

REMARKS

BY

Professor Apolo R Nsibambi

The Rt Hon Prime Minister of Uganda

Representing

H E the President of the Republic of Uganda

At the Makerere University

Grand Makerere University Alumni Re-Union

On Friday, 27th November 2009

At 2:00 pm

Your Excellency Benjamin Mkapa, The former President of Tanzania

Hon Ministers

Hon Members of Parliament

The Chancellor

Chairman of Makerere University Council

The Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellors

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am here to represent the His Excellency the President who has sent his warm regards to you. Your Excellency Benjamin Mkapa and other Makerere Alumni, Makerere University is delighted to receive you as one of the most outstanding Alumni of this institution. I am also delighted as an Alumnus and former Chancellor of this University, to join you at the Re-Union at Makerere University, an institution I cherish.

You have continued to show interest in an institution which nurtured you. I am delighted that you, an Alumnus of Makerere have not only risen to the highest position of leadership in Tanzania, but also that you have continued to be a key player on the global scene in diplomacy, environmental conservation, poverty alleviation efforts and others even after you left the Presidency.

During your Presidency in Tanzania, you assiduously supported the drive for East African integration and the fruits are showing. President Benjamin Mkapa, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and Daniel Arap Moi agreed in 1991 to resume the process of integrating East Africa at the Harare Commonwealth Conference. Recently, the Heads of State of the Partner States of Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi chaired a Customs Union and a Protocol on the Common Market was signed on 20th November 2009.

This means that there shall be freedom of movement of persons, labour, capital and services. The next step will be one currency for the East African Region. Thereafter, systematic steps must be taken to ensure that the Political Federation of East Africa is attained.

It is therefore telling Your Excellency Benjamin Mkapa, that you have retraced your steps to Makerere University, from where you began your lifelong journey of achievement and that as a prominent Alumnus, your objective is to help Makerere University rediscover herself and re-assert herself as a regional leader in training and research. Makerere has over the years played a significant role in shaping the East African region and Africa as a whole as the seat of debate, and through training and research and we would love to see that central role thriving again. It is also very important that as we move towards greater regional integration, the strategic role of our educational institutions in the integration process should be clearly defined and embedded in the process.

Your Excellency and the many Alumni present here, it is here that your role in the development of your institution Makerere University is defined. Your professional identity is defined by your association with Makerere University, whose Academic Transcripts and Certificates you carry. Your professional success or failure is therefore closely tied to the success or failure of your Alma mater. It is for this reason that you are being called upon to stand up and be counted in your support to Makerere. This University has had a tradition of producing world leaders; it is therefore in your interest to ensure that that tradition is maintained.

I am pleased to learn, Your Excellency that Makerere University has today planned to recognize you for your cause and contribution to humanity in the various ways earlier outlined in the citations. Let me add to the other voices that Makerere made the right choice in bestowing this great honour upon you. We have seen what you have and what you continue to do for humankind and this honorary award should provide further reason for you to continue with the great work you are doing. To Makerere University Convocation, you could not have made a better strategic choice by conferring this honour on one of our most outstanding alumni to move your strategy forward.

I wish to request you to address the Alumni.