

**VICE CHANCELLOR’S SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE
FACULTY OF TECHNOLOGY EXTENSION (14/08/09).**

Your Excellency the Ambassador of Norway to Uganda,

**The Chairman of the Electoral Commission, Engineer Professor
Badru Kiggundu;**

My colleagues members of the top University Administration,

Principals, Deans and Directors of Faculties, Schools and Institutes;

Members of Academic and Support Staff,

Representatives of the Student Body,

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

First, let me take this opportunity to warmly welcome you to Makerere University on this auspicious occasion when we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Faculty of Technology and official opening of its new extension. This is indeed a very special occasion for our University because it represents the ‘coming of age’ of the Faculty of Technology as a profuse centre for high quality technological education and training, research, professional services and innovation for sustainable national and regional development.

Today marks the attainment of physical infrastructural expansion, the first of its kind to the Faculty since its establishment 40 years ago. Architecturally, we now have gained a charming modernist complement to the original 1969 structure that Engineer Dr. Eric Adriko spearheaded.

Although architecture is important in the life of the mind (and the comfort of the body) the real significance of this new building is that we can now explode further the ingenuity, creative interaction, and output of our staff and students. This new building will enable us to face the future with greater confidence, despite the financial storm clouds gathering over the University – and indeed higher education in Uganda as a whole.

It is also special because we are celebrating the fruits of collaboration between Makerere University and the Government and people of Norway. To attain this extension, the government and people of Norway through NORAD sacrificed a hefty sum of money to construct the building.

The original contractual figure stood at 6.395 billion shillings. By the time of completion, it had reached 7.34 billion shillings mainly due to the global financial crisis. Honourable Guests, on behalf of Makerere University and on my own behalf, I would like to thank the Government and people of Norway for the support extended to the Faculty of

Technology in realizing this extension. It is no doubt that their generosity over the years has as well enhanced the development of a number of other faculties of Makerere University.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is important to note that this new extension whose official opening we are witnessing today is going to increase the current total teaching space requirements of the faculty by nearly 150% in addition to providing office space for academic staff. Comprising of five floors, the building will house three *state – of – the – art* computer labs, one environmental engineering lab, one telecommunication engineering lab, fifteen lecture rooms, a modern conference hall, a technical library, and more than fifty offices.

Ladies and Gentlemen, such modern facilities are rare in most African Universities. This, therefore, means that the Faculty of Technology here at Makerere University, will remain a paramount reference centre for teaching and research in disciplines synonymous with these facilities.

May I once again thank the Government and people of Norway for this wonderful gift for our new academic year 2009-2010. It is my firm belief that the collaboration between the Norwegian Government and Makerere University and indeed our entire nation will continue for many more years to come.

My administration is further indebted to Messrs Technology Consults for the design and procurement of the building and I am also delighted that the Arab Contractors have been able to complete construction work in time for the new academic year. Technology Consults based in the Faculty of Technology in particular is worthy of special applause in demonstrating that alongside their traditional obligations of teaching and research, academic staff can team up as professionals and pragmatically provide invaluable services to the University and the public. Worthy of special mention is the late Professor James Higenyi who configured the notion of Technology consults whose fruits we are enjoying today.

Contemporarily, it is also prudent for us to appreciate the leadership of Associate Professor Barnabas Nawangwe, the current Faculty Dean, in keeping those ideals burning in the mind and soul of the Faculty. Dr. Nawangwe, I can assure you that here in the Faculty of Technology you can say to yourself 'I have achieved something' (although your modesty which I know so well would prevent you from doing so aloud).

Ladies and Gentlemen, with these few remarks, it is my pleasure to welcome our Guest of Honor, Excellency the Ambassador of Norway to Uganda, and now my humble duty as Vice Chancellor to ask you, your Excellency, to come forward and address this gathering. Your Excellency!