



**MAKERERE**

**UNIVERSITY**

**ADDRESS BY THE CHANCELLOR**

**PROFESSOR EZRA SURUMA**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 67<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY  
OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

**THURSDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2017**

**Honorable Ministers**  
**Honorable Members of Parliament**  
**Members of the Diplomatic Corps**  
**Your Lordships the Judges of the Judicature**  
**Religious Leaders**  
**The Leadership of Kampala Capital City Authority**  
**Representatives of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies**  
**Chancellors and former Chancellors**  
**Chairperson and Members of Makerere University Council**  
**Vice-Chancellor and Members of the University Management Team**  
**Former Vice Chancellors**  
**Former University Management Staff**  
**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**  
**Distinguished Visitors**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen:**

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### **A Word of Appreciation:**

1. It is a great honor and privilege for me to welcome you all to the 67<sup>th</sup> Graduation of Makerere University. I thank the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Ddumba Ssentamu, for his remarks and for all the arrangements made by the administration to organize this graduation ceremony. Thank you very much indeed.
2. I also recognize the contributions of the Makerere University Council, the Senate, the students, the development partners and all stakeholders of Makerere University. I thank the academic staff, the administration and the support staff whose efforts have helped to bring the graduands this far. They have done their part to guide you through the complexities of academic life. Please always remember their contribution to your struggle.

3. Today is the Third Session of the Makerere University 67<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony and we are conferring degrees on graduands from Makerere University Business School (MUBS). To all of you the graduands, I say thank you for your hard work. Thank you for enduring to the end. Thank you for relative self-control in the midst of many temptations to abandon academic work and pursue the very many temptations outside the classrooms. The qualities of commitment, discipline and endurance are the most important certification of your readiness to face the world.
4. The degree we are awarding you today is a letter to the world. The letter is addressed “TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN”. It says that the bearer of this letter, this certificate, was “processed” at Makerere University. For a period of three or more years, he/she was subjected to numerous hardships including mental torture, financial deprivation, social alienation and continuous intellectual harassment otherwise known as tests and examinations. Having survived all those hardships, we have come to the conclusion that he or she is fit for survival challenges anywhere in the world.
5. During your many years of academic struggle, you received significant social, emotional and financial support from parents, guardians, relatives, friends, religious leaders and fellow students. Many among you have been supported by generous donors who provided you stipends and scholarships. Please join me in thanking all those men and women whose love and sacrifice has contributed to your achievements today.

***Makerere University Business School***

6. The Vice Chancellor in his addresses to the graduation sessions on Tuesday, yesterday and today, highlighted a long list of the Makerere University’s achievements. They range from domestic to regional, continental and global. There is no doubt that Makerere University is a significant player on the continental and global academic and research stage. We are proud of this achievement and we must do everything in our power to increase the reputation of Makerere University as a centre of excellence in research and teaching.

7. The story of Makerere University Business School (MUBS) is one of multiplication. The leap from a one degree programme institution in 1997 to over 30 degree programmes today speaks of faithful stewardship, and for this, I congratulate the MUBS leadership.

### **Honoring Academic Excellence**

8. Let me also congratulate the historic number of Makerere University Business School (MUBS) academic staff who attained PhDs over the past year. I am impressed to learn that the MUBS PhDs are not primarily donor funded. This is a commendable achievement! In a special way, I congratulate the **Nine** Female members of staff who were part of this historic achievement. I pray that you will use your new academic status to add to the body of knowledge and mentoring of the next generation of academics and leaders.

### **Message to Graduands**

9. My dear friends, the path ahead is lined with very many challenges. We should be alert to the opportunities and as far as possible endeavor to stand firm on our principles even in the face of adversity. I know there is a price to pay for standing for what you believe to be the right way. Last week we were remembering Archbishop Janun Luwum who spoke out against injustice and paid with his life. Uganda is the land of many martyrs. But I am not suggesting that you have to be a martyr. No. Rather I am challenging all of us to do what is right wherever we may find ourselves. If you are growing or selling tomatoes, be the best tomato seller. Sell good tomatoes. Be competitive. Be creative.
10. Ask God for wisdom to help you to be the best you can be with the gifts you have: Today you have the gift of time, of being alive while many have died, the gift of a sound mind, sound enough to get a degree, the gift of eyes and hands and a strong heart. Do not take these gifts for granted. And don't waste them. They were given to you for a purpose. Not to hoard them but to use them to make a difference in the world.
11. I pray that we shall all use those gifts in an aggressively creative and innovative way. Despite the risks and high costs of innovation and creativity, it is the true path to leadership. It is only through innovative creativity that you will stand out of the crowd. Please take to heart all the gifts God has given you and apply them to make a better future for your family, your country and your world. In the end, you will win.

12. Thomas Edison, the inventor of the light bulb, after 1,000 unsuccessful attempts to make a light bulb said, **“I didn’t fail 1,000 times. The light bulb was an invention of 1,000 steps.”** Uganda and Africa desperately need innovators in all areas of life. Some writers have called us *“the wretched of the earth”* and this must change. It is not Government alone which will transform Uganda. It is the people of Uganda especially in the private sector. This is your time. This is your moment. To quote President Barack Obama: **“Yes. You can.”** Yes we can. We have changed Uganda before and we will continue to change it again and again until it is the best country in Africa and in all the world. This is the time, this is the day to dedicate our lives to our God and to our country. When we say for God and my country we recognize that God is able to help us to transform this country into a great country and that we mean to dedicate ourselves to the transformation of our country to be the Paradise that God wants us to be. So let us renew our faith and our dedication to improve our world.
13. To quote Shakespeare: *“screw you courage to the sticking place and we shall not fail.”*

*“Success is not final, failure is not fatal, it is the courage to continue that counts.”* (Winston Churchill).

**FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY**