

MAKERERE



UNIVERSITY

**ADDRESS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR BARNABAS NAWANGWE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 70TH GRADUATION CEREMONY
AT THE FREEDOM SQUARE ON FRIDAY 17TH JANUARY 2020**

- The Chancellor Makerere University
- Honorable Ministers
- Honorable Members of Parliament
- Members of the Diplomatic Corps
- Your Lordships the Judges of the Judicature
- Religious Leaders
- The Leadership of Kampala Capital City Authority
- Representatives of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies
- Chancellors and former Chancellors
- The Chairperson and Members of Makerere University Council
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Members of the University Management Team
- Former Vice Chancellors
- Former University Management Staff
- Vice Chancellors, Rectors and Principals of other Universities and Institutions
- Members of the University Senate
- Members of Staff of Makerere University
- The Chairperson and Members of Convocation
- The President, Vice President and Speaker of the Students Guild
- Parents and Guardians
- Graduands
- The Media Fraternity
- Distinguished Visitors
- Ladies and Gentlemen:

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

It is my honour and privilege to welcome you all to the fourth and final session of the 70th graduation ceremony of Makerere University. I extend warm congratulations to you all upon the various academic efforts that have culminated in your recognition as graduands of the 70th Graduation Ceremony of Makerere University. We thank God for His divine enablement that has brought you this far.

Let me take this opportunity to once again congratulate our dear Chancellor, Prof. Ezra Suruma for being re-appointed Chancellor of Makerere University for another four years by H.E. The President. I also thank the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister of Uganda, the Rt. Hon. Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda and the Hon. Minister of education and sports, Mama Janet Museveni for gracing the first and opening session of this graduation ceremony on Tuesday 14th January 2020.

Allow me also to, once again, express our regret for the inconveniences caused by the delayed procurement of graduation gowns. However, I am happy to note that all graduands at this ceremony have received their complete academic dress for graduation. I wish to inform all our stakeholders that I have appointed a team of our eminent members of staff, headed by one of eminent professors to investigate the circumstances that led to the gowns saga and to assure all of you that everything will be done to avoid a repeat of that very unfortunate incident. But I have even more good news for you graduands. All your transcripts have been printed and are ready for collection from your colleges. Furthermore, all graduands on professional programmes can collect their certificates by March and the rest of the graduands by May this year.

2. GRADUATION STATISTICS

Ladies and gentlemen, for this 70th graduation ceremony, a total of **13,510** students will be conferred upon degrees and awarded diplomas of Makerere University in various disciplines. Of these, **62** will receive PhDs, **1,173** Masters Degrees and **119** Postgraduate Diplomas, while **12,156** will receive undergraduate diplomas and Bachelors Degrees. 50.5% of the graduands are women and 49.5% are men. In a very special way, we congratulate the **422** of students who are graduating with First Class Honours Division. Congratulations!

Mr. Chancellor Sir, during this 70th Graduation Ceremony of Makerere University, I am delighted to report that the overall best student in the Humanities (at the undergraduate level) is Ms. Rita Namukose who scored a First Class Degree with a **CGPA of 4.92 out of 5** in the **Bachelor of International Business of Makerere University**. Ms Rita Namukose from Makerere University Business School graduated yesterday during the third session and was recognized by the Makerere University Convocation. The best student in the Sciences (at the undergraduate level) is Ms. Sarah Namayengo who scored a

First Class Degree-Honours Division with a with a **CGPA of 4.83 out of 5 in the Bachelor of Conservation Forestry and Products Technology of Makerere University**. Ms. Sarah Namayengo from the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences graduated on Tuesday 14th January 2020 and was duly recognized by the Convocation.

I applaud all members of staff from the Colleges who will be awarded PhDs and Masters degrees in various disciplines. Your dedication to improving yourselves academically as well as our students is commendable. Makerere University is depending on you to form new or join existing multidisciplinary teams and make your personal contribution to improving our academic profile. I also take this opportunity to congratulate all members of staff who have been promoted to various academic levels in the last one year.

3. A WORD OF GRATITUDE

Ladies and gentlemen, the achievements of our graduands would not have been possible without the selfless contributions of our Academic, Administrative and Support staff. Through classwork and other avenues, they have shared with you knowledge and tips on how to succeed in the professional world. They have also introduced you to their networks and some of you have made the most of these opportunities. I implore you to always treasure their contribution to your success and always introduce them to your new networks so that together, we broaden the impact and reach of your alma mater.

I thank all our stakeholders, particularly the Government of Uganda and our development partners who have supported us through the years. In particular, I thank the President of the Republic of Uganda, H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni for the unwavering support to Makerere University to consolidate her position as a modern twenty first university.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, Uganda is currently one of the fastest growing economies in the World. I congratulate the Government for all the strategic interventions that have made this possible. I believe that the strategic investments in the training of key human resource at Makerere University and other sister universities. But with the huge potential that has been created here due to the huge investments by Government and Development Partners in human resource and infrastructure development, Makerere can do even much more to help our Country achieve middle income status much faster. I am happy that Government has appreciated this huge potential and has increased strategic investments in the University. During the Financial Year 2019/2020, Makerere University received special funding worth UGX 30 billion from the Government of Uganda to support high impact Research and Innovations. This support will greatly boost our strategic outlook for next ten years as we seek to: position Makerere as a research intensive University; enhance engagement with players in industry and business; implement a problem/community based learning approach; and sustain an inclusive and gender mainstreamed University. I also believe that as a result of enhanced research and innovation, the University will have

increased capacity to spin-off companies and create the jobs which our Country so badly needs. The first call for competitive grants attracted more than 700 applications, but the Grants Management committee was able to award only 200. **I urge all our researchers to be on the lookout for the second Grant Call which will come out shortly after the 70th Graduation Ceremony.**

Our visibility as an institution continues to improve with your support, and we are constantly exploring ways to incorporate the sustainability component in all our activities. Because of your support Makerere University has continued to rank among the top five universities in Africa and among the top 400 globally. Makerere is also considered the best black university on earth. With more than 70% of our 1340 academic staff holding PhDs, Makerere boasts of the most highly qualified faculty at any university on this continent. In five years every member of the academic staff at Makerere university will have a PhD. I thank our development partners for supporting our mutually beneficial institutional development programmes and I must single out the Swedish Government among our many supporters, which has helped train more than 400 of our staff for PhD. Because of this enormous support, Makerere is ranked No. 2 in Africa in research productivity. We are also ranked No. 1 globally in collaborative research, that is research conducted with partners at other universities. Makerere also boasts of the largest number of MoUs with international partner universities globally. We welcome more development partners to support us in further strengthening teaching and learning as well as research and innovation.

I implore all graduands of the 70th congregation as well as all the other alumni of this great institution out there to take keen interest in the strategic direction of your alma mater. Your alma mater is home to the brightest staff and students in the region and you should therefore look no further for a collaborating partner in corporate, philanthropic, knowledge translation and transfer endeavours. I also urge you to return and further your academic careers.

4. SUPPORT FOR THE GIRL CHILD

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I am pleased to announce that effective next academic year 2020/2021, Makerere University Management, Senate and Council will double the number of scholarships under the Female Scholarship Scheme from 20 to 40 and cover both tuition and functional fees for successful applicants. This scheme targets academically bright but economically disadvantaged female students mainly from Northern Uganda. We thank our partners including the Carnegie Corporation of New York, MasterCard Foundation, the Embassy of the Peoples Republic of China in Uganda, Japanese Embassy as well as other people of goodwill who are also providing scholarships to support economically disadvantaged students with affirmative action for girls. Management is also studying a proposal for consideration by Council to institute special scholarships for ethnic minorities in Uganda.

Makerere University is an equal opportunities institution. We have noted that continued under-representation of the girl child in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) courses. Last year, Council resolved to ring fence 40% admission into STEM for girls. That policy will commence with the intake for academic year 2020/21. In order to ensure the safety of our female students, Council and Management will explore the possibility of constructing more halls of residence on campus for female students.

5. PARTNERSHIPS AND INTERNATIONALISATION

I have already reported that Makerere University has the highest number of international partnerships in the world. Last year alone we signed MOUs with more than 40 universities, organisations and agencies in different parts of the world. One of them is the International Law Institute and African Centre for Legal Excellence. We have entered a partnership with them to conduct continuing professional development programmes for all levels in the different professions. The Institute has a table at the entrance to this venue and I urge all of you to take interest in the programmes offered through this collaboration.

6. ACHIEVEMENTS AND RECOGNITIONS FROM COLLEGES PRESENTING GRADUANDS

Mr. Chancellor Sir, in the fourth and final session of the 70th Graduation Ceremony of Makerere University, I present to you graduands from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology, and the School of Law.

a) College of Humanities and Social Sciences

I take this opportunity to congratulate our own Professor of Literature, Reverend Sister Dominica Dipio upon being appointed Consultor of Pontifical Council for Culture by Pope Francis. I thank Professor Sister Dipio for always flying the Makerere University flag high and wish you success in this noble and global responsibility.

I am also pleased to announce that Gerda Henkel Stiftung in Germany, which has supported PhD training of **30** members of staff and students in the last three years, has extended its cooperation with the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, by committing to support **60** more PhD fellows for the next six years starting 2020. We are sincerely grateful to our partners for this great gesture that reinforces our commitment to build for the future!

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences continues to be a vibrant college in teaching and research. In 2019 the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation which is already funding several projects, PhD training and other academic programmes, extended to the

College another grant worth 800,000 US dollars to pursue a College-wide research project titled: *Historicizing the Humanities at Makerere University Since 1922*. The Project seeks to rethink the research and scholarship enterprise of the humanities and humanistic social sciences at Makerere University. The College also received 800,000 US dollars to support Early Career Scholars to pursue cutting-edge and innovative research, publish and supervise graduate students. We sincerely thank the Foundation for this invaluable support accorded to the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Distinguished guests, I am pleased to inform you that through the Department of Religion and Peace Studies, Makerere University competed and won the bid to host the first International **Rotary Peace Centre** in Africa. The Rotary Peace Centre aims at promoting world peace by educating and empowering peace builders through rigorous academic training, applied field experience, and global networking opportunities. Through this training, Rotary Peace Fellows develop the skills they need to serve as leaders and catalysts for peace and conflict resolution both in their local communities and around the globe. The Rotary Peace Centre for sub-Saharan Africa was launched at Makerere University on 9th January, 2020. This is indeed a commendable achievement and I congratulate all those who actively participated in the bidding process.

b) College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology in 2017 won a World Bank grant worth **Six (6) million dollars** to train **Masters** and **PhD** students through the World Bank Centre of Excellence. Today, this project is graduating its first cohort of students. These **52** students will today receive their Masters degrees in various engineering and health disciplines. The College has so far recruited **141** students under this scholarship program, **30%** of whom are regional students. Female enrolment on the program has grown to **36.9%**.

The College has continued to partner with other Science-based universities across Africa in order to address key challenges affecting society. With financial support from the European Commission Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, CEDAT will partner with Eight (8) other universities on Graduate Students Mobility Programmes for Innovative Renewable Energy Technologies, as well as Mobility for African Scholars for Transformative Engineering Training. Each Mobility Programme was granted close to 1.4 Million Euros. We thank the European Commission for the financial support.

The College supported Government initiatives towards building Uganda's technology and industrial infrastructure through strategic training of officers from various Government Ministries in Management of Public Private Partnership contracts with local and international companies. The first cohort of students completed their Training in November 2019, and Makerere University is set to support other Government efforts towards transforming Uganda industrial sector.

Through the Problem Based Learning Approach, CEDAT students participated in different competitions and won international awards aimed at spurring innovation within a circular economy that upholds sustainable use of the world resources. **Five (5)** students from CEDAT participated in the Wege Prize, organised by the Wege Center for Sustainable Design of Ferris State University, USA. CEDAT Team Wet Technik designed a system to address Uganda's water shortage and wastewater treatment issues by way of upcycling grey water using a mix of constructed wetlands and filtration bio-carriers made from pumice (a type of volcanic rock) and repurposed plastic bottle caps. The system aims to reduce the cost of water usage while minimizing environmental pollution from hazardous waste water.

Another CEDAT team of **five (5)** students code named VEPOX, participated in the ClimateLaunchpad Global Competition held in the Netherlands in November 2019 and won a grant of 75,000 Euros (UGX 300million) for an innovation that addresses water quality in rural areas. The team designed a water filtration technology code-named Vepox Filter that uses activated Carbon and Functionalized sand in order to make water from surface water sources portable for drinking especially in rural areas. This team of five will join 15 other innovators enrolled into the EIT Climate-KIC accelerator program, to enable them scale-up the VEpoX Filter to commercialization.

c) The School of Law

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the School of Law is set to launch the Disability Law and Rights Centre which will spearhead activities that include mainstreaming of the disability issues in the curricula, management as well as research. Through Research, the centre will continually influence policy and practice and align them to the provisions of the law.

In November 2019, the Human Rights and Peace Centre in collaboration with the Centre for Resolution of International Conflicts (CRIC) launched a Danida-supported research project on Security, Peace and Development in Uganda. The project will enhance research output of the School of Law through supporting **two (2)** postdoctoral students and **two (2)** PhD students in the field of security, development and state-building. Through publication and dissemination, it will enhance knowledge and civic engagement among key segments of the Ugandan population, including academics, media, women's rights groups, youth groups and others on the role of security in development and on state-building. The project's findings are expected to contribute to the national debate and influence legal and policy reforms in the development sector, law enforcement and civil military relations.

The School of Law received an additional grant from the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) which has increased service delivery especially through the Public Interest Law Clinic. Over 50 civil cases including land, family law, and administrative matters were successfully handled from May to November 2019 in the Legal Aid Clinic. 136 Law students are beneficiaries of the program ***"Using Legal Education to promote public***

interest Lawyering and improve access to Justice”. It aims at harnessing the legal knowledge for law students on social justice issues in the communities and improving public policy and rule of law. Through community outreaches, over 1,300 persons were reached through legal literacy sessions, while over 400 persons were served in the clinic.

In the year 2019, the Refugee Law Project celebrated 20 years of continued service as a community outreach wing of the School of Law. They continue to offer services focuses on empowering asylum seekers, refugees, and deportees, Internally Displaced Persons and host communities to enjoy their human rights and lead dignified lives, serving over 1,000 clients per year. The Project also offers space and learning opportunities for law students to become more involved in practical dimensions of legal counseling and advocacy through internships in the refugee settlements in northern Uganda. There are specialized projects that include children and rights, sexual and gender rights, psycho social programs and durable solutions all aimed at addressing specific problems of internally displaced persons and refugees.

7. THE NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

From this year, Makerere University will implement the new ten-year strategic plan approved by Council. In this strategic plan we will seek to make Makerere an even more research intensive University through the following measures:

- i) Increasing the ratio of graduate students;
- ii) Further improving and modernizing the research infrastructure;
- iii) Establishing research grants officers at all Colleges and at the Centre;
- iv) Establishing a science, technology and business incubation centre;
- v) Improving the living conditions of our graduate and female students by constructing specialized hostels for graduate and female students; and other.

This will consolidate Makerere’s position as a world class leader in research and innovation and accelerate our economic development.

8. A WORD TO THE GRADUANDS

As you leave the gates of Makerere University today with a new qualification, I pray that you will remain humble and eager to learn, especially from those who have gone before you. Do not ever disrespect anyone by virtue of their qualification. Some of the men and women that run today’s billion dollar industries did not complete their undergraduate degrees. However, they were wise enough to spot those who were capable of taking their dreams to the next level and recruit them. This should humble you enough to know that your degree is a stepping stone to greatness and not a license to step on other people’s toes. It will be very unfortunate to meet the person on whose toes you stepped on your next interview panel. Discipline, humility and character are the key licenses to your success. You are leaving Makerere with a degree from one of the best universities in the

World. But the quality of that degree will be seen from your deeds. Do not let Makerere down and always remember your alma mater. Makerere cherishes you and will always welcome you back as a visitor or as you strive to get even higher academic qualifications. Fare thee well.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion Mr. Chancellor Sir, I would like to thank you on behalf of the Council, Management, Senate and Staff of Makerere University for successfully presiding over the 70th Graduation Ceremony of Makerere University. I thank the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of Council and the entire Management Team, in the Chancellor's procession, which has been with us since Tuesday 14th January 2020 for the spirit of comradeship exhibited.

I thank the Ceremonies Committee and all members of staff who have been involved in the activities of the 70th Graduation Ceremony. In a special way, I thank the Department of Performing Arts and Film and the Police Band for ensuring that we have been entertained and had wonderful accompaniment as we sung the anthems. In the same spirit, I commend the Emcees namely: Dr. Patrick Mangeni, Dr. Allan Birabi and Ms. Ritah Namisango for a job well done.

I thank the Makerere University Convocation for ensuring that our best performing students are duly recognized and motivated to embark on the next phases of their lives with a token of appreciation.

I applaud our friends in the media for objectively and prominently covering the Makerere University 70th Graduation ceremony. With your support, you have made it possible for the Government, development partners, alumni, other stakeholders and general public to understand and appreciate the key developments and achievements in teaching and learning, research and innovations at this great institution.

I thank the Uganda Police Force, Uganda Peoples Defence Forces, and our own Chief Security Officer as well as Makerere University Police Station for ensuring that we have had a safe, secure and uninterrupted 70th Graduation Ceremony. Above all I thank the Almighty God who has given us excellent weather and peace throughout the entire ceremony.

In a special way I thank my Crisis Management Team which ensured that the issue of gowns was solved in time for this graduation. These include the two Deputy Vice Chancellors Dr. Umar Kakumba and Prof. William Bazeyo, the Principal of COBAMS Dr. Eria Hisali, the University Secretary, Mr. Yusuf Kiranda, the Academic Registrar Mr. Alfred Namoah, the University Bursar Mr. Evarist Bainomugisha and his colleagues Lubowa Gyaviira, Walter Odoch and George Turyamureeba, My PA Mr. Gordon Murangira and the rest of the wonderful staff in my office. This extraordinary team worked around the clock for the week leading to the graduation and pulled off what can only be described as a miracle.

Finally, I once again congratulate you the graduands, your parents and sponsors upon attaining this milestone in your life. May the Good Lord guide and protect you all. It is now my pleasure to invite the Chancellor to address the congregation. Thank you for your kind attention.

Signed: _____

PROF. BARNABAS NAWANGWE, VICE CHANCELLOR