



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY



**REMARKS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR PROFESSOR BARNABAS NAWANGWE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SARAH NTIRO ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE,
AT THE YUSUF LULE CENTRAL TEACHING FACILITY AUDITORIUM
ON THURSDAY 31ST AUGUST, 2023**

- **Our Distinguished Keynote Speaker, Her Royal Highness, Nnabagereka Sylvia Nagginda, the Queen of Buganda**
- **Princess Katrina-Sarah Ssangalyambogo**
- **Ministers of the Kingdom of Buganda**
- **Your Excellency, Elsie Attafuah, UNDP Country Representative**
- **Mrs. Anna Reismann, Country Representative Konrad Adenauer Stiftung**
- **Hon. Maria Kiwanuka and Hon. Miria Matembe**
- **My Predecessor and Mentor, Prof. Livingstone Luboobi**
- **Members of Makerere University Council and Senate**
- **Members of Makerere University Management**
- **The Dean, School of Women and Gender Studies**
- **The Family of Sarah Ntiro Nyendowha**
- **All Members of staff present**
- **Makerere University Alumni**
- **Our dear students**
- **Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:**

Good afternoon to you all.

It fills me with immense pleasure to warmly welcome you to the Second Sarah Ntiro Annual Public Lecture, a demonstration of Makerere University's commitment to continue honouring and perpetuating the legacy a trailblazer, distinguished alumna, exemplary educator and relentless advocate for various causes, particularly women's rights.

With the aforementioned attributes, you can discern that the late Sara Nyendwoha Ntiro was loved by and therefore considered by various institutions, organisations and advocacy groups as their own.

Be that as it may, none of them was as close to heart as the family. I would therefore like to thank the family of the late Sarah Nyendwoha Ntiro for the continued collaboration with Makerere University to honour her legacy, through this annual public lecture series. We thank you very much.

In a special way, it gives me great pleasure to welcome Her Royal Highness, Nnabagareka Sylvia Nagginda, the Queen of Buganda to back to Makerere University.

I recall with nostalgia your visit to Makerere on 21st October 2011, when on the occasion, you donated computers to our Gender Mainstreaming Directorate (GMD).

This gesture from Your Royal Highness as the Patron of the Female Scholarship Foundation (FSF) not only struck a chord with us then, but also augers well with our theme today, *Catalyzing Change: Women as Pillars of Society*.

Your Royal Highness, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and gentlemen, Makerere University has since 1945 when we refined

our motto from *Let Us Be Men* to *We Build for the Future*, been at the forefront of *Catalyzing Change* that positions *Women as Pillars of Society* in our country and the region at large.

Sarah Nyendwoha Ntiro received her teaching certificate in History, Geography and English in 1950 and went on to teach at Kyebambe Girls School before proceeding to St. Anne's College at University of Oxford.

Eunice Lubega Posnansky who was the first Ugandan woman to obtain a Bachelor's degree from Makerere College in 1955, like Sarah Ntiro, proceeded to the University of Oxford for her further studies, and later on to Ghana and the United States where she enjoyed an illustrious career as a librarian.

On 20th February 1959, Prof. Josephine Namboze became the first female to graduate with a Licentiate in Medicine and Surgery (as it was called then) from Makerere College.

The Licentiate enabled its holders to apply to join the British Medical Council and practice medicine in Britain and throughout the British Commonwealth countries. Prof. Namboze at over 90 years of age today, continues to inspire and mentor many women not only in the medical field but also all other spheres of life.

Unfortunately, our time today does not permit me to share the countless examples of females that have etched their names in our annals of history by virtue of their prolific achievements. However, permit me to share just two more recent examples.

23rd May, 2022 will forever go down in history as a remarkable day for the female scholarship at Makerere University. On that day, Dr. Caroline Adoch became the first female to be awarded Makerere University's prestigious Doctor of Laws (LL. D) in our 100 years of existence.

That same day, at 31 years of age, Dr. Olivia Nabawanda became the youngest female to obtain a Ph.D in Mathematics from Makerere.

As remarkable as these achievements are, and not to take any credit away from the hard work of Dr. Adoch, Dr. Nabawanda, and their supervisors and mentors, they (these achievements) are a stark reminder that at slightly over 100 years of existence, Makerere can, and ought to do more.

As Vice Chancellor, I therefore wish to reassure you of the Makerere University leadership's unwavering commitment to do more to *Catalyse Change* that will position even more women as *Pillars of Society*, particularly through academic scholarship and early career mentorship.

The humiliation that Sarah Ntiro was subjected to by her Mathematics lecturer, which forced her to leave the class and pursue History, Geography and English instead, will never be repeated again.

At this juncture, I wish to pause and clarify that there is absolutely nothing wrong with pursuing History, Geography and English at Makerere University. What is wrong is having to be forced to take a different path through discrimination based on your being either female or male.

Therefore, through the Makerere University Gender Equality Policy, the Makerere University Policy and Regulations against Sexual Harassment, the Affirmative Action Policy providing for a 40 percent enrolment quota for female students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) various remedial measures have been instituted.

We also have regulations and policies that facilitate the institutional regulatory environment that guarantees our students, particularly our mothers, sisters and daughters the support and freedom to freely choose and pursue their full academic potential.

Your Royal Highness, as I conclude, I wish to thank you for accepting to be our keynote speaker today. I also thank you for the wonderful work you are doing for our country and particularly for Makerere University. When we established the Female Scholarship Scheme, we also established the Female Scholarship Foundation, and had no doubt as to who should be its patron. We thank you for having provided leadership of that very important initiative.

Your Royal Highness, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, with these few remarks, I once again warmly welcome you to Makerere University for the Sarah Ntiro Annual Public Lecture 2023 and wish you fruitful interactions, as ***We Build for the Future.***