

BUILDING EAST AFRICA

Makerere has indeed contributed to Human Resource Dev't in the region



Presidents Yoweri Museveni and Mwai Kibaki during the 62nd graduation ceremony at Makerere Freedom Square

COME SATURDAY June 29th 2013, Makerere University is partnering with the University of Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam University to mark 50 years since the formation of the University of East Africa (UEA).

The official program sent out by the University Public Relations Officer Ritah Namisango shows that besides these two universities, Makerere is also partnering with UNESCO and Swedish Embassy in Kampala to commemorate this important day in the region's history. High profile speakers at the event will include President Yoweri Museveni (to speak on the Life of Nyerere), Maama Maria Nyerere and famous Kenyan writer Prof. Ngugi wa Thiong'o.

The Vice Chancellors from the three universities, which made the UEA, will also make presentations on the state of higher education in the region. Former

Makerere governing Council Chairman Mathew Rukikaire, who was also the president, will give a Synopsis of UEA inauguration. His presentation will be preceded by welcome remarks by current council chairman Eng. Dr. Wana Etyem.

The official statement from the office of the PRO Ritah Namisango further reveals that Dr. Martin Alier, a onetime UEA governing council Chairman, will preside over the presentation of the awards in honor of some of UEA's most illustrious alumni who went through the University of Nairobi, Makerere University and the University of Dar es Salaam. The Saturday function will be held at Makerere University Main Hall starting at 12pm.

THE ALUMNI

As Makerere prepares for the big day, we reflect on some of its most illustrious alumni who have served and made great contributions in East Africa and beyond.

MWAI KIBAKI

Kibaki who, until early this year was President of Kenya, is an alumnus of Makerere University having graduated in 1955 with a First Class Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics, History and Political Science. While studying at Makerere, Kibaki chaired the Kenya Students Association and was also the Vice Chairman of the Makerere Students' Guild. In 1955, he secured a postgraduate scholarship to the prestigious London School of Economics (LSE) for a Bachelor of Science in Public Finance and graduated with a Distinction. Three years later in 1958, Kibaki returned to Makerere (his alma mater) as an Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Economics where he served until 1960. He then returned to Kenya in December 1960 and became Executive Officer for the Kenya African National Union (KANU), a political party he had helped found earlier in March 1960. In recognition of his excellent academic performance, teaching service in the then Department of Economics, satisfactory economic record and laudable gender reforms aimed at empowering women in Africa, Makerere University governing council on Thursday 8th December 2011 voted to give him a Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa). Indeed there is no doubt that this recognition of Kibaki's distinguished and outstanding national, regional and international contribution in areas like academic excellence, political, social and economic reforms was actually long overdue. Consequently, in January

2012 during Makerere's 62nd graduation ceremony, Kibaki received his honorary doctorate. President Museveni also attended this ceremony at the University Freedom Square.

BENJAMIN MKAPA

Benjamin William Mkapa served as third Tanzania President from 1995 to 2005. One of its most illustrious alumni, Mkapa graduated from Makerere University in Uganda in 1962 with a degree in English language. His pursuit of knowledge saw him join Columbia University in 1963 where he was awarded a master's degree in international affairs. Before becoming president, Mkapa, famous for his great journalistic works, also held a number of public offices in the Republic of Tanzania including being the administrative officer in Dodoma and later on Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education. He was also Tanzania's Foreign affairs Minister from 1977 to 1980 and from 1984 to 1990 for the second time. He rode on anti-corruption rhetoric to easily get elected in 1995. He also had staunch backing of former president Julius Nyerere. The activities of the Presidential Commission on Corruption (Warioba Commission) which he created during his presidency won a lot of kudos for Tanzania. This Makerere alumnus is famously remembered for privatizing state-owned corporations and instituting free market policies, which inspired donor confidence and attracted increased foreign investment which promoted economic growth in Tanzania. Grateful World Bank and International Monetary Fund bureaucrats reciprocated by spearheading cancellation of Tanzania's debts. In his retirement, Mkapa has engaged in charitable community works including serving as a Trustee on Aga Khan University's governing board. He has always remembered his Makerere roots and has regularly been in touch with his alma-mater. For instance on November 29th 2009, Makerere recipro-

cated all this by awarding him the Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) of Makerere University. PRO Ritah Namisango says they were recognizing his outstanding record of excellence in diplomacy, journalism, administration, governance, regional and global politics.

RICHARD SEZIBERA

This top Rwandan diplomat left Makerere University in 1989 after satisfying his scholarly requirements for the award of a degree in human medicine. Dr. Richard Sezibera briefly worked at a hospital in Kampala before being posted at Mbale regional hospital where he served until 1994 when he quit becoming a field medical officer for the then rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) whose leadership later on promoted him to the rank of Major. In July 1994, shortly after the RPF captured Kigali, Sezibera became the personal physician to Pasteur Bizimungu who became Rwandan president immediately after the war. Sezibera later on joined politics in 1995 and in won a parliamentary seat. He became President of the Parliamentary Commission on Social Affairs. In 1999, he became Rwandan Ambassador to the US before being transferred to Mexico, Argentina and Brazil. Meanwhile, he took off time to add on what Makerere inculcated in him and did a master's degree in international affairs at Georgetown University, Washington, DC. Subsequently, he became President Paul Kagame's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region. He also oversaw the process for Rwanda's admission into the membership of the EAC which materialized in 2007. Between October 2008 and April 2011, Makerere-trained Dr. Sezibera served as Health Minister for his country Rwanda. In May 2011, his star was to rise even higher when he became the 3rd Secretary General ever for the EAC, a position he still holds. In his capacity as Secretary General EAC, Sezibera is the topmost bureaucrat at the Arusha-based secretariat, something that further makes Makerere's contribution more visible beyond Ugandan borders. Being the biggest technocrat at Arusha, Dr. Sezibera also has the last word on all matters pertaining to EAC. His influence and impact of his decisions, as EAC boss, is felt by close to 150m people spread all over East Africa Community (EAC) member states which geographically covers an area stretching up to 1,800,000 square kilometers. Col/Hon. Nuwe Amanya Mushega, who is one of Richard Sezibera's predecessors, is also another product of Makerere University. Mushega, who did political science at Makerere, was in fact the pioneer Secretary General for the revived EAC and his contribution in that capacity was invaluable because, among other things, he is the man who founded the current EAC Secretariat and all its attendant structures.

JESSICA ERIYO

She deputizes Dr. Richard Sezibera at Arusha-based EAC