

MAKERERE



UNIVERSITY

ADDRESS BY THE CHANCELLOR

Professor Ezra Suruma

On The Occasion of the 71st Graduation Ceremony of Makerere University

Wednesday 19th May 2021

- **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**
- **Chairperson of Makerere University Council**
- **Members of Makerere University Council**
- **Vice-Chancellor Makerere University**
- **Former Vice Chancellors**
- **Members of the University Management Team**
- **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**
- **Parents and Guardians**
- **Graduands**
- **The Media Fraternity**
- **Distinguished Visitors**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen:**

1. It is a great pleasure and privilege to welcome you all to the third day of Makerere University's 71st Graduation Ceremony. I am very pleased to congratulate the graduands, the parents, guardians as well as all faculty, staff and management of Makerere University for reaching this wonderful occasion. Thank you all very much for a job well done.

2. And indeed, congratulations on surviving covid19. It has been and remains a threat to the world. But we thank God who has brought us this far and we pray that this pandemic may soon come to an end. I congratulate you upon your survival and graduation in spite of all these trying times.
3. Today we are awarding degrees to students in the **College of Business and Management Sciences, College of Computing and Information Sciences and the College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources and Bio-security. I wish to thank the faculty and staff of these colleges for the excellent work they have done to prepare** the students who are graduating today. Thank you very much. I am confident that these graduates will have a transformative impact on the future of our country and on the entire African continent.
4. Allow me to take this opportunity to share my humble experience through some turbulent days. When I graduated in 1969 with a specialization in Finance at Fordham University in New York City, I did not attend the graduation ceremony. I did not have family members to cheer me up and so I decided to be satisfied with the fact that I had achieved my objective. So if you are out there and feeling unhappy because there is no one to make a party for you, cheer up. The chancellor is here and he has survived that journey.
5. When the opportunity to upgrade to a doctorate came, I found myself specializing in Economic Development, Growth and Fluctuations. Some of my friends teased me about the fluctuations part. They said Keynes had solved the problem of fluctuations or Business Cycles as they were classically called. When I returned to Uganda in 1973 to teach economics here at Makerere I found Uganda in a state of both political and economic shock. President Idi Amin's overthrow of President Obote had created political shock and his expulsion of the Asian community had created a severe economic shock. (Please see E. Suruma, *Advancing the Ugandan Economy*, 2014; for further details). For Uganda, business cycles were not a theory. It was a harsh reality.
6. Economic theory teaches us that shocks come from endogenous and exogenous factors. For example, changes in domestic savings and investment and public expenditures may be considered endogenous factors while droughts, wars and now covid19 are examples of external or

exogenous shocks. Is all this relevant or important to us today? I believe so.

7. Ever since independence in 1962, Uganda has experienced significant political and economic shocks. We have seen constitutional upheavals, military coups, economic breakdown, civil wars and now a global pandemic that threatens life everywhere. These shocks affect us collectively as well as individually.
8. My simple testimony is that God has taken me through all these upheavals. I believe that he has used me to fulfill the purpose for which He created me and I want you to stand firm in the belief, in the faith, that God has a purpose for your life and that purpose will be fulfilled. No man and no circumstance can nullify the purpose of God for your life.
9. So go home from here standing firm in this faith. Go home confident that the Lord who has brought you this far will never leave you nor forsake you. Despite the turbulence you experience in the air or on the seas God will make sure that you reach the destination for which He created you. As St Paul wrote in his letter to the people of Corinth “He has delivered us from death and He will deliver us.” (2 Corinthians 1:10)
10. Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. He will deliver us from every trouble and from every peril.

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY.