

# MAKERERE



# UNIVERSITY

## ADDRESS BY THE CHANCELLOR

**Professor Ezra Suruma**

**On The Occasion of the 71<sup>st</sup> Graduation Ceremony of Makerere University**

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021

- **Honorable Ministers Present**
- **The President of the African Development Bank, Dr. Akinwumi Adesina**
- **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 fifth and final day of Makerere University's 71st Graduation Ceremony. It gives me great joy to congratulate the graduands who have successfully endured to this day in spite of the severe pains and stresses of the past several years. Congratulations.

2. I also wish to extend strong gratitude to the parents and guardians who have had to meet what often looks like endless payments for tuition, functional fees, books, hostels, food, and transport and so on. You really deserve a break and I am happy for you that you are not only getting a break but seeing what you paid for. For those parents and guardians whose investment has not yet brought results, please hang in there. A day is coming when the prodigal son will come to his senses and you will see him/her coming home with that certificate. Hang in there and may the Lord hear your prayers.
3. Allow me to use this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to the Chairperson and members of the University Council together with the Vice-Chancellor and Management for their efforts in guiding this important institution. Similarly, I thank all members of faculty and staff for your hard work and endurance in advancing the academic integrity and excellence of Makerere University. We cannot thank you enough for the many sacrifices you make to ensure excellence in teaching, research and discipline.
4. In a special way I wish to extend a very warm welcome to Dr. Adesina, the President of the African Development Bank who has accepted our invitation and is here for the award of the Honorary Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa). We thank Dr. Adesina for the excellent work he is doing to uplift the African people and for honoring us with his presence today. As the African countries struggle to overcome the huge negative effects of Corvid19, I am sure that they will find a vital and sympathetic ally in the African Development Bank.
5. On this final day of our graduation ceremonies, we are awarding degrees and diplomas to students in the **College of Engineering Design Art and Technology, and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. 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.
6. I have looked at the topics of research especially in the humanities and social sciences. I am truly impressed and encouraged by the relevance of their research topics. They are tackling some of the most pertinent issues that touch on the social, political and economic welfare of our countries. I am confident that their research will have a transformative impact on the future of our country and the entire African continent.

7. During the past four days of graduation ceremonies I have tried to encourage the graduands and others in the audience by citing our resilience as a people through the changing fortunes of our 60 years since independence. There are many of us who are witnesses, who have seen with our own eyes the hand of God leading us through the serious economic and political troubles in the past six decades. I have tried to assure the graduands that despite the difficult times we have been through God's purpose for our lives has triumphed over evil and suffering.
8. You can be sure that the testing you have been enduring ever since your primary school days, this persistent testing, was to prepare you to overcome despite the toil and sweat and tears of this world. You now have a certificate that testifies to your perseverance, your persistence and your resilience. In my seven decades of wandering in many parts of the world I have become increasingly convinced that there were two things that could never be taken away from me: my faith in God and my education.
9. 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. Despite these trials, God has sustained us. I believe that God has used my time on earth to fulfill the purpose for which He created me. 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.
10. 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 we experience in the air or on the high seas God will make sure that we reach the destination for which He created us. Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. He will deliver you from every trouble and from every peril.
11. Permit me to thank our friends from Performing Arts and Film for being a source of joy and beautiful emotion throughout these graduation ceremonies. On Tuesday they brought tears of joy to my eyes when they sang: "*Carry your candle into the darkness and go light your world.*" A candle may be small in size but when it is taken where there is darkness it brings amazing relief and hope. So do not underestimate the power you

have to bring hope and joy wherever you find yourself, wherever God sends you. Together, our candles will grow into a powerful flame that will transform Uganda forever. So!

### **GO LIGHT YOUR WORLD**

(Chris Rice)

*1. There is a candle in every soul  
Some brightly burning, some dark and cold  
There is a Spirit who brings fire  
Ignites a candle and makes His home*

#### **CHORUS**

*Carry your candle, run to the darkness  
Seek out the hopeless, confused and torn  
Hold out your candle for all to see it  
Take your candle, and go light your world  
Take your candle, and go light your world*

*2. Frustrated brother, see how he's tried to  
Light his own candle some other way  
See now your sister, she's been robbed and lied to  
Still holds a candle without a flame*

*3. We are a family whose hearts are blazing  
So let's raise our candles and light up the sky  
Praying to our Father, in the name of Jesus  
Make us a beacon in darkest times*

*Carry your candle, run to the darkness  
Seek out the helpless, deceived and poor  
Hold out your candle for all to see it  
Take your candle, and go light your world*

*Carry your candle, run to the darkness  
Seek out the hopeless, confused and torn  
Hold out your candle for all to see it  
Take your candle, and go light your world  
Take your candle, and go light your world*

### **FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY.**