



## VICE CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE MEDI-SHARE PROJECT NATIONAL CONFERENCE, 9<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2010, IMPERIAL ROYALE HOTEL, KAMPALA

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**Invited guests, international delegates, ladies and gentlemen:**

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I take this opportunity to welcome you warmly to the MEDI-SHARE project national conference. I commend the strategic partnership of the MEDI-SHARE project, which is an initiative taken by a consortium of institutions: CINENA of University of Bologna, Italy and pharmacy schools in three Higher Education institutions in East Africa; Makerere University, Nairobi University, and Muhimbili University of Health Sciences.

I pay tribute to CINECA, a non-profit Consortium, made up of 37 Italian universities, for joining academic institutions in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific regions in MEDI-SHARE and taking the initiative to pilot IT tools for collection and management of data on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and malaria.

Through such partnerships, universities evolve into centres of academic excellence with breakthroughs in research, theorization, as well as strong partners in policy formulation and implementation.

The era of globalization demands collaborations among universities in order to find solutions to both local and international problems in an ever changing environment. I am therefore proud that we are here to witness the benefits of international collaborations among universities in the MEDI-SHARE project.

We all know that HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria are among the most killer diseases threatening humanity. This project gives us hope when universities develop initiatives to provide information, which helps in understanding the trend of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. This is one of the ways through which universities can ably justify their contribution to national development and also be accountable to the citizenry by making the world safer and a better place to live in.

Being a computer science professional, I know that the information collected can have effective multiplier effects with the integration of ICT. I therefore salute CINENA in conjunction with *Almalaurea* of Italy for developing the software and platform to manage this information.

As Vice Chancellor, I am glad that Makerere University is one of the Universities participating in the MEDI-SHARE project. Makerere University holds a prestigious position in Uganda in its humble contribution to knowledge and research in the region. Makerere has been a centre of many innovative discoveries including the discovery of Prostaglandins by SMM Karim in 1970s. Makerere is associated with the Uganda Cancer Institute where Buckitt's lymphoma was described in 1960s.

The three (3) diseases of your current interest namely HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria have received enormous interest within the body of researchers at Makerere University. The first awareness of a strange disease that was later identified as HIV AIDS was first described in the country by Makerere University personnel in 1982. There is significant research work on Malaria; and a number of collaborative studies on Tuberculosis at the College of Health Sciences as well as research in prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV/AIDS.

In addition, the activities of this consortium are in line with the current Makerere University Strategic Plan (2008/09-2018/19), which emphasizes knowledge transfer partnerships and networking; and internationalization.

I am particularly happy that Makerere can share in the wealth of experience and professionalism coupled with technical expertise in IT solutions to fill the expectations of customers such as Ministry of Health and other national agencies.

I hope that your discussions will pave a way to better manage and promote health management information systems.

*To the international guests in particular you are most welcome to this country once referred to as the Pearl of Africa. I do hope you take off some time during your stay here to sample some of the local foods, visit a few cultural sites. Go see the source of the longest river in the world.*

**I now declare this conference open as we build for the future.**

Sincerely: Professor Venansius Baryamureeba, Acting Vice Chancellor, MAK