

**THE ROLE OF THE ALUMNI IN GOVERNANCE AND
INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Public Lecture by H.E. Benjamin William Mkapa at the Inaugural Makerere University
Grand Alumni Re-Union, 28 November 2009**

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Vice-President of the Republic of Uganda;
Honorable Prof. Apolo Nsibambi,
Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda;
Honorable Rebecca Kadaga,
Deputy Speaker of the Ugandan Parliament;
Honorable Ministers and Members of Parliament;
Excellencies High Commissioners and Ambassadors;
Prof. Mondo Kagonyera
Chancellor of Makerere University;
Prof. Venansius Baryamureeba,
Vice-Chancellor of Makerere University;
Faculty, Staff and Students of Makerere University;
Fellow Alumni;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let me begin by thanking the government of Uganda and the Makerere University community for welcoming me so warmly and for the honor you have bestowed upon me to speak on behalf of my fellow alumni on a very important subject, on a very important day and a very propitious occasion.

It is always a great pleasure to return to Makerere, and today is no exception. Indeed, today is an historical home-coming not only for me but I am sure for all my fellow alumni. Thank you for welcoming us back.

I want to thank and congratulate the University Convocation and authorities for the idea to convene this grand alumni re-union. With the support of all of us, which by being here we promise, I am sure this re-union will be a great success and a rewarding experience to everyone. Working together we can give our beloved Alma Mater new energy, new vision and new direction.

In a special way I want to thank the Vice-President for that most gracious oratory, which I am not sure if I entirely deserve. Thank you all the same, and thank you Mr. Chancellor as well for your very kind words.

As part of these celebrations I have been asked to speak on, “The Role of the Alumni in Governance and Institutional Development.”

But before I do so I want us to step back and look again at the context in which we assembled here, and others like us across sub-Saharan Africa, received the higher education that lies at the heart of who we have since become. It is a very profound thought.

I came to Makerere in the nineteen fifties aged 19. Makerere was at that time a University College affiliated to the University of London. It was a small institution then; enrolment was in the hundreds not thousands. There were four halls of residence, three for males and one for female students. Staff was predominantly British and a touch South African. Local, i.e. African, staff could be counted on the fingers of two hands.

Then graduating from Makerere was a great achievement. One felt immensely privileged not only because entry was acutely competitive, but also because jobs were assured. Employers would visit to sample prospective graduates. Remuneration for these jobs was quite high. But more importantly was the prospect of high standing in public office, in the professions and the administration. Being an ex-Makekererian gave one enormous social status. It may have bred a little Elitism but this was tempered by the call for social and political responsibility.

The University College had, for its Vision and Mission this statement on its Coat of Arms: “Pro Future Aedificamus,” which we translated into: “We are building for the future” I notice that the motto has been retained on Makerere University’s logo: “We Build for the Future. “Why the Latin text was abandoned I look forward to learning this afternoon.

Statistics from UNESCO show that in 2007, on average, only six percent of tertiary education cohort in sub-Saharan Africa was enrolled in colleges and universities. And this is considered a huge improvement considering where we came from.

In the time of my matriculation, I believe the ratio was less than one percent. In Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere’s time it was nothing short of scandalous, and our former colonial masters need to hang their heads in shame. In Mwalimu’s own words, when he sat for the then Makerere College entrance examination in the early 1940s, there were only three schools in the whole of the then Tanganyika which could send students here at Makerere, the only such institution of higher learning at that time in the whole of this region.

In 1949 and 1950, five, yes **five only**, African students from Tanganyika, Mwalimu Nyerere being one of them, received scholarships to study in the United Kingdom. According to him no other scholarships were given for more than five years.

What does this mean? It means two things. The first is that the former colonial powers did not consider it a priority to prepare Africans for leadership, for good governance and for institution building. And, as we all know, their own form of colonial administration was the antithesis of democratic good governance.

The second point is that the post independence alumni have a two-pronged responsibility beyond their own transformation through education. They have to realize that the responsibility to build democratic political dispensations, and to develop governance systems and build institutions of governance and regulation needed for economic and social transformation lies not with anyone else but with them. They cannot and must not have the luxury of being unaccountable spectators as the continent grapples with these profound challenges.

Their other responsibility is to be role models and positive mentors of new generations of educated Africans. Again, let us step back, and consider our ways, wherever we may be, and whatever we are doing. Have we been good role models, and have we mentored new generations of educated Africans in the right direction? What have they learnt from us--not from our words, but from our actions--and what will they learn from successive generations of alumni? Have we built the foundations of good governance and strong institutions that can outlive us, or are we passing on the buck to the next generation?

But above all, those proportionally very few of us who receive or have received higher education in postcolonial Africa have to realize how privileged we are, and that with that privilege comes responsibility.

An alumnus of Makerere, Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, put the expectations that society has in those privileged to be educated in the following terms:

“Those who receive this privilege, therefore, have a duty to repay the sacrifice which others have made. They are like the man who has been given all the food available in a starving village in order that he might have the strength to bring supplies from a distant place. If he takes this food and does not bring help to his brothers, he is a traitor. Similarly, if any of the young men and women who are given an education by the people of this republic adopt attitudes of superiority, or fail to use their knowledge to help the development of this country, then they are betraying our union.”

Mr Chancellor,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

These are without doubt very strong words; but they need to be said from time to time because they are a useful compass to all of us privileged to have had a good education at a critical time for the development of our countries, their governance systems and institutions.

In my time here we had a very friendly Catholic Chaplain, an English Dominican named Paul Foster O.P. It is not for his preaching, which was unquestionably inspiring and mercifully short, that I recall him now. Rather I recall him for a long and contentious conversation we had about that University College motto. What kind of future were we building? How were we building it? He thought it exemplified well the British penchant for obfuscation or equivocation in order to make everyone feel good!!

I have revisited Makerere a few times. It has grown a great deal in terms of physical infrastructures, academic disciplines and the sizes of the annual enrollment and graduands. There is a lot to be proud of and to congratulate ourselves upon. I hope that the reunion gives us the opportunity to look back, reflect and renew our spirits.

When I was given the invitation to make these remarks I decided to ask the alumni, but especially the graduating classes of the nineteen sixties, my contemporaries. What kind of a future have we built? How have we lived to our education motto's injunction?

The independence movement was reaching its climax as we graduated. We entered the political and labour market. Thus we have helped build independence from colonial rule. Have we built a sense of nationhood? We have helped to build, indeed others would say to shape, the civil service. Is it a dedicated, faithful and loyal civil service? We have been instrumental in building up an array of professional associations. How professionally ethical are they?

The Alumni and Their Alma Mater:

But let me now turn to the relationship between the alumni and their Alma Mater, and the role that I see for the alumni in institutional governance and development. You see, the relationship between an alumnus or alumnae with his or her Alma Mater is kind of like the relationship between a child and its parents. We can grow up as children, and then move out to chart our own paths and begin our own families. Sometimes we may have strained relationships with our parents, some quite serious. But nothing on earth can change the fact that they are, and will forever remain, our parents.

In a family, what unites the offspring is their organic relationship with the parents. Likewise, what unites all of us in this alumni re-union is the relationship that each one of us has with Makerere. We have a duty to support our parents; and we have a duty to support our Alma Mater. Both made us what we are today, and both need and deserve our support. But just as they have the right to expect support, they equally have to be open to our views and opinions. As much as possible the alumni have to feel they are welcome to contribute to issues of governance and institution building in this university.

There is the story of an honest young boy and an old man:

Old gentleman: You're an honest boy. But it was a ten dollar-note not ten ones that I lost.

Small boy: I know, mister, it was a ten-dollar note I picked up. But the last time I found one, the man who owned it didn't have any change.

Sometimes it takes the wisdom of a child to get something out of a man!

If the alumni are remembered only for fundraising purposes, important as it is, the relationship will never be as strong and the role of the alumni never as robust as one would have liked. As alumni, we care deeply about this university. The collective professional and personal experiences we hold are a huge resource for the university. Keep the alumni informed and connected--with Makerere and with each other. And I truly appreciate what I have learnt since coming here about your commendable efforts in this very direction. Please keep it up; you have our support and encouragement. We are your product, we are the living proof of your excellence in learning, and we shall always be your loudest cheerleaders.

In that spirit, let me raise a few issues that I think are critical in the governance and institutional development of this and other institutions of higher learning in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Paradox of Scope: The African Scene:

A few years ago, Prof. David J. Collis of the Harvard Business School wrote a piece titled "The Paradox of Scope: A Challenge to the Governance of Higher Education". Although the discourse clearly had in mind universities in the West, in particular the United States of America, some of his points are equally relevant to our circumstances in Africa and elsewhere and provide a good entry point for some of my arguments.

In short, the concept of "paradox of scope" refers to the inherent friction between the core (conservative, if you like) values and mission of an institution on the one hand, and the demands imposed on it by a kaleidoscopic (radical, if you like) periphery and external environment that can threaten the very relevance and

sustainability of an institution. Universities are believed to be conservative in nature; but they now have to learn to adapt to new situations. In the words of Prof. Collis:

“Circumstances today are conspiring to expose the inherent weaknesses in the governance of higher education. The external environment of universities and colleges is undergoing profound change: globalization, technology, the massification of tertiary education, the emergence of the knowledge economy, and the intrusion of market forces into the sector, among other forces and trends, all threaten to disrupt the hallowed halls of academia in ways not experienced before. If universities and colleges are to successfully adapt to these unavoidable societal trends, they must develop, communicate, and implement clear and concise strategies. The hallmark of those strategies will be a willingness to make difficult choices among very different alternatives”

Across the world, the dynamics of social, economic and technological changes, and the demands placed on tertiary education institutions, require a continuous re-evaluation of academic governance and institutional building. For African universities the challenges are even more formidable. Makerere cannot be an exception.

My experience, not just as President of Tanzania, but immediately before that as Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology, is that among the governance challenges that typically confront African universities are the following:

- Funding and Accountability.
- Student enrollment, retention and graduation rates.
- Responding to the special needs of “non-traditional” students, including distance and adult learning.
- The pressure to make governance more inclusive and responsive to the often competing needs of a much wider array of stakeholders, including alumni, business sector, parents, student bodies, government, and others, all of whom seek an opportunity to determine how tertiary education is designed and managed.
- Dealing with the high expectations and volatility of faculty, including issues of remuneration, tenure and career development, and hence the issue of brain drain;
- Working and interpersonal relationships between faculty and administrators, and hence the question whether traditional institutions of academic governance can resolve emerging frictions and chart a common vision and strategy;

- Curriculum development and adaptation;
- Relevance and competitiveness and hence issues of quality versus quantity of output.

I should like to address some of these issues in greater detail.

Enrolment, Retention and Graduation Rates:

We all know that education, and certainly higher education, is a sine qua non for personal and societal development and adaptability. That is why all countries, without exception, including the most advanced ones, invest more and more in increasing enrolment, retention and graduation rates in their tertiary education institutions. As H.G. Wells summed up the challenge ninety years ago, “Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe”.

The risk of such catastrophe in sub-Saharan Africa is real. Most of our countries have no more than 50 years of independence. Yet, we cannot escape from being held, by our own people and by the outside world, to the highest standards of governance and institutional competence, whether in government, in academia or in the private sector.

A recent UNESCO report captures four decades of “explosive growth” in tertiary enrolment in Africa. In 1970, it says, there were fewer than 200,000 students enrolled in tertiary institutions in sub-Saharan Africa. By 2007, this number had increased more than twenty-fold to 4 million. Enrolment over this period of time increased by 8.6 percent annually on average, compared to a global average of 4.6 percent over the same period. More recently, between 2000 and 2005, the average annual growth rate reached 10 percent.

Should we pat ourselves on the back? Definitely no!

On the one hand, this phenomenal growth has had huge implications for governance and institution-building in our colleges and universities. The political desire to expand enrolment was not always backed by a corresponding increase in budgetary allocation. As a result, over time, quality of instruction and output began to suffer, motivation declined and on campus tensions increased.

On the other hand, pressure for increased enrolment continues unabated, especially as secondary school expansion creates an ever-increasing wellspring of young men and women looking for matriculation in the few tertiary education institutions we have. And, at 3.1 percent, Africa has the fastest growth of the tertiary education cohort population, compared to a global average of only 1.7 percent.

We cannot, unfortunately, ignore or wish away this escalating demand for expansion of enrolment. I mentioned earlier that in 2007, only 6 percent of the

tertiary education cohort in sub-Saharan Africa was enrolled in tertiary education institutions. This should be seen against a global average of 26 percent. In North America and Western Europe the rate was 71 percent that same year; in Central and Eastern Europe it was 62 percent; in Latin America and the Caribbean it was 34 percent; in Central Asia it was 31 percent; in East Asia and the Pacific it was 26 percent; in Arab States it was 23 percent; in South and West Asia it was 11 percent; and in sweet home sub-Saharan Africa it was only 6 percent. A huge improvement from where the colonialists left us, but still only 6 percent! Even South Africa, the best performer among us, had a gross enrolment ratio of only 15.4 percent.

So, much as I sympathize with our colleges and universities, there is no way the pressure to expand enrolment will abate for many years to come. These pressures also bring to the fore the challenges of retention and graduation rates. Some privately sponsored students drop out when poverty or bereavement disconnects the lifeline to continued university participation. Social tensions that can partly be explained by declining resources can also disrupt classes or precipitate rustication, temporarily or permanently.

Then, of course, there is the issue of gender parity in tertiary education that is becoming more involving with each passing year. Nobody believes these days the Hausa saying that, “the strength of woman is nothing but talk”. On average, sub-Saharan African counties have made commendable progress in, raising the ratio of women in tertiary education from 22 percent in 1970 to 40 percent in 2007. It should be noted, however, that the commendable achievement of a few African countries tend to obscure the serious challenges that remain in other countries. The leading success stories include Botswana (50%), Swaziland (50%), Mauritius (53%), Cape Verde (55%), Lesotho (55%), and South Africa (55%). But these should not eclipse the challenges in Chad (13%), Guinea (21%), Central African Republic (22%), Ethiopia (25%) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (26%).

A road accident involving a man and a woman occurred one day, and the ensuing conversation went as follows:

Female driver: But I insist it was all my fault.

Male driver: No, my lady, it WAS my fault. I could tell your car was driven by a woman at least half a mile away, and I could easily have driven into the field and avoided this!

Believe me; it will take some time to get rid of some of the outrageous prejudices against women.

Funding and Accountability:

Mr. Chancellor

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The persistent pressure for expansion of enrolment, retention and graduation comes against a background of shrinking resource envelopes for tertiary education relative to the rate of expansion. This is so even when per capita expenditure per tertiary student relative to GDP is exceedingly high. According to UNESCO, Benin, Burundi, Ethiopia and Togo have per capita higher education expenditure levels in excess of 100 percent of GDP per capita. In Niger it is 371 percent!

Across the world, funding university education continues to be a major challenge, even among the wealthy countries. The challenge of governance in those countries, as in ours, is not simply to fold our arms and bemoan declining or inadequate public funding, but how to diversify sources of funding in a way that is consistent with our goals and strategies. This balancing act, however, becomes increasingly difficult to maintain especially as universities rely more and more on outside funding sources, each with its own interests, goals and strategies. Again this is a huge challenge of governance.

Among sources of funding that universities across the world have resorted to are the alumni, private sector, consultancy, partnerships with business, research funding, increasing tuition fees, various endowments, donations and grants, introduction of student loans, and in the case of developing countries, donor support. Others make businesslike investments, on their own or in joint venture with external entities. The University of Dar es Salaam, for instance, used part of their land to attract investors in shopping malls, hotels and apartments. I am sure Makerere and others do likewise.

But, again, I have to repeat. While new revenue streams can assuage the thirst for funding, they bring with them new demands on the governance of universities which may prove challenging. Managing and meeting the needs and standards of diverse sources of revenue is a sufficient challenge. But added to this is that each new player, some of them very peripheral to the core mission of the university, may want to play a part in setting the direction towards which the university will move.

Mr Chancellor

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Another way to deal with funding shortfalls is to downsize the wide array of activities that universities have to deal with. Increasingly, in business, in academia and even in government, the trend has been to outsource non-core, or even some

core, functions to entities with greater capacity to deal with them at lower costs. These may include activities such as:

- academic services, such as admissions, media and video conferencing, and testing;
- administrative services;
- advertising and marketing;
- athletics/sports;
- auxiliary services such as bookstores, vending machines, laundry, and housing;
- computer facilities and information systems;
- development and public relations, including fundraising, printing, and institutional research; distributors and wholesalers for commercial and industrial equipment and supplies;
- financial aid-related services;
- accounting, financial and investment services;
- legal services;
- library resources;
- personnel services, including benefits administration, retirement programs, and executive recruitment; plant services, such as maintenance, building design, and security; and,
- student services, such as substance abuse programs and medical services.

Some of these measures could help save real money.

Let me now say a few words about tuition fees. Unfortunately, across the world, the trend has been to increase tuition and other fees that students are charged in an effort to balance the books. But for poor countries like ours this can be counterproductive if the fees are so high as to defeat the goal of increasing enrolment. That is why more African countries have to design and implement effective student loan programs. This is the only way to build capacity to expand enrolment, without turning universities into places for the elite in each society.

An idea worth pursuing is to ask the donor community to create a capital fund to underwrite student loans for needy students in sub-Saharan Africa.

Governments cannot totally abdicate responsibility to fund higher education. But, having been in government, I realize that people want to see more results for each shilling invested in higher education. Perhaps the time has come for institutions of higher learning to be asked to develop and sign performance contracts, with clear deliverables, quantitative and qualitative, in exchange for public funding.

Governments on their part must create mechanisms to provide incentives for private companies, individuals and charitable organizations to help finance higher education. An example that quickly comes to mind is the provision of some form of tax allowances for such donations.

To encourage research, governments could also create a legal framework that allows universities to own and, therefore, to earn money from intellectual property rights. Governments and the business sector could also be encouraged to outsource research and development activities to universities.

Mr. Chancellor,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

These ideas constitute a menu of some of the things that can be done to increase funding for higher education. The only problem is that this, in the end, complicates governance. The more the donors, the more complex the task of assuring everyone that funds are properly used for the intended purposes, that procurement regulations are followed and that value for money is attained. So, in terms of governance, universities have to get used to more evaluations, more financial audits, and more reports.

Issues of Quality, Relevance and Competitiveness:

As we enter into an increasingly knowledge-based economy and a regionally and globally more competitive environment, quality education becomes more important than ever. This poses a huge challenge to sub-Saharan African countries and their higher learning institutions.

Former President of Rice University in Houston, Texas, Prof. Malcolm Gillis, could not have described this challenge better than when, in February 1999, he opined as follows:

“Today, more than ever before in human history, the wealth – or poverty – of nations depends on the quality of higher education. Those with a larger repertoire of skills and a greater capacity for learning can look forward to lifetimes of unprecedented economic fulfillment. But in the coming decades the poorly educated face little better than the dreary prospects of lives of quiet desperation”.

So, where does Africa stand on this score? One indicator that can be used in measuring where we stand is the amount of new knowledge we create in our universities. Since researchers do conceive and create new knowledge, their numbers can be a useful indicator of our capacity to create a repertoire of competitive and skilled individuals who can lead us to economic fulfillment.

Estimates issued by UNESCO Institute for Statistics two months ago show that between 2002 and 2007 Asia as a whole increased its share of world researchers from 35.7 percent to 41.4 percent, mostly at the expense of Europe and North America. In 2002, Africa had only 2.3 percent of researchers, and that share had not changed in 2007. For sub-Saharan Africa, if we exclude South Africa, we had only 0.6 percent of researchers in 2002 and still the same 0.6 percent in 2007. The phenomenal increase in Asia is to a large extent accounted for by China which had its share of world researchers increase from 14.0 percent in 2002 to 20.1 percent in 2007, putting it almost at par with the United States of America. Between them, the United States, China, European Union and Japan have 70 percent of all researchers in the world.

So what does this tell us? It provides pointers as to who will dominate the 21st century, if not beyond. But it also shows how much we risk being completely irrelevant except for our oil, mineral resources and agricultural commodities they need from us. We veritably risk being irrelevant in determining the course of human history and achievement. And, as Prof. Gillis said, we risk facing “little better than the dreary prospects of lives of quiet desperation”.

I give these statistics not to lead us into despondence, but as a wakeup call for governments, and for tertiary education institutions. We just have to produce more people who generate more new knowledge, not just those who use and recycle existing knowledge.

We can no longer procrastinate on the question of relevance of African higher education to the challenges confronting Africa today, and the kind of challenges we can already foresee for the future. Higher education is an extremely expensive investment made by the present poor African generation for the future. Such an investment, and the opportunity cost it entails with regard to other pressing demands on national treasuries, can only be justified by equally robust returns in terms of quality and relevance of output from our universities. And there are, in my view, four aspects of such quality and relevance:

- First, our young people must get the kind of university education that enables them to understand the present and future challenges of our countries in their broadest sense. In Tanzania, when I listen to, or read what is written by some university students or even some dons, I do not get the comfort that they have such an understanding, grounded in reality.
- Second, our young people must get the kind of university education that prepares them attitudinally and professionally to integrate with their society, not to be alienated from it. An elitist education that becomes a vehicle for the alienation of those we prepare for leadership would be a

waste of scarce resources against competing demands, and a great tragedy.

- Third, the university education we give our young people must prepare them – again intellectually, attitudinally and professionally – to be agents and catalysts for positive change. We want them to graduate with inquiring sharpened minds, minds that thrive in original thinking, not ones that simply recycle western notions, ideas and prejudices.
- Fourth, university education must prepare our youth to be innovative and competitive, whether in public service or private sector – nationally, regionally and internationally – in a globalizing and competitive market for skills and jobs.

This brings me to the question of curricula. I have the hunch that our curricula are still too academic, too theoretical, with minimal applied science. Change has begun to come, it needs to come faster.

Textbooks are outdated, and we cannot always afford new editions or new publications. One way around this problem is to make increasing use of free but trusted online educational resources. Computing and internet access can provide relevant and current course material. In East Africa, we have just launched the first submarine optical fiber cable providing international bandwidth along the East Coast of Africa linking Southern and East Africa, Europe and South Asia.

As a matter of priority, African universities have to hook up to the global learning community. We should also now ask our development partners to support the infrastructural investment needed to make full use of the optic fiber bandwidth for research and learning, among other things. We on the African continent should also increase pressure to have more knowledge in the public domain through open access to research, including scientific, medical and engineering journals and data bases.

Alumni members of professional bodies have a unique opportunity to contribute to curriculum development at the University. Our world is witnessing vast and fast changes. Their own practice in the professions, in medicine or law, in agricultural extension or public policy research, in political governance or social welfare delivery, uncovers new areas of interest and concern lacking in existing manuals and ways of doing things. Through dialogue and exchanges they can input into remarkable curriculum improvements that will strengthen academic competitiveness and raise international image.

But practicing professionals can also provide for short term or part time staff needs, just as academics can benefit from brief attachments to ongoing successful

enterprises. This is the practice overseas; it is seldom if ever seen here. Yet the benefits that can accrue are worth the money they would cost. More importantly such exchanges would go a long way to nurture the town-grown partnership in learning and working. Theory is moderated by practice, and excessive industriousness is restrained by theory. Let us give it a try.

African universities also have to learn how to cope with non-traditional students. Lifelong learning is the best way to prepare people for the increasing vagaries of the labor market, and ensure they remain employable and competitive. Universities must increasingly position themselves to meet their needs.

Coping with Brain Drain:

Many graduates emigrate. More than ten percent of African graduates overall emigrate. In technical and medical fields, the rate is much higher. It is said that 90 percent of all Zambian doctors trained in the last 30 years work abroad. It is also estimated that such brain drain costs sub-Saharan Africa close to \$ 1 billion a year in educational investment made in their people. This is twice the amount of U.S. aid to the continent.

In the context of universal human rights and freedoms, it is difficult to issue a fiat against emigration. However, brain drain need not be a total loss. With more aggressiveness in the African side, and more understanding in richer countries, it is possible to turn brain drain into some kind of brain gain.

If Western countries are as concerned about brain drain in Africa as they claim to be, let them agree to put in place mechanisms to compensate Africa for this huge loss. With the advent and march of technology, solutions are now available to engage the African Diaspora, including alumni of African universities, in continuing to make contributions to capacity building and institutional development in Africa. Through telemedicine, African doctors in Western countries can take part in diagnosis, prescription and even surgery of patients in Africa. Through e-learning and the leveraging of the wide array of ICT capabilities and tools including things like tele-presence and other video capabilities, African academics in Western countries can continue to have classes in their Alma Mater or other universities, and they can continue to set and mark exams, or supervise the theses of post-graduate students from wherever they are. If they really want to, and if we on the African side press them, Western countries can make the resources available to get all this and more done.

Thanks to the presence of two formidable Nigerian ladies at the World Bank, Managing Director Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and Vice-President for Africa Obiageli Ezekwesili, a program to engage the Diaspora in African development has been established in the Bank. The challenge now is for African governments, and specifically African universities, to engage the World Bank early on with clear

strategies and plans on engaging the Diaspora in governance, institution building and service delivery for Africa's social and economic development.

Another way to ensure the brain drain in Africa is not a total loss for the continent is to proceed from a simple logic. One of the reasons African graduates end up working in developed countries is that employers in western countries need and value them. The solution to brain drain, therefore, is not to try to stop Africans from going to work abroad, but to give African universities and governments the capacity to train more people. One mechanism is to ask employers in the west to reimburse the costs incurred by African countries to train every one of those alumni of our universities working abroad. And, for them, this will be quite a steal. In most African countries, it would take less than \$50,000 to train a medical doctor, assuming 5 years of instruction and one year of internship. In a place like the United States, that amount is enough for only one academic year! By employing our alumni, they concede that we trained them well, and cost-effectively. We can do it repeatedly. Why do they not give African universities the capacity to train more, and better, and we can share the output?

Western employers, and even other employers in developing countries can in the very least, pay back the outstanding student loans owed by those they employ.

Engage, not Disengage:

One request I have for the alumni, especially those in the Diaspora, is for them to do much more to promote and encourage faculty and student exchanges with colleges and universities in the countries they reside in.

One of the most memorable characteristic of the Makerere of my time was its East Africanness. At that time it was the only university college in the four East African countries. Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar and Tanzania were administered by the British, even if they were titularly identified as a colony, a protectorate and a trust territory respectively. The student community was a variety of tribal ethnicities and racial make up. There were a few students from Malawi and Zambia and from abroad.

Despite this wide diversity of origins we were a pretty united student community. We were united in our common aspiration to see our countries independent of British rule. There were individual country political groupings. But were reached to each other during important events in the political agenda of transition. We recognised the diversity of cultural traditions, but we were passionately East African. Happenings at East Africa House in London where diaspora fellow students would gather to discuss our region's future strengthened or embrace at home.

At independence we had the East African High Commission which we later turned into the East African Community. It represented for many of us the precursor of what should have been an integrated East Africa, politically and economically. We decided to part ways in 1977. The rest is history, and in particular the harmful impact the breakdown has had on regional development.

But now a spirit of integration is resurging, and I would like to see Makerere alumni drive this surge. I ask that they renew the East Africanness which historically and inherently characterizes Makerere, to step up the momentum towards East African integration.

When four years ago the leaders of the re-born East African Community agreed on a Common Customs Union the defeatists loudly forecast sharp declines on state revenues. The opposite has transpired and they have been proven wrong. Revenues went up in all three states.

Last week, in Arusha, the five leaders of an enlarged East African Community signed the Protocol for the establishment of an East African Common Market, a great economic leap forward. Again the decision has not lacked its detractors. I ask alumni to take up the cudgels in defense of the Protocol. The Secretariat has illustrated how member states stand to gain with the Common Market. I must ask alumni again to be upfront in advocating its establishment. It is incredible and inexcusable that, in the midst of a global economic crisis, while developed countries move faster towards their own integration, such as in the EU, poor countries, such as those in our community, should prevaricate and equivocate!!.

International Cooperation in Education

Most western countries have reduced their support to African higher education, including scholarship programs for post-graduate studies abroad on the pretext that they wanted to help us meet the MDG target for basic education. This is a fallacy. No country was ever built by people with only basic education. Governance and institution building, and even entrepreneurship, requires people with higher education and specialized knowledge and skills.

A study conducted to show cross-country correlations between higher education and good governance showed a clear positive and significant correlation between higher education and each of the following indicators of good governance: corruption in government; rule of law; bureaucratic quality; ethnic tensions; repudiation of contracts by government; and risk of expropriation.

Furthermore, the study showed a clear correlation between higher education and entrepreneurial activity. Individuals with higher levels of education have higher levels of entrepreneurial activity.

There is no doubt, therefore, that higher education is absolutely necessary in building strong and capable institutions in our countries, in developing the capacity to compete in the global knowledge economy, and in meeting our development goals. Knowledge has, and will continue to surpass physical capital as a source of wealth. As the 1998-99 World Development Report put it:

“Knowledge is like light. Weightless and intangible, it can easily travel the world, enlightening the lives of people everywhere. Yet billions of people still live in the darkness of poverty-- unnecessarily”.

Education at all levels, including higher education, is the switch to turn on the light. People talk of the “green revolution”. The time has come to talk about an “intellectual revolution”. Our universities must not only develop capacity to deliver relevant curricula to more traditional and non-traditional students, but they have to be strong enough financially and in terms of faculty to do more research, and to develop capacity to acquire, absorb and internalize knowledge from the rest of the world.

It is our educated young people who will provide the capacity “to run more effective governments, develop the business of the future, and build the health and educational systems that make such a difference to the quality of life”.

We may not all be like Stanford University in California that developed the series of technology and entrepreneurship mentoring that produced the Silicon Valley, transforming the world. Nevertheless, we can, still make our own small contribution.

Conclusion:

Mr Chancellor

Ladies and Gentlemen:

There is a Yoruba proverb: “However far the stream flows, it never forgets its source”. So it is with us, alumni. The education we were privileged to get here launched us into various orbits of life experiences and achievement. But we cannot forget Makerere. Today we have the opportunity to show—in both word and deed—that we have not forgotten you, Makerere.

I came here to provoke a debate, not to provide readymade solutions to governance and institutional challenges that Makerere and other universities in Africa face. And having hopefully provoked you sufficiently, I will leave you with the ten most powerful two-letter words in the English language: IF IT IS TO BE, IT IS UP TO ME.

From our diverse origins we have converged here to pay homage and to support our Alma Mater. Together we can do it, and it is up to us. For, as the Archbishop of Canterbury said in Shakespeare's King Henry V, Act I, sc. 2:

*As many arrows, loosed several ways,
Come to one mark; as many ways meet in one town;
As many fresh streams meet in one salt sea;
As many lines close in the dial's centre;
So may a thousand actions, once afoot.
End in one purpose, and be all well borne
Without defeat...*

One purpose, well borne, without defeat.

May fortune recover her eyesight and be just in the distribution of her favours.

I thank you for your kind attention.