

MAKERERE



UNIVERSITY

REMARKS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR

PROF. JOHN DDUMBA-SSENTAMU

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 67TH GRADUATION
CEREMONY OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2017

FREEDOM SQUARE

- **Our Chancellor, Professor Ezra Suruma**
- **The Representative of the Honourable Minister of Education and Sports**
- **Honourable Ministers present**
- **Honourable Members of Parliament present**
- **Your Lordships the Judges**
- **Members of the Diplomatic Corps**
- **Religious Leaders**
- **Development Partners present**
- **The Leadership of Kampala Capital City Authority**
- **Chairperson and Members of Makerere University Council**
- **Chairperson and Members of Makerere University Appointments Board**
- **My Colleagues, Vice Chancellors, Rectors and Principals of Institutions of Higher Learning**
- **Former Vice Chancellors present**
- **Members of Management, Senate and the entire Makerere University Community**
- **Parents and Guardians**
- **Our Dear Graduands**
- **The Media**
- **All Invited Guests**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen:** It is my great privilege to welcome you to the second day of the 67th Graduation Ceremony of Makerere University.

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We are gathered here this morning to witness the graduation of the young women and men that have satisfied the requirements for award of degrees and diplomas of Makerere University. We congratulate them. Mr. Chancellor Sir, in particular I thank these graduands for not engaging in examination malpractices.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, you may recall that I informed you yesterday of 58 names that had appeared in the 67th graduation booklet in error but were deleted. I take this opportunity to assure the public and all our stakeholders that Makerere University has the duty to protect and secure the integrity of its academic credentials.

Without integrity, research cannot be trusted. Academic credentials cannot be relied upon and all degrees and diplomas lose their value. Makerere University Senate can recall any degree or diploma in cases where they were granted in error. I wish to thank the staff who identified this anomaly.

I warmly welcome the representative of the First Lady and Hon. Minister of Education and Sports. Through you, we extend our thanks to the Hon. Minister for her exceptional support to date since taking on the responsibility of overseeing the Ministry of Education and Sports in Uganda. We pledge to work with the Ministry to strengthen higher education in Uganda.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to recognise the presence of Members of Makerere University Council including the Chairperson, Eng. Dr. Charles Wana-Etyem, the Deputy Chairperson, Hon. Irene Ovonji Odida and Mr. Bruce B. Kabasa, Chairperson of the Appointments Board. Without the support and guidance of Council, Management cannot be as effective. On behalf of Management, therefore, I extend our thanks to the University Council for steering us on the right path, in line with the University's strategic direction.

I thank and appreciate the entire body of staff of Makerere University including academic, administrative and support staff for their committed service to this University, despite our challenges. On behalf of Management, I sincerely thank you and urge all of us to remain steadfast in our different roles, as we work together to support our core functions.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all members of staff who have been promoted, most especially the **8** who have risen to become Professors and the **19** Associate Professors. The body of works in your individual academic disciplines brings pride to Makerere University. Thank you and congratulations!

Mr. Chancellor Sir, you will appreciate the positive correlation between the number of Professors in the University and the salary enhancement. The higher the salary enhancement, the higher the number of Professors in the University and vice versa. Makerere University is very grateful to His Excellency The President of Uganda, for his commitment to enhancing salaries of all University Professors to a tune of UGX 15 million.

We know that this will inspire more academics to rise through the ranks. We further thank The President for enhancing salaries of all categories of staff in Public Universities.

We extend our sincere condolences to all bereaved families in the Makerere University Community who have lost loved ones since the last graduation, including Members of Staff and Students. In the same vein, we remember with respect and dignity, the late Dr. Margaret Mungherera, whose service benefitted Makerere University and the nation at large. May the Almighty God rest their souls in eternal peace.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, as you are aware, Makerere University faces a number of challenges. Our main challenge remains inadequate funding. I am, therefore, pleased to inform you that with approval of University Council, we have embarked on the process of implementing the Investment Policy of Makerere University. This has included the establishment of the Makerere University Endowment Fund and the Makerere University Holdings Company Limited.

One of the main activities of the Makerere University Endowment Fund this year is the **Endowment Fund RUN scheduled to take place on April 2, 2017**. The activity is aimed at complimenting resource mobilisation efforts of the Fund and creating awareness among alumni, friends and well-wishers. I take this opportunity to call upon our congregation today and all well-wishers to purchase Tickets and T-shirts for the Run, which are currently on sale.

Please register and support Makerere University Endowment Fund to achieve its goal of expanding the resource base of the University.

Yesterday, at the initiation of the Makerere University Convocation chaired by Dr. Tanga Odoi, the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister together with the Chancellor launched the fundraising campaign to construct the Perimeter Wall. We appeal to the congregation to support us in this exercise.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, while we have several challenges, I am happy to report some of our recent **developments and achievements**. Makerere University remains a leading research centre on the continent.

In April 2016, the National Research Foundation of the Republic of South Africa, in collaboration with the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, issued their first joint call for proposals under the South Africa/Uganda Joint Research Cooperation to promote Science, Technology and Innovation.

We are proud to inform you that our staff have dominated the First Round of this research collaboration in the fields of *Renewable Energy, Biotechnology; and ICT*. Out of the five winners, four are our staff including **Dr. John Luyimbazi Sentongo, Dr. Denis Okello, Dr. Frank Mugagga and Prof. Moses Robert Kamya**. We commend them for their tireless efforts that further the University's vision.

Makerere University has continued to maintain good working relations with our Development Partners, who are supporting *Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovations, as well as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and Networking*. These are our three core functions, which they continue to facilitate in different ways including capacity building programmes to enhance expertise of our staff in their respective academic disciplines.

Makerere University's collaboration with the Government of Sweden continues to grow. Over the last 15 years, the Swedish Government has invested **US\$ 73.3 million** in Graduate Training and the scientific environments of five Public Universities in Uganda, with the main recipient being Makerere University. I wish to acknowledge the substantial support of the Government of Sweden towards staff capacity building at Makerere University, most notably at PhD level. Our research capacity, as well as that of the country at large, has also been reinforced. We sincerely thank the Government and people of Sweden for this support. In the same vein, we thank the Royal Government of Norway for its great support to our three core functions.

We thank the MasterCard Foundation for sponsoring 200 bright but economically disadvantaged students at Makerere University this academic year 2016/2017. The current cohort includes scholars from Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda. Out of these, 72% are female scholars. We sincerely thank the Foundation for this generous support.

The 67th graduation ceremony has a **total of Fourteen Thousand, Four Hundred and Ninety Seven (14,897)** graduands. Of these, **45.9% are female** and **54.1%** are male graduands. **Seventy Five (75) are Doctoral students of whom** 24 are female and 51 male. A total of **Two Hundred and Sixty One (261)** graduands will be awarded First Class degrees.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, today we present to you candidates from four (4) Colleges.

The College of Business and Management Sciences is today presenting **Two Thousand, Two Hundred and Eighteen (2,218)** graduands, including **four (4)** PhDs. We congratulate the students and staff of the College upon this great achievement.

In 2016, the College embarked on efforts to improve research, learning and financial sustainability. It finalised a business plan for a general purpose College Endowment Fund. The Fund will be supported by Alumni, Staff, Students as well as well-wishers. The returns on the Fund will promote research in the fields within the mandate of the College and will also generate resources that will ensure financial viability of the College.

The School of Economics has maintained close collaborations with UNDP and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to hold Annual High-level Policy Dialogues. The School still maintains its collaboration with the World Bank in authoring and dissemination of the **Uganda Economic Update**.

The School of Statistics and Planning received a grant of **United States Dollars Three Hundred and Fifty Thousand (US\$ 350,000)** from the African Development Bank, to strengthen institutions responsible for statistics. Core priority areas include infrastructure development, regional integration, private sector development, governance and accountability, skills and technology development.

Under the School of Business, I am happy to report that the Development Bank of Southern Africa continues to provide support to the Pan African Master of Public Infrastructure Management (MPIM), which aims at training a high caliber of African public service officers to professionally manage infrastructure development projects on the continent.

The Centre for Population and Applied Statistics, in collaboration with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, is a flagship center for further analysis for census and survey data, as a way of informing decisions using verifiable data.

I am glad to note the publication of a book titled “*The Demography of Uganda and Selected African Countries: Towards Sustainable Development Pathways*”, in honor of Professor James Patrick Manyenye Ntozi, whose lifelong career has promoted demographic research, training and development in Uganda, Africa and beyond. Mr. Chancellor Sir, I take this opportunity to thank Professor Ntozi for his dedicated service to Makerere University, until December 2016, when he retired.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, **the College of Computing and Information Sciences** is today presenting a total of **One Thousand, Three Hundred and Sixty Eight) (1,368)** graduands, of whom **Two (2) are PhDs.**

I am pleased to inform you that the best performing student in the Science based disciplines is graduating today. **Mr. Mukalele Rogers will be awarded a First Class Honours Degree in Information Technology with a Cumulative Grade Point Average of 4.91.** We extend special congratulations to him, his family and the College for this great achievement.

The College of Computing and Information Sciences, through the work of the Artificial Intelligence Researchers, continues to innovate mobile applications in various areas. The College has also participated in the design and **pRototyping** of an Automatic Weather Station (AWS), as well as installation of the second generation Automatic Weather Stations in South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda, under a project on Weather Information Management in East Africa. The project seeks to advance all aspects of meteorology in the East African region.

The College also produced a book authored by Professor Maria. N. Musoke titled “***Informed and Healthy: Theoretical and Applied Perspectives on the Value of Information to Health Care.***” The book focuses on the value attributed to information by users and its effect on health care. We warmly congratulate Professor Maria Musoke and the College on this achievement.

Mr. Chancellor, Sir, **the College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources and Bio Security** is today graduating a total of **Three Hundred and Fourteen (314)** students, including **Six (6) PhDs**. We take this opportunity to congratulate the students and staff of the College upon this great achievement.

The College has achieved several milestones over the past year. It will be graduating at least 1000 integrated livestock farm enterprises this year, under its joint initiative with the Government of Uganda aimed at transforming households into industrial cottage enterprises and cooperatives. The College is also working with Government on a biosecurity and biosafety programme. I am pleased to inform you that the construction of a US\$ One Million Biosecurity Facility has been initiated at the College. The Facility is crucial for global health security and regional control of trans-boundary diseases. We sincerely thank the Government for this support.

Through its collaboration with the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), the College has raised the volume of competitive research grant awards to over UGX One Billion.

For all its research and innovative work, the College was recognised as the most innovative public-private partnership institution of the year by the Ministry of Public Service and the National Centre for the Control of Sleeping Sickness in Uganda. This recognition is largely attributed to the College's efforts in reducing the prevalence of sleeping sickness in Northern Uganda from 41% to 4%. We congratulate the College upon this achievement.

The College of Health Sciences is presenting a total of Five Hundred and Eighty Three (583) candidates for award of degrees and diplomas in various health disciplines, including **Nineteen (19) PhDs**.

Mr. Chancellor Sir; the College of Health Sciences remains a leader in health science research and publication. In 2016, it won 50 research grants and consultancies, 36 of which are by the School of Public Health in the areas of HIV/AIDS, Health Policy, disease prevention, nutrition, reproductive health, and sanitation, among others. We thank our funders including the European Union, US-AID, UNICEF, World Health Organisation, the Global Fund, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, to mention a few.

I am further pleased to share that since the last graduation ceremony, the College has registered **432** publications in peer-reviewed journals. Mr. Chancellor Sir, this is a big achievement. We therefore thank the College for its contribution to the University's standing as a leading institution in research and publication. You have made us proud.

We acknowledge and thank the Medical Education for Equitable Services to all Ugandans Medical Education Partnership Initiative (MESAU-MEPI) and the Training Health Researchers into Vocational Excellence in East Africa (THRiVE) research projects for the wide-ranging support to the College, including PhD training. Indeed the College is graduating 19 PhDs during this ceremony, 11 of whom have been supported by these two projects led by Prof. Nelson Sewankambo.

Similarly, we appreciate the support of Mulago National Referral and Teaching Hospital, the Uganda Cancer Institute, Uganda Heart Institute, Ministry of Health and Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) for their continuing partnerships with the College. Your support has enabled the College to remain at the forefront of knowledge generation and innovation in the field of health at national, regional and global levels.

The College received support worth **United States Dollars Five Hundred Thousand (US\$ 500,000)** towards construction of the first Optometry and State-of-the-art Teaching Laboratory and Vision Science Centre in Uganda.

The funds were used to establish a Training Laboratory at the College and the Optometry Centre at Makerere University Hospital.

With the establishment of state-of-the-art laboratory, access to Optometry and Vision Science training equipment, and availability of skilled experts, Makerere University introduced the **Bachelor of Optometry** degree programme. The pioneer students of this programme will graduate in January 2018. We thank the Australian Government; the University of New South Wales; Brien Holden Vision Institute, and Light for The World, for this support.

Through the Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Support (METS) project, funded by the Centre for Disease Control, the School of Public Health has contributed to the much-needed tracking of patients on ARV treatment, using computers and solar systems.

The Centre for Tobacco Control in Africa (CTCA) whose Secretariat is at the School of Public Health registered yet another key milestone last year. The Center supported the introduction of a comprehensive tobacco control law in the Gambia.

Through the ResilientAfrica Network (RAN), a US-AID funded project in the School of Public Health, the College is incubating over 150 potentially transformative Innovative solutions directed towards addressing the most pressing challenges of our communities including a Low Cost Solar Irrigation Pump used by small holder farmers to pump water from the source to their crops; a Solar Dryer; a Community Radio in a bucket, which uses a transmitter and telephone to replace a conventional radio studio for broadcasting; an improved Push and Pull Technology for inter-cropping that suppresses weeds and pests and a Village Egg Bank, that encourages savings among small holder farmers.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the College also runs the Bachelor of Biomedical Sciences and the Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Engineering.

I am pleased to inform you that we are graduating Biomedical Engineers this year, whose services will transform health care delivery in Uganda. The School of Biomedical Sciences has also established a fully operational Bio-repository to serve East, Central and Southern Africa. Over 50,000 biological samples are already stored in this facility and are available to researchers.

Additionally, the School of Biomedical Sciences has a fully functional Molecular Gene Sequencing facility, which has led to a number of discoveries about drug targets, disease transmission and genetic determinants of diseases.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I am happy to inform you that Council approved the immediate take over of the University Hospital by the College of Health Sciences. We welcome this initiative, which will improve health services at Makerere University.

As I conclude, allow me to once again congratulate our dear graduands. I also congratulate in a special way, all Members of Staff as well as children, spouses and relatives of Staff graduating today. We extend thanks to your parents and guardians who have been part of this journey.

Go out of the gates of Makerere University with passion, with a determination to use your knowledge to improve your self, your family and your country. Always remember your alma mater—Makerere University. God bless you all.

Ladies and Gentlemen, with great honour and privilege, I now invite the Chancellor, Professor Ezra Suruma, to address you.

I thank you.