

**Address by Hon. Matthew Rukikaire, Chairman,
Makerere University Council**

**On the Occasion of Celebration of the Ten Year
Carnegie Support to the Makerere University Female
Scholarship Foundation, and in Commemoration of
Africa's 50 Years of Independence**

20th November, 2010

Serena Hotel, Kampala

Female Scholarship Foundation that will take on the responsibility of sustaining the female scholarship program at Makerere University.

I am sure I speak for my colleagues, members of the University Council, when I say that this occasion has special significance, first, because it occurs in this year, 2010 - the year Africa commemorates 50 years of Independence; and secondly because it falls at the end of our term as a University Council. We, therefore, consider it one of the milestones of our service as a Council. It is a source of pride for us that we are ending our term by launching the Makerere University Female Scholarship Foundation for a sustainable girls' higher education at Makerere. Bearing in mind that women form more than 50% of Uganda's population, there can be no greater contribution to national development than the education of girls.

For me personally, this occasion will remain memorable, as I recall the early 1960s, when the Rt Hon Professor Apolo Nsibambi, the Prime Minister of Uganda and I were students together at Makerere at a time when women were an insignificant proportion of the student community at the university.

Tonight, as we sit here representing a host of distinguished and prominent Alumni of our Alma Mater—Makerere, I am happy to say that the ratio of women to men in all the university faculties is almost half and half; as a matter of fact, at the last Graduation event, women were more than 50% of the graduands. That is why, tonight, we are recognizing and celebrating the significant contribution of our partners, the Carnegie Corporation, who have made it that much easier and faster for Makerere to accomplish that important contribution to the development of Eastern Africa as a region through the education of women.

I beg your indulgence, tonight, as I reflect with some pride, on the achievements of Makerere University these past four years. The university has experienced significant growth and innovations particularly in the area of technology: for example, Makerere University was the only African University South of the Sahara (excluding S. Africa), in a global partnership of top universities, to design and build an energy-efficient car. As you may have read in the news, the Faculty of Technology is about to roll out Uganda's first electric car, thanks to H.E President Museveni's support to technological innovations at Makerere University!

**Our Chief Guest, Rt. Hon Professor Apolo
Nsibambi, Prime Minister of Uganda;**

**Our Special Guest, Ms. Deana Arsenian, Vice
President, Carnegie Corporation of New York, and
Your Esteemed Delegation;**

**Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and High
Commissioners;**

**Your Royal Highness Sylvia Nagginda Luswata, the
Nabagereka of Buganda Kingdom and Patron of the
Makerere University Female Scholarship Initiative;**

**Honorable Ministers and Members of Parliament
of Uganda and East Africa;**

**Chancellor, Professor Mondo Kagonyera, and
Chancellors of sister Universities here present;**

Members of the Makerere University Council;

**The Administration and Staff of Makerere
University;**

**Distinguished Alumni of Makerere—East Africa's
oldest and premier University;**

Honored Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen:

Introduction:

I am honored to welcome you to this celebration of 10 years of successful support to the Female Scholarship Initiative at Makerere by the Carnegie Corporation. Mine is a double pleasure tonight, as I also warmly welcome you to the launch of the Makerere University

The department of Food Science Technology has also come up with a number of innovations. The Faculty of ICT is a leading one in East and Central Africa. The Faculty of Social Sciences, the Schools of Medicine and Public Health are on the cutting edge of research and development, especially in HIV/AIDS and Infectious Diseases.

It has also been our privilege as a Council to consider and approve the formation of Colleges, thereby consolidating the various programs in the University.

We have not done it alone; we have had support from solid and reliable partners along the way. We are especially grateful to the Carnegie Corporation of New York for all its institutional development support, in particular, support to extension and equipping of the Main Library!

Perhaps none of these achievements are more important than the development of the Gender Mainstreaming Division and all the programs it will undertake for the promotion of girls education and mainstreaming gender in all aspects of Makerere University life.

We are in the final process of approving the establishment of the Gender Mainstreaming Directorate so that it becomes autonomous. I want to congratulate and thank the Vice Chancellor, his Deputies, and most especially Ms. Catherine Kanabahita, Head of Gender Mainstreaming and Deputy Registrar, and everyone at Makerere for your collaborative hard work in this.

In this regard, I wish to add my voice to the special appeal lodged with the Government of Uganda through you, Rt Hon Prime Minister. My Council and I commit to work with your office, Rt Hon Prime Minister, to ensure that the required 1.5 billion shillings is availed to Makerere University, to administer targeted affirmative action and affirmative opportunity scholarships for girls from Greater Northern Uganda. This is something we need to do as a nation, so that none of our citizens is left behind. As we enter into the larger East African federation; we cannot afford to leave Greater Northern Uganda behind in terms of education and human resource development. I thank you that you will give serious consideration to this special appeal.

Distinguished Guests, it would be remiss of me not to point out that all this progress has been possible largely because of the stable environment that prevailed on the Campus of Makerere, devoid of the well-known and chronic demonstrations and strikes. I must commend the teaching and Administration staff, and most especially the students, who have remained patient and peaceful in the midst of sometimes overwhelming difficulties. I want also to pay tribute to the Ministry of Education and Government for partnering with us in our efforts to maintain a peaceful environment.

In conclusion, permit me to reiterate the historic nature of this day of launching the Makerere University Female Scholarship Foundation (MUFSF) and its significance to Makerere University, Uganda, East Africa and the African continent as a whole:

- First, it demonstrates that Makerere, the “mother school”—*alma mater*—of vanguard *Alumni*/leaders in the struggle for Africa’s Independence, has continued her pace-setter leadership. In the last couple of years, Makerere has reclaimed its academic pre-eminence in teaching and research, having moved from the 56th to less than 10th position in ranking in Africa South of the Sahara, again excluding the Republic of South Africa.
- Secondly, for Uganda, this historic MUFSF Launch signals Uganda’s commitment to higher education for the women of Africa, and to the development of their leadership. I have no doubt that this will define Uganda’s destiny in the 21st Century.
- Thirdly, for Africa, Makerere - East Africa’s oldest and premier University - is the best platform to articulate Africa’s clarion call to unleash the full potential of her women through higher education for girls, towards “Africa’s new future in the next 50 years, 2010-2060”.

I am grateful to be alive to witness it today, and I am proud to be an alumnus of East Africa’s oldest University as together WE BUILD FOR THE FUTURE!

I thank you, Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen!