SPEECH BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL AT THE HAND-OVER CEREMONY FOR THE OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR, MAKERERE UNIVERSITY AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL ROOM, ON THURSDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER 2012

The Chancellor, Makerere University
Professor Baryamureeba, the Out-going Ag. Vice Chancellor
Professor Dumba Ssentamu, the In-coming Vice Chancellor
Members of Makerere University Council
The Chairperson MUBS Council
The Deputy Vice Chancellors
Principals of Colleges and MUBS
Members of Staff of Makerere University
Students
Invited Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

In June 2004 Professor Livingstone Sserwadda Lubobi was appointed as the first Vice Chancellor of Makerere University under the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTIA) 2001 (as amended) for a five year term. On the expiry of his contract in June 2009, a process to re-appoint him for the second term or a successor was started by the University Council as provided for in the Act. Unfortunately this process was to abort due to the expressed wish of Government of Uganda to amend the Act to address some of the problems that were articulated in the 2007 Report of the Visitation Committee to Public Universities chaired by Professor MacGregor. This occasioned the appointment of Professor Lillian Tibatemwa Ekirikubinza as Acting Vice Chancellor until October 2009.

Whereas the process of amending the Act was thought to be an easy and fairly straight forward activity that would be completed within a period of no more than three months, it did not materialize so. Towards the end of 2009, Makerere University Council then came up with an interim arrangement in which Council advertised internally for the filling of the position of the Vice Chancellor in an acting capacity until a substantive one would be appointed; presumably under the amended UOTIA. The outcome of this interim arrangement was the appointment of Professor Venasius Baryamureeba as the Acting Vice Chancellor in November 2009. His appointment was to run until such a time that the UOTIA Act was amended and/or a substantive Vice Chancellor was appointed.

Professor Baryamureeba, being the youngest ever Vice Chancellor of Makerere University, assumed office with a lot of enthusiasm and vigour. He came with a lot of good will from almost all the stakeholders of Makerere University. He initiated major

reforms in the various aspects of the management of the affairs of the University. He completed the formation of colleges within a remarkably short period. He streamlined the financial operations of the University, reducing the number of operational accounts from more than one hundred fifty to less than thirty. He developed a very good rapport with not only the Government of Uganda but with many Development Partners. In the unprecedented history of the University, Makerere was able to receive a commitment by the President of the Republic of Uganda to provide annually UGX 10bn for five years through the Presidential Initiative Project which will annually benefit: Food Science and Technology UGX 4.5bn, Engineering UGX 4.5bn; and SPEDA under the now College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources and Bio-security (COVAB) UGX 1bn to impart skills to youth. In addition, the President pledged UGX 154bn to support the nascent Transportation Centre through the next five years out of which UGX 10bn has already been disbursed in FY 2012/13. The ranking of the University within Africa is now in the single digit number. Makerere University became the University of choice for partnering in research in many disciplines. Exploiting his back ground as a computer guru, he pioneered valuable relationships with donors on measures to improve on the use of ICT in University setting and operations. While a lot was done within the short period more still remain to be done. I use this opportunity to thank Professor Baryamureeba for the innovations that he ushered in the University during his tenure and for containing the many unrests that threatened to derail not only him but the manner in which the affairs of the University was run.

The tenure of Professor Baryamureeba was nearly eclipsed by dogged paradox of success and near instability. There was as much accolade about his performance as about some of his perceived untamed edges that needed a little bit of polishing. In the end, the call for an appointment of a Vice Chancellor became such a loud rancour that it could not be ignored. Government withdrew the moratorium on the recruitment of a Vice Chancellor using the existing law, paving way for the search process to begin and hence this gathering.

The search process which was conducted in accordance with the UTIOA 2001 (as amended) kicked off in a less than blissful environment. There was a lot of suspicion and trepidation. Suspicion on the process was based partly on what had been obtaining on campus in the previous one year or so. Despite the disruptive manner in which the exercise was conducted, it ended with the appointment of Professor Ddumba Ssentamu who is now assuming office for a period of five years. I use this opportunity to whole heartedly congratulate Professor Ddumba Ssentamu for the success in the race and wish him the very best during his tenure.

The new Vice Chancellor assumes office at a time when the University is not totally settled. There are many issues which require both immediate and long term solutions. The immediate task is to understand the working of the University and its relationship with stakeholders, particularly the Government of Uganda and the Development partners. Many staff related issues are on the drawing board and will not simply disappear because there is a new Vice Chancellor. The endemic problem of financing public University will not disappear. For the long term, while Makerere University has the autonomy on paper to determine the management of the University such bitter realities like the inability to determine fees that are commensurate with service delivery has to be lived with. You are going to have to deploy all your skills you have amassed over the years in Economics and Banking industry to try and address some of them. Makerere University sits on some of the most coveted real estates in Kampala. I hope you will try to fast-track the investments in this area so that the University can have a sustainable stream of cash flow to address its recurrent and development needs. Your task is well cut out to try, together with Council, to address those issues.

Professor Baryamureeba made many in-roads in the development of the University during the short period he served as Vice Chancellor. I would like to urge the in-coming Vice Chancellor to consolidate the changes and innovations that he championed. The collegiate system is a good structure for Makerere University given the size of the University with students population nearing 50,000 or thereabouts. There are some units that feel the collegiate system was fast tracked too quickly for them to get on board comfortably. I would like to advise that the way forward is to identify the rough edges and bring it to the attention of Council so that they may be smoothened. There are measures that have been introduced regarding the management of University finances that would require the support of all of us. We should have a well stream-lined financial management system that allows decision making to be made quickly without compromising anything.

Before, during and after the search process the local politics on the campus was rather vicious. There was a lot of verbal fighting. Candidates for the post of Vice Chancellor and their agents were overtly and covertly de-campaigning one another. It was not uncommon to hear that the TOK axis was now moving against the PVB axis in such a manner etc. Presumably understandable during the period but it polarized the campus. The game is over. This is now the time to reconcile and forge a more united and better future for Makerere University as we build for the future. I would therefore like to use this occasion to implore you, Professor Ddumba Ssenatmu and the entire staff of the University, to reach out to each other and extend a hand of friendship and cooperation and forget about the past.

As the Chief Executive Officer of the University you must lead by example. Show a spirit of statesmanship and put behind you the petty differences, real or perceived that characterized the University during the race to the position of Vice Chancellor. Do not carry any baggage as you enter the office otherwise you will become a prisoner of your own making. Support must be on the basis of principles and not petty considerations. Makerere University is a national institution and please manage it as such; desist from temptations that will give your detractors fodder for maligning you in the management of the University. Two prominent Ugandan politicians on different occasions made very poignant statements which I will use to give Professor Ddumba Ssentamu some very sober advice. One said the "seat is very hot"; the other said the "seat is very sweet". Both were right. You however need to be on your constant guard to defuse the heat on the seat to a manageable level and avoid indulgence in the excesses of the sweetness.

To the staff, I would like to use this occasion to request all staff to cooperate with you. The three staff associations have pending issues that are to be addressed by Council and Government. I would like to use this occasion to appeal to the members of theses associations; MUASA, MASA and NUEI to allow the new Vice Chancellor find his bearing while dialogue continues. A restructuring exercise headed by Professor Omaswa is currently undertaking its assignment that is expected to be completed by the end of September 2012. I implore every member of staff to be patient and give the Task Force the necessary cooperation so that some of the endemic problems in the University can be addressed. I do expect the new Vice Chancellor to take keen interest because the implementation of the outcomes of this Task Force will rest upon him.

The students who are here to get knowledge will be looking to your fatherly stewardship of the University. Pay attention to the concerns quickly. You have your immediate subordinates to support you; use them otherwise they are a source of idle talks. As for Council I can assure you that you have our full support use us to better the management of the University.

Barya, as he is fondly known, is a great asset to the University. He has flair and likes the fine things of life. He thinks on his feet; the word procrastination is not in his vocabulary. Please use his gifts and talents to better Makerere. I once again thank Professor Baryamureeba and his colleagues for steering Makerere University this far and wish all of them the best in whatever they are going to be doing from now on.

Finally, I would like to thank the Chancellor and the Government of Uganda for the support and guidance they continue to render to me and my Council in managing the affairs of the University. We thank the Chancellor for doing his bidding at the shortest possible time. The President of the Republic of Uganda, who is also our Visitor, has

placed Makerere University on top of his priority for the industrialization and modernization of our economy. Let us keep the excellent relationship that has evolved in the last few years for the betterment of the University and the country. The Leader of Government business, the Right Hon. Prime Minister Hon. Amama Mbabzi has his doors open for us at all times. Let's use it. Last but not least the Hon. Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Jessica Alupo and her team are more than willing to support the University in all its endeavours. My humble advice e to the new Vice Chancellor is to keep the communication channels open at all times.

As I conclude I once again congratulate and welcome Professor Ddumba Ssentamu to the office. Well come aboard; your tasks are cut out for the next five years. Your two deputies and the rest of the members of top management are people you know and should be able to guide you through the transition period without any squabbles at all. I am just a phone call away 24/7. Good luck.

THANK YOU ALL FOR LISTENING TO ME AS WE BUILD FOR THE FUTURE.