

# MAKERERE



# UNIVERSITY

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**SPEECH BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROF. BARNABAS  
NAWANGWE AT THE 73<sup>RD</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY  
ON 13<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2023**

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- The First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni,
- The Chancellor of Makerere University, Prof. Ezra Suruma,
- Hon. Ministers;
- Members of the Judicature;
- Members of the Diplomatic Corp;
- Hon. Members of Parliament;
- Religious Leaders;
- The Chairperson of Makerere University Council, Mrs. Lorna Magara,
- The Vice Chairperson of Council, Rt. Hon. Dan Fred Kidega
- The Chairperson of the Appointments Board, Mr. Edwin Karugire;
- Members of Council,
- The Vice Chancellor of the University of London, Prof. Wendy Thomson;
- My Colleagues the Vice Chancellors, Rectors and Principals of sister institutions;
- The Deputy Vice Chancellors and Members of Management;
- Members of Senate;
- The Leadership of Kampala Capital City Authority,
- Members of Staff of Makerere University,
- Graduands,
- Parents, Guardians and sponsors,
- The Media,
- Invited Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen!

## 1. Welcome Remarks

I warmly welcome you to the 73<sup>rd</sup> graduation ceremony of Makerere University, which is being held during the first year of Makerere's second century of impactful existence. In a special way, I welcome you, Our Chief Guest, the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports back to your Alma Mater. Thank you for honouring our invitation to officiate at this historic graduation ceremony. In the same vein, I welcome our special guest and commencement lecture speaker, the Vice Chancellor of the University of London, Prof. Wendy Thomson. With much happiness, I congratulate our graduands upon staying focused and fulfilling the requirements for the award of the various qualifications they are going to be presented with today.

## 2. Graduation Statistics

Mr. Chancellor Sir, during the course of the 73<sup>rd</sup> graduation ceremony, I will present to you a total of **13,221** graduands who will receive degrees and diplomas of Makerere University. Of these, a total of **102** graduands will graduate with PhDs, **1,378** with Masters degrees, **11, 598** with Bachelors degrees and **143** with undergraduate and postgraduate diplomas. **52%** of the graduands are female and **48%** are male. **41** of the **102** PhD graduands and **563** of the **1,378** Masters graduands are female, representing **40%** and **41%** respectively. We are making steady progress. Furthermore, I will present to you Professor Christopher Whalen, a Global Health and Distinguished Researcher for the award of an Honorary Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa) of Makerere University. I congratulate all our graduands upon reaching this milestone. I congratulate all our graduands that are graduating today as well

as children and spouses of members of staff and their parents or spouses. Today, I will present to you graduands from the College of Health Sciences, the College of Natural Sciences and School of Law.

### **3. Governance**

#### **a. Re-Appointment of Council**

Hon. Minister, Mr. Chancellor Sir, I congratulate the Chairperson of Council, Mrs. Lorna Magara and the Vice Chairperson of Council, Rt. Hon. Daniel Fred Kidega upon their re-appointment. In the same spirit, I congratulate the new Members of Makerere University Council upon their respective appointments and thank the out-going Council for their dedicated service to Makerere.

#### **b. Re-Appointment of the Vice Chancellor**

After serving my first term as Vice Chancellor of Makerere University, I was exceedingly humbled when the Chancellor, on the recommendation of the University Council appointed me for a Second five-year term as Vice Chancellor of Makerere University. I pledge to continue working with the Government, Council, Senate, Management, staff, alumni, development partners and other stakeholders to advance the University to greater heights.

#### **c. New Appointments**

I take this opportunity to congratulate the following members of University Management upon their respective appointments: Professor Buyinza Mukadasi-Academic Registrar, Professor Edward Bbaale- Director of Research and Graduate Training and Dr. Cyprian Misinde-Director of

Quality Assurance. In the same vein, I congratulate the Chaplain of St. Francis Chapel, Rev. Onesimus Asiimwe on being elected the 6<sup>th</sup> Bishop of the Church of Uganda diocese of North Kigezi.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, it gives me great pleasure to report that the Chaplain of St. Francis Chapel, Rev. Onesimus Asiimwe was elected the 6<sup>th</sup> Bishop of North Kigezi Diocese. We are happy to note that during this graduation ceremony, his Daughter-Ruth Ariho Asiimwe will be graduating with a Bachelor of Human Resources Management from Makerere University Business School. I congratulate Rev. Asiimwe and Ruth on these achievements.

#### **d. Appointment of the 88<sup>th</sup> Students' Guild**

I am pleased to report that in November 2022, Makerere University successfully held online elections (e-voting) that ushered in the 88<sup>th</sup> Guild President-His Excellency Allionzi Lawrence, Vice Guild President-Her Excellency Margaret Nattabi and the entire Students' Guild Cabinet.

I am happy to report that the new Students' Guild leadership has initiated the Guild Dialogue series to instill a culture of intellectual debates among students and minimize violence in student politics at the University. I applaud the Guild leadership on this good initiative.

### **4. Mak@100 celebrations**

#### **a. Appreciation of H.E The President**

Throughout its 100 years of existence (1922-2022), Makerere University has trained professionals in the different disciplines who have contributed to the transformation of lives, communities and society in general.



To celebrate a century of excellent service to humanity, Makerere University embarked on year-long celebrations that kicked off on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds. Activities included public lectures, seminars and conferences, a home-coming dinner, alumni events across the globe and others. I thank His Excellency the President, for the generous contribution of UGX 800 million shillings towards the year-long celebrations.

Opposite the entrance to this Freedom Square, stands a magnificent monument of a flying bird, designed and built by our won members of staff, Prof. George Kyeyune and Mr. Joseph Sematimba. This monument, which symbolizes the maturity of Makerere University at 100 years was commissioned by His Excellency the President on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022 during the Grand Finale of Makerere centennial celebrations. This beautiful Monument will forever symbolize both Makerere University's 100 years of impactful service to humanity and readiness to soar even higher as we embrace the next century.

During the tenure of the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Janet K. Museveni, Makerere University has enjoyed tremendous support that has enabled us achieve a lot. The strategic engagements with the University Council and Management continue to inform Makerere University's teaching and learning, research and innovations as well as knowledge transfer partnerships. Makerere University has also made tremendous progress in infrastructure development, including the construction of the Frank Kalimuzo and Yusuf Lule central teaching facilities, rehabilitation of labs and construction of new ones, construction of the Indoor Games Facility that is nearing completion, new buildings for the Schools of Dentistry and Law, and the perimeter fence. The re-construction of the iconic Main Administration building is progressing well and its



completion is expected at the end of this year. We are eternally grateful for your support and guidance, Hon. Minister.

#### **b. Appreciation of other stakeholders**

We acknowledge that the milestones we registered over 100 years would not have been possible without the close working relationship we have enjoyed with Government and People of Britain who laid a firm foundation for this great institution. Taking stock of the 100 years' journey, we remain thankful to God for the support that we have received from the Government and People of Uganda, the Ministry of Education and Sports, national and international development partners, faculty, staff, alumni, students, the media, parents, guardians and sponsors, the private sector, employers who take on our graduates as well as the surrounding communities. May the good Lord bless you all for thus far Makerere University has come! Our collaborations have brought forth funding that has enabled us to train staff at Masters, PhD and Post-doctoral level, produce more research and innovations, improve our laboratory infrastructure, grow our international networks and contribute to the attainment of National Development Priorities as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). I therefore sincerely thank our development partners for all the support extended to Makerere University.

#### **5. The University of London**

Today, we are privileged and honoured to have in our midst the Vice Chancellor of the University of London, Prof. Wendy Thomson, who will deliver the commencement lecture. Makerere became a college of the University of London in 1949 and maintained that status until October 1963



when she transformed into the University of East Africa. It is during that time that Makerere truly developed into a university level institution. Thank you very much, Prof. Thomson for accepting our invitation to give the commencement lecture at this graduation ceremony.

## **6. Research and Outreach**

Makerere strives to transform into a research-led University. I thank His Excellency-the President whose support led to the creation of the Research and Innovations Fund (Mak-RIF) in the 2019/2020 financial year with initial funding of **UGX 30 Billion**. The Research and Innovation Fund has transformed Makerere tremendously, with very many innovations in agriculture and food security, health, engineering, education, and the social sciences that are already changing the lives of our people. Researchers from the three colleges that are graduating students today are making tremendous contribution to research and community outreach. Details of their activities may be found in the graduation booklet. Beyond the 826 grants issued by Makerere University Research and Innovations Fund to date, we have taken a strategic decision to use part of the funding to support PhD research grants. This is in line with Government efforts to develop Uganda's knowledge economy. We are hopeful that this will help unlock the potential of Makerere to more substantively contribute to national development. I equally applaud our development partners whose generous support has trained the majority of our PhDs over the last 20 years, as well as a number of Masters and Post-docs. I commend the Government and People of Sweden for the biggest staff development programme in the history of Makerere University. Sida support to Makerere University came to an end in June 2022 with more than 500 (staff at Makerere University and other Public Universities) obtaining PhDs and more than 1,000 obtaining

Masters' degrees. We are in consultation with the Swedish Embassy to explore alternative ways of research collaboration.

Some of the beneficiaries are graduating during this 73<sup>rd</sup> ceremony and we sincerely thank our partners for this support.

## **7. Appointment of Professors and Associate Professors**

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the transformation of Makerere University into a research-led University requires a critical mass of Professors, Associate Professors and Senior Lecturers to drive the University's research agenda.

In July 2022, **40** academic staff were promoted to the ranks of Associate Professor and Full Professor. With these promotions, the number of Professors rose to **89**. Although this is a big improvement, we are still far below our peers on the continent. I take this opportunity to thank the Government of Uganda for prioritizing the full salary of enhancement of Professors and Associate Professors which has greatly improved staff turnover and we look forward to the full salary enhancement of the rest of the staff when resources become available.

and we are working towards exceeding the **100** mark in the next few years. I take this opportunity to thank the Government of Uganda for availing the wage that enabled us to promote staff. I further thank the Government of Uganda for prioritizing the salary enhancement of Professors and Associate Professors.

## **8. Mastercard Foundation Support to Makerere University**

Digitalisation and e-learning will define the future of higher education and Makerere University is making steady progress in this area. I am pleased to



report that Makerere University in partnership with Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program is implementing an 18 months **2 million USD** E-Learning Initiative, which will support the development of E-Learning infrastructure at Makerere University. The Mastercard e-Learning Initiative is aimed at addressing the impact of COVID-19 pandemics on teaching and learning and therefore enhancing Makerere University's resilience to future disruptions in teaching, learning and research.

We thank the Mastercard Foundation for being a true and reliable partner of Makerere University, and for always coming on board to support our development and institutional agenda. I also wish to thank the Institute of Open, Distance and e-Learning, which is spearheading the implementation of the Initiative at Makerere University.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, from 2013 to date, Makerere University has been implementing the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program through which **1,032** academically talented Youths, 76% of whom are women, from economically dis-advantaged backgrounds in Africa have been able to pursue higher education at Makerere University.

**Hon. Minister**, Mr. Chancellor Sir, Makerere University is working closely with Mastercard Foundation on the prospects of implementing a successor phase of the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University. Our sincere appreciation to Mastercard Foundation for the continued support to empower the African Youth in order to contribute to a Transformation Change in Africa.

I would like to thank the other stakeholders who are providing scholarships to enable bright, but economically disadvantaged students to attain education at Makerere. These include the Madhvani Foundation, the Government of Uganda through the Higher Education Students Financing Board, the Embassy of China, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Government Ministries, State House, NORAD and many others.

I thank the Higher Education Students' Financing Board for the award of loans to students' for both undergraduate degree and diploma programmes. The Board has so far supported a total of 1,853 learners at Makerere University since 2014 and this year, a total of 114 Students Loan beneficiaries are graduating. I congratulate the graduands and encourage you to repay the loans to create a revolving fund. The launch of the students' loan scheme nine years back in April 2014 was meant to be a major breakthrough in widening and broadening access to higher education in this country for the brilliant but needy students. While I congratulate the Board for the good strides in ensuring increased access to Higher education, there is need to support more learners to join Higher Learning Institutions and also offer financial assistance to those who are struggling to meet their bills at the University. I wish also to repeat my call for the introduction of a scholarship or loan scheme for graduate students. I believe that this is a matter of priority for our Country.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, from 2011 to date, Makerere University Council provides Tuition Fees Waiver Scholarships to bright, but socio-economically disadvantaged female students. From inception, a total of **320** female students

have so far benefited. Makerere University Council also pays the fees of members of staff who study here or abroad.

## **9. Infrastructural developments**

### **a. Renovation of Halls of Residence**

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I am happy to report that the Government of Uganda has prioritized the issue of renovation of Halls of Residence at Makerere University. I recall vividly that the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni personally toured the Halls of Residence, which informed her report to the respective organs of Government on the dire need to embark on the renovation of our halls of residence. We commend His Excellency, the President for his strategic engagements with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to provide the required funding for the renovation of all Halls of Residence and Schools of Medicine. We thank the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for releasing funds to commence the renovations in a phased approach starting with Lumumba and Mary Stuart Halls of Residence. We are making every effort to ensure that the renovation of Lumumba Hall commences as soon as possible and we look forward to the release of funds for the renovation of facilities at the Colleges of Health Sciences and Veterinary Medicine. We need a total of UGX 150 billion to undertake all infrastructure improvements.

The construction of the Makerere University School of Public Health's new home, which is undertaken using resources saved by the School itself, with the support of development partners, including USAID, the Government of the Netherlands and the Rockefeller Foundation, is currently ongoing. This

new home will boost our scientific investigative capacity, especially for emerging and re-emerging diseases such as the Ebola virus disease and Covid-19 and other complex public health challenges.

## **10. Makerere University Transcripts and Certificates**

Makerere University has come up with measures aimed at making the issuance of academic transcripts and certificates very fast and convenient. I wish to inform graduands, alumni and stakeholders that we have shortened the clearance process. Previously, for one to receive the academic transcript and certificate, he or she was required to clear at more than 10 offices. We have reviewed this and one is now required to clear with only two (2) Offices namely Makerere University Library and the Office of the University Bursar.

In response to the needs of our alumni and stakeholders, the University Management organized the first ever Public Fair on Transcripts and Certificates in November 2022 at the Freedom Square. I am happy to report that during the three (3) weeks, we served and listened to more than 11,000 clients. We issued than **4,650** certificates and **4,113** transcripts. The University Management has decided that the Public Fair on Transcripts and Certificates will become an annual event so that we continue to clear the backlog. Due to unforeseen challenges with the importation of blanks for transcripts, we apologise that we are unable to issue the transcripts immediately after graduation. However, we are making every effort to issue the transcripts after one month.

## **11. Makerere University Incubation Centre**

Makerere University takes cognizance that unless the brilliant ideas and innovations produced by our students and staff are transformed into

commercial products, Uganda and the rest of region will continue to lag behind. We have therefore partnered with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to build a state-of-the-art innovation hub that is aimed at skilling students in various sectors, as well as empowering startups and creating jobs. Graduands with good business ideas are encouraged to make use of this facility, which is located in the Yusuf Lule Central Teaching Facility.

## 12. A Word to the Graduands

Finally, my message to the graduands. As you leave the gates of Makerere, I urge you to always be proud of your Alma Mater and be her good Ambassadors wherever fate will place you. Go and put to good use the knowledge you have received from one of the best universities in the World to change your communities, your Country and humanity. Put your trust in God and honour your parents and opportunities will be opened for you. And please, *Do not Forget the Gates of Makerere*. Remember that learning never ends, and Makerere's gates will always be open for those that seek more knowledge.

I once again congratulate you upon achieving this milestone and pray that God will continue to bless and preserve you our graduands, parents, and sponsors as We Build for the Future.

**It is now my honour and pleasure to invite the Chancellor to address the congregation. Mr. Chancellor, Sir.**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** .....

**VICE CHANCELLOR**

