



The Republic of Uganda

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

**At the 73rd Graduation Ceremony of the
Makerere University**

**Monday 13th February 2023
Makerere University, Freedom Square**

**The Chancellor of Makerere University, Prof. Ezra Suruma,
Honourable Ministers,
Heads of Diplomatic Missions,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
The Chairperson of Council, Mrs. Lorna Magara,
and Members of Council,
The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe,
and your team,
The Vice-Chancellor of the University of London,
Prof. Wendy Thomson,
Members of Makerere University Senate,
Parents and Guardians,
Our dear Graduands,
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Good Morning!

I welcome you all to Makerere University's 73rd Graduation Ceremony. It is always a joy for me to witness another cohort of graduates accomplish a key milestone in their education journey.

I therefore congratulate all the graduands upon completing this phase in your education. Thank you for all the hard work and for choosing to stay the course. I also commend and appreciate the parents, guardians, and sponsors for the sacrifices you have made that have enabled the graduands achieve this milestone. In the same way, I appreciate the professors and lecturers for your efforts to mould our children academically.

Today, I have learnt that we have in our midst Prof. Wendy Thomson, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, whom I would like to warmly welcome to Uganda and to Makerere University in particular! Makerere's relationship with the University of London goes back a long way to 1949 when Makerere became a University College affiliated with the University of London. This relationship later led to Makerere transitioning to joining the University of East Africa in 1963, a key milestone in our journey.

It is therefore heartwarming to note that this relationship has stood the test of time, and 74 years later, we are receiving you as our special guest at this graduation. Professor Thomson we are honored to host you here and we thank you for coming!

To our esteemed graduands, Makerere University has played its part in training you in knowledge and skill. I encourage you to use these two tools to pursue your career paths and for the betterment of society!

At the recent inauguration of the University Council of Makerere University on Thursday, 2nd February 2023, I extended my gratitude to the outgoing members for their dedicated and diligent service to Makerere University and the nation. I also challenged the incoming Council to raise the standard of Makerere University to include equipping the students in the fight against societal evils, the fight against sexual perversions, HIV/AIDs, and corruption.

I invited the Council, as I now invite you, our graduands and parents, to join me in the fight against moral decadence in our society. I appeal to the staff, students, and all stakeholders of our Premier University, to participate in this campaign code-named **"Makerere says no to HIV/AIDS and Corruption."**

Therefore, today, I count myself blessed to have the opportunity to speak into the lives of especially the graduands. I need to urge you to remember as you leave the gates of Makerere today, that you each need a personal life mission statement which guides you to the fulfilment of your life's purpose here on earth. Because if you don't have that life mission, you will be like somebody once said, going to catch a bus or a taxi without knowing where you are going, or why you are going there. If you don't know where you are going or why you are going there, then it doesn't matter which bus you take or what direction it is going.

Purpose predates conception, that is why in the Bible, God said to Jeremiah, ***"Before I formed you in your mother's womb, I knew you, I set you apart, I appointed you as a Prophet to the Nations"***-
Jeremiah 1:5

Therefore, we must know that each individual life has a purpose. But until that purpose is discovered, life has no meaning. And please know that if you are not deployed according to God's purpose, that is how you get lured into destructive habits like selling and use of drugs and all other manner of evil because, your life has no purpose.

My prayer for you therefore, is for wisdom to do what it will take to prepare with humility and all the processes you may require to ensure that you fulfill your God given purpose for your life. And your character is what will give meaning to all the work you have done at Makerere University all these years.

I now would like to applaud the University Council for the new strategic plan, which seeks to increase the enrolment of graduate students.

This strategy further addresses the need for highly qualified human resources for the economy, our young universities, and other institutions of higher learning.

I assure you of Government's support towards enhancing the research and learning environment, and in your quest to become a research-led university within the available resources.

In addition, I thank Makerere University for being an excellent partner to the Government, through training the required human resources and research intended to drive national transformation. I wish you a great start to your journey into the next one hundred years.

I wish to conclude my remarks by once again, thanking all the parents and guardians gathered here, for believing in your children and for the sacrifices you have made, to support them through their educational journey at this great University.

May God bless our graduands as they go out into the world to embark on their career paths!

God bless you all!