Nigeria**
- **All Religious Leaders present**
- **Chairperson and Members of Makerere University Council**
- **Chairperson and Members of the Appointments Board**
- **My colleagues, Vice Chancellors, Rectors and Principals of Institutions of Higher Learning**
- **Former Vice Chancellors**
- **Members of Management, Senate and the entire Makerere University Community**
- **Parents and Guardians**
- **Our dear Graduands**
- **The Media**
- **All Invited Guests in your Distinguished Capacities**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen:**

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I am honoured to welcome you to the second day of the 66<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony of Makerere University. I recognise all dignitaries present including Ministers present, the Katikiro of Buganda, Ow’ekitibwa Charles Peter Mayiga, H.E Archbishop Augustine Kasujja and Members of Parliament. Thank you for gracing this occasion with your presence.

I once again welcome and congratulate our new Chancellor, Prof. Ezra Suruma. Mr. Chancellor Sir, I take this opportunity to renew the assurances of our highest consideration and commitment to work with you to overcome the challenges of our University. I am quite confident that the Chancellor, Council, Management, Senate, Members of Staff, Staff Associations, Students and Government can work together to overcome the challenges of our institution.

A graduation ceremony is one of the few opportunities that graduands, parents, guardians and members of staff come together to celebrate the combined efforts of their work. I therefore congratulate all of you in this congregation.

I extend special thanks to the parents and guardians of our graduands. You are our key stakeholders and I would like to thank you for the time and resources you have invested in your children to acquire quality education at Makerere University.

Our dear graduands, I extend sincere congratulations upon your achievements today. Your success is our success. Together, we have walked the journey towards fulfilling our mission “to provide innovative teaching, learning, research and services responsive to national and global needs”. It is a joint

responsibility and we thank you for doing your part. It is our sincere hope that you will make the best use of the skill-sets you have received from Makerere University. I also take this opportunity to congratulate our members of staff graduating today.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I am happy to inform you that as we celebrate our 66<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony, Makerere University continues to excel in its core functions of *teaching and learning, research as well as innovations and knowledge transfer partnerships and networking.*

Today, Makerere University is ranked in third position on the African continent according to the January 2016 Times Higher Education University Rankings report. The university has been able to attain this achievement because of our dedicated staff who are undertaking research in various areas.

I would therefore like to extend my sincere appreciation to all of you. Despite the several challenges we have in our midst, you have continued to serve this university diligently.

Your commitment in preparing our students for a better tomorrow cannot be underestimated.

I congratulate members of staff who have achieved various academic and professional ranks and ask you to continue with the good work you are doing for Makerere University.

While we take stock of our achievements, let us humbly remember the staff as well as students, relatives and friends we have lost over the past year. These include, among others, Assoc. Prof. Charles Opolot Okurut, formerly in the College of Education and External Studies. We pray for their souls to rest in eternal peace.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, allow me, at this juncture, to appreciate the continuing support from our development partners. I extend sincere gratitude to the MasterCard Foundation for providing support to educate 1,000 youth from Africa through its global Scholars Programme. I also appreciate the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) for its continuing support towards research and knowledge for development.

A new agreement for continued collaboration was signed on November 3, 2015, aimed at '*Strengthening Public Universities to Generate Knowledge and Promote Research Uptake for National and Regional Development*' The new phase for the period 2015-2020 is expected to strengthen and deepen the achievements of the previous phases.

I equally acknowledge the support we have received from Germany, Turkey, Nigeria, China, Japan and other partners this past year towards training and research in form of scholarships, exchange programmes and equipment. We greatly value these partnerships.

Through you, Mr. Chancellor Sir, I extend our sincere appreciation to His Excellency The President and the Government of Uganda for all the support extended to Makerere University in various forms, most notably the Presidential Initiative for Science and Technology. We are further grateful for the Presidential Pledge to support the construction of a Perimeter Wall around the university campus. This, we believe, will go a long way in improving security on campus.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I am pleased to inform you that Makerere University has continued on its search of diversifying the financial resource base through the Makerere University Endowment Fund whose Board of Trustees is chaired by Dr. Martin Aliko and the Makerere University Holding Company, with a Board of Directors chaired by Mr. Charles Mbire. The Makerere University Endowment is championing the development of a Students Centre at an estimated cost of US\$ 15 million. I take this opportunity to appreciate the support we have received from our partners including a donation of UGX 100m from *dfcu* bank.

Key to the success of our strategies to achieve financial wellbeing is our large Alumni base. I therefore call on our alumni to assist your alma mater. Dear graduands, today you join the distinguished Makerere University alumni. It is the alumni that have engineered change and inspired progress in many of the world-class universities, by giving back to their alma mater. I urge you to do the same for Makerere University. Together, we can bring Makerere University to the first position in Africa.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, Makerere University is graduating a total of **Fourteen Thousand, Three Hundred and Eighteen (14,318) students** during this 66<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony. Of these, **49.6% 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. Out of the total graduating number, **64 will be awarded Doctorate degrees of whom 66% are male and 34% are female**.

Of the same total, **One Thousand, One Hundred and Fifty Nine (1,159) Students will receive masters degrees in various disciplines**. A total of **286 first class degrees** will also be awarded.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, today we present to you graduands from two colleges; i) the **College of Humanities and Social Sciences**; and ii) the **College of Education and External Studies**.

**The College of Humanities and Social Sciences** has established several partnerships over the past year. The college was able to attract support from the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia towards the teaching of Arabic Language. With financial support from the King Abdalla Bin Abdul Aziiz International Centre for Arabic Language, twenty (20) students in this College and the College of Education and External Studies will receive training in Arabic language and culture. I extend our sincere gratitude to the King Abdalla Bin Abdul Aziiz International Centre for this generous support aimed at supporting our core functions; particularly, teaching and learning as well as knowledge transfer partnerships and networking.

Similarly, the College continues to benefit from a very fruitful collaboration with the Government of the People's Republic of China. Since the establishment of the Confucius Institute in December 2014, 700 students, including staff and members of the general public have completed various levels of learning Chinese and many more are yet to complete. I extend our gratitude to all our partners supporting the operations of the Institute including Zhongmei Engineering Group Limited, a Chinese firm which renovated the Garden Hill Road to the Institute.

The College, through the Department of Literature, hosted a very successful 2<sup>nd</sup> Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies Conference. The three-day historic event attracted 120 scholars from the East African region, Southern Africa, West Africa, Europe and North America. On behalf of University Management, I extend sincere thanks and congratulations to the College.

I am also happy to report that the Department of Literature is organising a one-day symposium to celebrate fifty years of Okot P'Bitek's Song of Lawino. This event will be part of a larger departmental programme to celebrate Uganda's literary scholars. ***The highlight of this event will be the launch of Omulanga gwa Lawino, the translation of Song of Lawino into the Luganda Language by Professor Abasi Kiyimba.*** He follows Ben Walakira's translation of Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart into a Luganda version titled ***Eby'edda bisasika***. We therefore warmly congratulate Professor Abasi Kiyimba upon this achievement of *Omulanga gwa Lawino*.

Furthermore, the college, through the School of Women and Gender Studies, launched an outreach training programme aimed at creating a formidable force of intellectuals with the ability to comprehend gender dynamics, plan and advocate for gender equality from an informed position. I call upon Government and other organisations to embrace this programme for better gender planning and budgeting.

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences will present Three Thousand and Sixty Four (3064) candidates for graduation of whom 60% are female and 40% are male. Nine (9) will receive doctorates and One Hundred Fifty Five (155) will be awarded masters degrees.

**For the College of Education and External Studies,** Mr. Chancellor Sir, I am pleased to inform you that University Council recently passed the Open Distance and E- Learning (ODEL) Policy to guide the implementation of open, distance and e-learning programmes and the transformation of the present Department of Open and Distance Learning into an Institute of Open, Distance and eLearning. The Institute will coordinate all Open Distance and E- Learning programmes in the University.

In addition, I am happy to report that the College has championed the development of the first ever online programme at Makerere University. A Masters programme in Instructional Design and Technology has been

developed to fill the human resource gap for online education teachers, practitioners, managers and researchers in Uganda and beyond. This is one of the innovative initiatives being undertaken by the College to address the challenge of the massification of higher education in our country and the region. The Bachelor of Youth Development Work has been developed to run as an online programme.

The College of Education and External Studies will be presenting One Thousand Two Hundred and Ninety One (1291) candidates for graduation of whom 51% are female and 49% are male. Four (4) will receive doctorates and Thirty One (31) will be awarded masters degrees.

As I conclude, Mr. Chancellor Sir, allow me to once again congratulate our graduands. Today is your day to remember, it is your day to celebrate and it is your day to cherish. You have earned it and we wish you a wonderful and joyful celebration.

However, I call upon all of you to gainfully apply the knowledge you have acquired. Remember this knowledge is not yours alone. It is for the benefit of the entire society. Use it to overcome the challenges within your community and the nation at large.

You should remember that graduation is not the end but the beginning of a new journey and it is a means of achieving a better tomorrow. May God bless you all.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I now take the honour and privilege to invite you to address the congregation.

***We Build for the future.***