

MAKERERE



UNIVERSITY

VICE CHANCELLOR'S MEDIA BRIEFING, FRIDAY 16TH MARCH 2018

COMMUNICATION FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROF. BARNABAS NAWANGWE

1. Introduction

I welcome you all to this media briefing. A number of developments have taken place at Makerere University in the months of February and March 2018. I am therefore pleased to use this platform to share with you some of the important issues.

2. Abolition of the Staff Incentive

You will recall that in 2016, the University Management and Council observed that with the declining student numbers leading to the decline in revenue, the payment of incentive was unsustainable.

In 2016, the University Management and Council communicated to members of staff that the payment of incentive was not financially sustainable. That due to the declining student numbers that led to a significant decline in the University revenue, the University was not in position to pay members of staff incentive effective 1st July 2016. Unfortunately, some members of staff went on strike.

It is important to note that Makerere University internally generated revenue has dropped from UGX 120 billion to UGX 90 billion over a period of 10 years. At the same time, the cost of in-puts has gone up considerably.

On 1st November 2016, The President of the Republic of Uganda and Visitor of Makerere University, H.E Yoweri Kaguta Museveni issued a Presidential Directive to close Makerere University with immediate effect. The President appointed a Visitation Committee chaired by Hon. Dr. Abel Rwendeire (R.I.P) to study the issues affecting Makerere University and recommend strategies aimed at finding a lasting solution to the financial issues affecting the University.

In the report handed over by the Deputy Chairperson of the Visitation Committee, Lady Justice Keturah Katunguka to H.E President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the Visitation Committee recommended abolition of the salary incentive, citing the inability by the University to pay the incentive and the decision by Government to enhance staff salaries.

During its meeting held on 14th March 2018, the University Council reiterated that the incentive was introduced as a stop gap measure pending enhancement of salaries by Government. The incentive was introduced basing on NTR budget of UGX120billion, but this has reduced to UGX.90billion. The Makerere University Council re-affirmed that the incentive was abolished with effect from 1st July 2016.

The alternatives to the incentive are being handled by the evening teaching and allowances committee whose report will be presented to the University Council.

3. Evening Programmes at Makerere University

All continuing students of Makerere University currently enrolled on the evening programmes will continue with their studies until successful completion. In simple terms, all students already admitted to Makerere University evening programmes will continue to attend lecturers in the evening.

During its meeting held on 14th March 2018, the University Council resolved that all new students (freshers) starting with the coming Academic Year 2018/2019, will be admitted to study various academic programmes at Makerere University on either the day programme from 8:00am to 5:00pm or on the afternoon programme from 2:00pm to 6:00pm. Colleges are however allowed to run evening programmes after filling the minimum enrolment on day and afternoon programmes.

In terms of facilities to facilitate this revised teaching schedule, we plan to make use of the new space that came online with the completion of the Central Teaching Facilities 1 and 2, as well as all spaces that used to serve as dining facilities in the Halls of Residence. Some of the funds that will be saved as a result of this innovation will go towards offsetting the University debt.

According to the proposed Makerere University Strategic Plan 2020-2030 and as recommended by the Visitation Committee Report, Makerere University should become a research-led university. This will necessitate reducing our undergraduate student numbers and increasing our graduate student admissions. We believe that there exists a critical number of Universities in Uganda to handle the training of undergraduate students and only Makerere University has the capacity to produce the Masters and PhD graduates that will be needed to facilitate undergraduate training and the development of the country at large.

4. Management of the evening teaching for continuing students

Since all continuing students of Makerere University currently enrolled on the evening programmes will continue with their studies until successful completion, there is need to continue remunerating staff offering services on the evening programme.

I constituted a committee to review the evening teaching programme with a view of defining alternative ways of remunerating staff who teach on the evening programme and large classes in the absence of the incentive.

The Committee is still working and considering a number of issues including the following:

- Extra load allowance for staff with teaching loads beyond the mandatory 12 hours
- Remuneration for staff that teach and mark large numbers of students (above 200 students)
- A revenue sharing model between the Centre and the colleges that will be appropriate in the absence of incentive.

The University Management has provided the schedule of University activities and a proposal from the Committee shall, through the University Channels, be presented to the University Council on how to share revenue between Administrative and Academic Units.

5. Abolition of Catering Services

The University provides food to Government sponsored students resident in the University's halls of residence, who total 2000. In a survey conducted by the Office of the Dean of Students, over 50 percent of the eligible students recommended that instead of the University providing food, the University should give them their money to buy food.

The results of the survey were endorsed by the Finance, Planning and Administration Committee of Council, which presented the matter to the University Council. It was becoming increasingly uneconomical for the University to continue providing food for students residing in Halls of residence.

On 1st March 2018, the University Council unanimously agreed to stop providing meals in the Halls of Residence effective June 2018. With this Council resolution, each Government sponsored student will receive **UGX.476,000/=** per semester for feeding.

The Students Affairs Committee is currently coming up with strategies aimed at ensuring that the University designates befitting commercial places for students on campus to buy food. The food outlets that previously existed on the Main Campus did not meet the minimum standards required by public food vending outlets. These were located in staff residences and undesignated locations which necessitated their demolition.

6. MakRun 2018 Proceeds to support construction of Students' Centre

The Katikkiro of Buganda, Ow'ekitiibwa Charles Peter Mayiga who is also an alumnus of Makerere University has accepted the Makerere University Endowment Fund's invitation to grace the 2018 edition of the Makerere University Run (MakRun) as Chief Runner. The Chief Runner Ow'ekitiibwa Charles Peter Mayiga will flag off the MakRun 2018 runners on Sunday 25th March 2018 at the University Freedom Square starting at 7:00am.

As one of the strategies to raise funds for the University, the Makerere University Endowment Fund (MakeEF) –was established in 2014. The

Makerere University Endowment Fund chaired by Dr. Martin Alier under its mandate to achieve long term financial sustainability for the University established the annual Makerere University Run (MakRun).

In my address during the 68th Graduation Ceremony, I paid tribute to all staff, students, gallant alumni and members of the general public including corporate bodies that participated in last year's Run, where UGX 247,845,000 (two hundred forty seven million eight hundred forty five thousand Uganda Shillings) was raised.

All proceeds from the MakRun are aimed at supporting the Fund's inaugural project, the "Students Centre", estimated to cost UGX15 billion. The Mak Students centre is aimed at enhancing the quality of student life and experience. A one stop Student Information centre, state of the art Auditorium worth 200 seating capacity and Wall of Fame, Conference facilities, Cafeterias, Internet Kiosk, Memorabilia Shop, Bookshop, Recreational Sports Arena (pool, chess, table tennis, gym etc), Entertainment and Social Areas.

We are therefore once again rallying your support for this noble cause, by urging you all to warm up and get ready to participate in the MakRun 2018 scheduled on Sunday, 25th March 2018 starting at 7:00am in the Freedom Square.

Tickets are now on sale at UGX15,000 for students, UGX25,000 for the Silver and UGX50,000 for the Gold. Tickets may be obtained at the following locations: Makerere University Main Building, Makerere University Printery, Makerere University Planning and Development Department (PDD), Block C-Lincoln Flats, and Piato Restaurant on Lumumba Avenue, Kampala.

The Vice Chancellor will sponsor 200 students to take part in the MakRun2018 and the Principals at College level will sponsor a number of students. I once again call upon all of you including our friends in the media to join us in this rare opportunity as we run with the Katikkiro of Buganda.

7. Makerere's Zero Tolerance Policy on Sexual Harassment

In line with the constitution of the Republic of Uganda that guarantees all Ugandans equality, dignity and non-discrimination. Makerere University reaffirms its zero tolerance for sexual harassment and is committed to creating an environment that respects and protects the rights of all its members male and female.

The Makerere University Policy and Regulations on Sexual Harassment applies to students, academic staff, administrative staff, support staff of Makerere University as well as to others who participate in Makerere programmes, activities and employment in both on-and off-campus settings.

The University Council reiterated that anyone facing allegations of sexual harassment should be suspended and investigations expedited.

On 2nd March 2018, I suspended Dr. Swizen Kyomuhendo; who was facing sexual harassment allegations, from the University with immediate effect to allow smooth investigations into the matter. The CHUSS Sexual Harassment Committee has commenced investigations in the allegations against Dr. Swizen Kyomuhendo as provided for in the Sexual Harassment Policy.

In addition, I appointed a Committee consisting of five (5) respected Professors to investigate the matter of Sexual Harassment at Makerere University generally, including a review of the Sexual Harassment Policy and report the findings and recommendations to the Vice Chancellor. The Committee headed by Prof. Sylvia Tamale from the School of Law is expected to conclude the investigations within two (2) months. I wish to reiterate that this committee has not been appointed to investigate the recent allegations against Dr. Swizen Kyomuhendo but will investigate the causes of increasing cases of sexual harassment at the University in general. The Committee will also receive submissions on sexual harassment at Makerere University. Members of the public are also free to provide information on sexual harassment or report any other cases at Makerere University to the committee.

Many of our stakeholders, including our development partners are concerned about this problem at Africa's premier University, but I want to once again assure them that Makerere University Administration has zero tolerance to sexual harassment. We are committed to fighting this vice until it is routed from our University. We encourage the victims of sexual harassment whether students or staff, to take the bold step and report the cases to the various organs of University authorities so that together we fight the vice of sexual harassment.

Makerere was the first university in Africa to come up with a policy on sexual harassment more than ten years ago. Whereas this policy is one of the best, some gaps such as; the absence of sanctions against Heads of Units or Officers of the University who receive reports on sexual harassment and do not take action, have been identified and the Committee will help make recommendations on how we can improve the policy.

It has also come to our attention that many students do not read our policies and as such, do not know what to do in case someone makes sexual advances at them. I therefore urge our students to read our policies and find out how and where they can report. Reports can be made to the Heads of Department, the Dean of Students, Students Guild Government and Representatives and even the Vice Chancellor's office. We have set up a special desk in the Office of the Vice Chancellor where cases can be reported.

We thank the media for helping us to expose cases of sexual harassment but request you to always be objective in your reporting.

8. Centralised marking

The problem of late submission of marks has tarnished our image for a long time. Effective Semester I of this Academic year 2017/18, we introduced centralised marking of all exams. This initiative is aimed at addressing; reports of scripts lost during the process, delayed release of students' marks as well as loss of students' marks. I am therefore happy to report that for the first time in our history, we have had all our marking completed within one month. This initiative has worked well for us and we are going to reinforce this going forward, as a measure of ensuring that our students can secure their transcripts and transcripts by the time they graduate.

Unfortunately, this morning we experienced an incident where students from the School of Statistics and Planning were demonstrating against the delayed release of their marks. This was caused by the lack of quorum at the School Board sittings, which meant that the final verified marks could not be published on the notice boards or results system. However, I have since established that all marking of exams at the School of Statistics and Planning was successfully completed and provisional marks are available with the Departments. I have asked the Principal, College of Business and Management Sciences (CoBAMS) to see to it that the School displays these provisional results and I am positive that this will be done by the end of the day.

9. Mak Students' Guild Elections 2018

Once again, I take this opportunity to congratulate the Guild President Elect, **Were Salim** upon his victory with 3,202 votes. I also thank the Electoral Commission Chairperson, Mr. Isaac Isabirye who was elected following the resignation of the former Chairperson Mr. Makumbi, all the members of the Electoral Commission and the Dean of Students for concluding the elections successfully.

On behalf of the University Management, I state that there are lessons learnt and there is need for electoral reforms. The Students Affairs Committee has embarked on the evaluation process that will inform the interactions and consultations with key stakeholders in order to improve the electoral processes.

10. Suspension of Ronald Ainebyoona from the University

I decided to suspend Mr. Ronald Ainebyoona, a student of Makerere University, who admitted on television that he forged examination results to enable him obtain nomination for Guild President. He also claimed to have bribed Mr. Makumbi the Chairman of the Electoral Commission, who he also accused of having solicited a bribe on behalf of the Dean of Students. Mr. Makumbi has since denied these allegations in writing.

Mr. Ainebyoona has been suspended and this matter is to be investigated by the Disciplinary Committee. We have also handed over his case to the Police to carry

out further investigations because forgery and bribery are crimes under the laws of Uganda.

11. Visitation Committee Report

On 29th December 2017, the Visitation Committee handed over its Report to H.E. the President and Visitor to Makerere University. The University Council was required to provide a formal response to the Visitation Committee Report to the Ministry of Education and Sports as guided by the President upon receiving the report.

On Wednesday, 14th March 2018, the University Council met and dispatched the aforementioned formal response to the Ministry of Education and Sports.

The Visitation committee made some observations related to governance and I wish to highlight three of them;

- i. Amending the law to reduce conflicts in the University especially at top management level. One of those cited was the provision that an officer reports to one member of management but is responsible to another member in line with other duties of responsibility
- ii. The size of the University Council should be reduced to a certain fixed number. However, we think that the law should instead stipulate the various constituencies to be represented and the minimum qualifications.
- iii. The appointment of top management officials should be done by the Ministry of Education and Sports on recommendation by the University Council.

The Visitation Committee report further observed some irregularities in financial management in the University.

- a. **Loss of Funds:** The visitation committee covered a long period of time as reported by some media houses. During this time some University officers had delayed to account for funds and this was always reported on, in the Auditor General's reports. These officers eventually accounted for these funds and ultimately there was no financial loss.

- b. **Disciplining officers who cause financial loss:** The University has been following up on any matters that relate to financial losses and so far staff who were found to have caused financial loss were disciplined and some were dismissed by the Makerere University Appointments Board.
- c. **Borrowed Funds from Projects:** The University operates as one entity and the cases in question were a borrowing from the University projects. This arose out of the financial constraints that the University was faced with owing to delayed payment of tuition by our students and yet we needed to procure teaching materials. However, efforts have been made to refund the said funds to the projects.
- d. **Procurement Irregularities.** The University has a Contracts Committee and a Procurement and Disposal Unit which follows the PPDA to the letter. The accusation was that some companies with lowest bids were not being given jobs. However, a company may be the lowest bidder but fail to meet technical specifications and hence is not chosen. A few cases that were investigated for procurement irregularities were disciplined according to the gravity of the matter.

.....I thank you for listening to me.....