



The Republic of Uganda

**Speech by Hon Janet. K. Museveni,
First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports**

**At the International Research and Innovations
Dissemination Conference**

**Monday 9th May 2022
Speke Resort, Munyonyo**

**Your Excellency, The Ambassador of Swedish to
Uganda,
The Chairperson, Makerere University Council,
The Vice Chancellor,
The Vice Chancellors of other Partner Public
Universities in Uganda,
Representatives from the Government of Sweden,
Our Development Partners,
Members of the Makerere University Community,
Students, Distinguished guest,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Good morning!

I am delighted to join you this morning at the International research and innovations dissemination conference that doubles as a celebration of 22 years of the Uganda – Sweden bilateral research Cooperation.

I acknowledge with gratitude, the presence of the Ambassador of Sweden to Uganda, Her Excellency, Maria Håkansson, and all our friends from the Swedish Government.

Thank you for your invaluable support over the years, that has had a significant impact on our economy.

Your Excellency, the Swedish Government has extended significant support to Uganda over the years in various areas, including; democratic governance, health systems and private sector development; with specific emphasis on international trade and financial systems.

Makerere University has successfully implemented the Uganda-Sweden Research Training Partnership program since 2000. I know that the current Cooperation agreement, 2015 – 2023 was expanded to include Makerere University and four partner public universities, namely, Kyambogo, Busitema, Gulu and Mbarara University of Science and Technology in Uganda collaborating with eleven Swedish Institutions.

We appreciate the cooperation with Sweden, a country that invests in knowledge and competence building, and prides itself in being a knowledge society with ability to create, develop and make practical use of new scientific discoveries.

Tremendous achievements have been made with the SIDA funding involving creation of an environment conducive to high quality relevant research through investment in human resource development, specialized research infrastructure and services, integrated library resources, a well-developed field and laboratory facilities for centres of excellence and sound institutional research management structures, systems and policies.

Ladies and gentlemen, the strength of any University is measured by its contribution to solving societal problems. Research and innovation today takes substantial resources and subsequently influences the policies and growth of Uganda as a whole.

Furthermore, research is the most proven avenue for the production of the high caliber human resource for knowledge generation, through investigation and experimentation leading to creation and adoption of innovation.

Indeed, the current progress in agriculture, health and the environmental sectors, science, engineering and technology is heavily dependent on the application of such research results and innovations.

On behalf of the Government of Uganda, I extend our sincere gratitude to the Royal Government of Sweden for the unconditional and generous support towards the advancement of research and innovations in institutions of higher learning. The two decades of Swedish support have greatly improved our research culture and through the numerous research projects conducted, the Government of Uganda has been able to formulate well informed policies that will lead to sustainable development.

Makerere University has received funding support to the tune of about Swedish Kroner 814 million (USD \$100 million).

Tremendous achievements have been made including the creation of an environment conducive to high quality relevant research through investment in human resource development, ICT, library resources, laboratory and field site infrastructure.

The Government of Uganda will continue supporting initiatives aimed at promoting research and innovation development. Government has made significant impact through the Presidential Initiative on Science and Technology, to the President, committed UGX.25billion to support research and innovations in science-based colleges at Makerere University. In 2020, Government established the Research and Innovation Fund and has committed an annual budget support of UGX. 30 billion for research and innovations at Makerere University. The fund illustrates the increasing importance that Government of Uganda attaches to Research and Innovation as a driver of socio-economic transformation.

Your Excellency, I have been informed that this very successful research partnership program will come to an end after 30th June 2022. However, even when the Ugandan Universities have prepared their sustainability strategies, the COVID-19 Pandemic has had adverse effects on the education Sector. Our universities lost much of their research and academic calendar time which calls for a structured recovery plan.

Therefore, like Oliver Twist, we are asking for more! Our prayer is that this great partnership can be renewed for purposes of continuity and sustainability of our joint achievements. This renewal of our Research Cooperation Agreement for another 5-years would enable the Universities successfully recover from the adverse effects from the pandemic.

As I conclude, I would like to appreciate the good work undertaken by the five collaborating public Universities in Uganda and the eleven partner institutions in Sweden. Thank you for stewarding this work faithfully.

I have been informed that to-date the Swedish support has benefited over 800 members of staff from the five Ugandan Universities in graduate training and research.

This is no mean achievement. I appeal to the trained staff to do everything possible to add their brick to our national development agenda and ultimately, accelerate socio-economic transformation of our country.

Finally, let me reiterate Government's appreciation and commitment to this great partnership with the government and people of Sweden.

It is my singular honour to declare this International research and innovations dissemination conference officially open and I wish you fruitful deliberations.

Thank you and God bless you!