

## **ADDRESS BY THE CHANCELLOR**

**Hon. Dr. Crispus Kiyonga**

### **On The Occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony of Makerere University**

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

#### **1. Address**

- 1.1 The Guest of Honour, Hon Minister of State for Primary Education standing in for the Hon Minister of Education and Sports.
- 1.2 Hon Ministers and Ministers of state
- 1.3 Honourable Members of Parliament
- 1.4 Your Lordships the Judges of the Courts of Justice.
- 1.5 Your Excellencies the High Commissioners and Ambassadors and officials of the UN system.
- 1.6 Cultural and Religious Leaders
- 1.7 The Chairperson and Members of Makerere University Council
- 1.8 The Vice-Chancellor Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, and Deputy Vice Chancellors Makerere University
- 1.9 The Commencement Speaker – The Vice Chancellor of the University of South Africa
- 1.10 Former Chancellors of the University
- 1.11 The University Secretary and the Members of the University Management Team
- 1.12 Members of the University Senate
- 1.13 Principals of the Colleges and Dean School of Law.
- 1.14 Members of the Students guild
- 1.15 The graduating students
- 1.16 All students
- 1.17 Distinguished Guests
- 1.18 Ladies and Gentlemen:

## **2. Introduction**

2.1 I welcome you all to Makerere University's 75<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony.

2.2 I am delighted to congratulate all of you who have successfully fulfilled the requirements for graduation today. We stand with you as you celebrate the achievements made at various levels of the academic ladder.

2.3 To you the parents, guardians and sponsors who have supported the graduands. I thank you for a task well accomplished. Thank you very much.

2.4 The Central Engine that enables the University to produce the qualifications, including those we shall witness today lies with the Professors, lecturers and the administrators of the University. These are very well supported by the University council. Accordingly it is only fitting to acknowledge all of them for a job well done.

2.5 Makerere University is a public institution managed by the Government of Uganda. On behalf of the University community, I extend our deep gratitude to H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and the NRM Government that he leads for the invaluable financial and other support that the University receives.

2.6 Besides the Government, there are friends, alumni, other stakeholders and development partners that support the university and its activities. To them we say thank you very much.

### **3. My return to MAK**

3.1 I am an alumnus of Makerere University. I graduated with the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBCChB) in 1978.

3.2 I then returned in 1979 to register for an Med in Paediatrics which I did not complete as I was called to join the struggle for political leadership of our country.

3.3 Later on I was able to pursue further studies elsewhere in the world.

3.4 I thank President Museveni and Mrs Janet Museveni Minister of Education and Sports for availing me this opportunity to return to the University in the position of Chancellor.

3.5 I return to Makerere University with a resolve to add to what my predecessors have done so that incrementally we shall reach the fullest potential of the institution.

### **4. The role of the university and linkage to the community**

4.1 Makerere University is the oldest university in the country. Over the years the institution has built a strong stock of high quality human resources.

4.2 The University is doing significant amount of research. Research plays a very vital role in the development of any community.

4.3 In this regard, I thank the Government of Uganda for committing UGX 30 billion through the Makerere University Research and Innovations Fund (MakRIF).

4.4 In the same spirit, I commend the University for coming up with initiatives such as the Grants Administration and Management Unit (GAMSU), which is focused on working with Makerere University researchers and staff to attract and win funds for research through grants.

4.5 I think more work is required to mobilize for increment of funds in order to further support research work.

4.6 The University has room to expand its community out-reach in order to play an even greater role in community development and transformation; In this regard I have some proposals that can be developed

4.6.1 Internship work. In the sector of Agriculture, I am informed that there is provision for under graduate students to stay in the country side for a period of one year. This is indeed a very good initiative. For the country to get the full benefit of this, I propose formalized relationship with some medium to large scale farmers across the country. The students would be attached to these farms to work with the owner of the farm.

4.6.2 The students will be hands-on and so the farmer will obtain a benefit from the work of the students.

- 4.6.3 The Farmer will also in turn provide basic accommodation to the students and may be some food.
- 4.6.4 These students besides working at the farm would also reach out in the neighborhood to closely work with the smaller farms providing extension work to the farmers.
- 4.6.5 Across the country extension workers are in short supply and so in this way we ease this constraint, leading to increased productivity and increased incomes to the farmer.
- 4.6.6 There are also gaps in some of the training of Ugandans abroad. For example in some countries where Ugandans train in Human medicine, the exposure to the practice of clinical human medicine is very limited for mainly cultural reasons. The University could partner with these Universities so that when it comes to the stage of practical clinical training, these students return to Uganda for that purpose.
- 4.7 In the area of industrialization the University can play a greater role. The university is generating innovations that should eventually be taken to commercialization level. At this stage more resources and infrastructure are needed. A formal partnership with the investment community both national and foreign will be necessary to take this forward.
- 4.8 Together, we can commit to ensuring we promote an environment that equips youths with skills and mindsets required for the fast-socio-economic transformation of our communities.

## **5. Current graduation**

5.1 To the graduands, this is a milestone in your lives. At whatever level of attainment be it a Diploma, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Postgraduate diploma and PhD.

5.2 You have invested and worked towards attaining these qualifications. It is only fitting that you get value from this work.

5.2.1 Some of you will get jobs at the University, in Government or abroad.

5.2.2 Read and understand the work culture and core values of that particular workplace. Be ready to listen, and be open to new ideas. Always be hardworking and disciplined.

5.2.3 These positions I have referred to are not enough to absorb all of you.

5.2.4 However the knowledge you have acquired at the University is quite facilitating. You can actually start work on your own, singularly or in groups.

5.2.5 Use the knowledge and skills that you have acquired for the benefit of your family and society in general.

5.2.6 What is critical is sustaining the thinking that you can indeed apply your knowledge to create work in areas with demand within the population.

5.2.7 Partner with some of your friends to form teams, come up with an idea, and you could turn that idea into an innovation, business enterprise or product. Every problem or development challenge faced by Ugandans presents a job opportunity. Make use of the great resources at your disposal such as the Internet and social media to learn and innovate.

5.2.8 On this note, I am happy to note that last year's Overall Winner of the Best Farmer Award in the country is a member of staff of Makerere University. We shall continue to work and produce leaders who lead by example.

## **6. The Arable land available to expand employment opportunities**

6.1.1 There is indeed a contradiction that our country has young people who are unemployed and yet 50% of arable land is unused. Besides the unemployment we also have varying degrees of food insecurity across the county. In the Rwenzoris and parts of greater Kigezi for example the rate of stunting is reported at about 40% among children below the age of 5 years.

6.1.2 We shall work with the resources at Makerere to make a contribution to change this situation.

6.1.3 In this regard we shall work with the university to liberate pieces of land that H.E. President Museveni has allocated to the University in the past.

6.1.4 Part of this land will then be used to set up model agro industrial parks with state-of-the-art technologies. This will, besides training students earn money for the University.

## **7. Understanding our country more fundamentally**

- 7.1 It is critical that we deeply appreciate socio-economic forces that determine forward movement or lack of it.
- 7.2 In this regard H.E the president has directed that political economy be taught across all courses at the University. This will no doubt be implemented following regular approaches within the University.
- 7.3 Africa lags behind in the world despite the existence of massive resources. It is our duty and we owe to our continent to play our roles to better the conditions of our people.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude my speech I would like to outline some of the areas I think we should further highlight in our work at the University

- (i) The Directive by H.E. President Museveni to teach political economy across all courses
- (ii) Strengthening funding for research work at the University
- (iii) Building stronger partnerships with the private sector to Commercialise innovations at the University
- (iv) Building structured relationships with the communities
- (v) Taking part in building a food security system for the country
- (vi) Building a model Agro-industrial park



**As We Build for the Future**  
**FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY!**