



OPENING REMARKS

BY
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CHAIRPERSON, MAKERERE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

AT
THE STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIVE MEETING

DATE: FRIDAY 3RD AUGUST 2012

VENUE: SENATE BUILDING CONFERENCE ROOM

**Rt. Hon Prime Minister
Minister of Education & Sports
Chancellor
Development Partners
Stakeholders
Distinguished Guests
Ladies & Gentlemen:**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

I am honoured to host and chair the Opening Session of the 4th Makerere University Stakeholders Consultative Meeting this 3rd August 2012.

I am pleased to welcome you all to this Stakeholders' Consultative Meeting. This 4th Stakeholder Meeting is taking place at a strategic and historical intersection of time for Makerere, Uganda and East Africa.

What do I mean?

This year 2012 is the intersection of the commemoration of 50 years of (Uganda) East Africa's political Independence, or Golden Jubilee; with the celebration of 90 years of Makerere University! It is also this year that we commemorate 50 years since the University of East Africa (UEA) was born at Makerere!

The important backdrop to this is formed by those distinguished Makerere alumni who became vanguard nationalist anti-colonial fighters and led their counties to political independence. They did not only lay the first building blocks of nation building and post-colonial socio-economic development in their countries; they also inculcated the spirit of--and founded--the East African Community!

As such, these distinguished Makerere Alumni bequeathed to us the legacy of East African economic and political integration towards which we are working today.

These distinguished Makerere Alumni include late **Mwalimu Julius Nyerere** of Tanzania, late **Jaramogi Oginga Odinga** of Kenya, late **Apollo Milton Obote** of Uganda, late **Sir Edward Walugembe Mutesa II**; as well as **H.E Mwai Kibaki**, the incumbent President of Kenya, and **H.E Benjamin Mkapa**, former President of Tanzania to name but a few.

In this sense, therefore, Makerere University is the cradle of the East African Community, as foreshadowed by the University of East Africa formed at Makerere in

1962; with none other than Mwalimu Julius Nyerere as the first and last Chancellor. **Hon Mathew Rukikaire**, my predecessor as Chairperson of Council, was Students' Guild President of an East African student body when the University of East Africa was inaugurated in our world renowned Main Hall!

Hence, this 4th Stakeholders' Consultative Meeting today is historic and strategic because it also kick-starts the celebration of Makerere's 90 years of existence. As farther testimony to the distinguished Alumni I have mentioned, celebration of Makerere's 90 years is also the celebration of East Africa's Golden Jubilee of Independence! This began with Tanzania's Golden Jubilee, 1961-2011, followed by Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda's Golden Jubilee, 1962-2012, to Kenya's forthcoming Golden Jubilee, 1963-2013.

I, therefore, congratulate the University Administration for planning to honour these distinguished Alumni in a special way during the 90-years of Makerere University celebrations.

Yet another distinguished Alumnus, **Dr Martin J. Okec Alier**, actually flagged-off the 90 year celebrations of his *alma mater* yesterday! This was at the public lecture in his honour delivered by **Dr William S. Kalema**, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Female Scholarship Foundation (FSF), Makerere University. The Discussant was **Mr Hannington Karuhanga**, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Stanbic Bank.

Dr Alier stands tall as a leader of excellence and integrity nurtured by Makerere University. He is a pioneer African dental surgeon in East Africa, a statesman, and an internationally successful businessman. Now Chancellor of Gulu University, I believe Dr Alier deserves a special monument of honour on the Main Campus of his *alma mater* during this one calendar year of Mak@90 celebrations!

These special recognitions will not only celebrate our distinguished Alumni, but will also celebrate their *alma mater* that gave birth to and nurtured their leadership. At the same time, they challenge us, their *alma mater*, to re-dedicate ourselves to nurturing yet more leadership and skills into the next 50 years, and the next 90 years. This has always been encapsulated in our motto, WE BUILD FOR THE FUTURE and well covered in the theme of Mak@90: ***Celebrating 90 years of Makerere University: Leadership towards Africa's Transformation and Innovations in the 21st Century!***

2.0 STOCKTAKING

Because of this intersection in time, this 4th Stakeholders' Consultative Meeting in 2012 is a historic stocktaking platform in Makerere University. How so?

It is the right platform in two ways:-

First, it affords us the opportunity to truly appreciate all our Stake holders who have been with us through thick and thin. Hence, I am privileged to thank all our stakeholders, namely: Government, private sector, development partners, alumni, friends, critics, financiers and, unreservedly; staff and students of the past, present and future!

In a special way, allow me to recognize and appreciate our **Guest of Honour** today, one of our most distinguished Alumni: **Rt. Hon Amama Mbabazi, MP**, Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda, and Leader of Government Business. He is an accomplished leader whose achievements have truly modelled his *alma mater's* motto: **WE BUILD FOR THE FUTURE!**

Second, the three-fold objectives of this 4th Stakeholders Consultative Meeting form the parameters of candid dialogue and feed back through:-

1. Sharing with our development partners the content of the University Strategic Plan and Reforms that have taken place since the Stakeholders meeting held in January 2009;
2. Receiving feedback from our stakeholders, specifically from Government, Development partners, and the Private sector
3. Establishing a mutually enriching dialogue about the roles of Makerere University, in particular, and Higher Education in general, concerning socio-economic development and transformation of Uganda, East Africa and the African continent.

Therefore, on behalf of University Council, I wish to pledge that we welcome candid dialogue and feedback with and from all our key Stakeholders. This will enable us to understand perceptions about our University. This is crucial in guiding our work of providing policy direction and leadership so the University can fulfill her mission of knowledge generation and dissemination. This is all the more urgent for skilled human resource and capital development that must be relevant to today's labour market, which is increasingly competitive in an ever globalizing knowledge economy.

3.0 CHALLENGES

The celebrations of achievements at this historic intersection of time do not obscure some hard realities in Makerere University.

Chief among the hard realities are inadequate resources to:

- Provide quality education to our students;

- Support research, practicals and professional development for academic staff and students; and academic staff;
- Give deserving remuneration and conditions of service to our academic, administrative and technical support staff worthy of their productivity and, which is also, competitive in the East African region;
- Develop infrastructure that is appropriate for current population of Makerere University, etc.

Although these challenges have fuelled strikes in the recent past; they can be mitigated, if not overcome. This will take collective involvement and support of all stakeholders.

For its part, Council has appointed a **Task Force on Job Evaluation, Re-organization of Staff Structure and Financing of Makerere University** towards finding long lasting solutions to Makerere's grievances. It is a Task Force of eminent independent Ugandan experts chaired by **Professor Francis G. Omaswa**. It was inaugurated on **18th November 2011** by the Minister of Education and Sports, **Hon Jessica Alupo, MP**, representing our Guest of Honor and distinguished Alumnus, **Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi, MP**.

The **Prof Omaswa Task Force** is expected to review and recommend the most suitable structure for the University; conduct a job analysis and job evaluation of all the jobs in the University towards establishing commensurate salary levels; recommend optimal establishment for each unit according to required competences; propose implementation strategies in regard to the reviewed structures and job evaluation; and develop strategies of improving current financing sources and performances, as well as identifying new financing sources for the University.

Council expects the Omaswa Task Force to submit its final recommendations and report very soon, and is confident that Government will give due consideration to implementation of its final recommendations and report.

4.0 CONCLUSION

There is, however, light at the end of the tunnel, especially in the demonstrated goodwill of Government to increase support to Makerere University. A good example is the **Presidential Initiative in support of Science, Technology and Innovations@ Makerere University**.

This has already produced results, such as, the *Kiira-EV* Electric Car by the College of Engineering; and various innovations and incubations by the Colleges of Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine, and Computing and Informatics, etc.

There is a strong indication Government will increase funding to Makerere University and other public Universities as proposed by the National Development Plan (NDP): “the contribution of the state to public Universities should be increased from **0.3 percent** as a percentage of the GDP (where it has been since 1999) to **1.0 percent** to match what Kenya and Tanzania spend on this item. This is the key way to keep Uganda’s edge as a supplier/exporter of education in the region.”¹

Were such a proposal implemented so that state funding to Makerere and other public Universities matches those of Kenya and Tanzania; then we can afford to pay our professors/academic and administrative staff what they deserve, and similar to their counterparts in Kenya and Tanzania!

And yet our distinguished Alumni are another source of funding for Makerere. By celebrating 90 years of existence, Makerere proclaims her wide network of distinguished Alumni who will support their *alma mater* if cultivated. And many have significant **net-worths** and **networks**. May, I therefore, encourage the University Administration to be more aggressive in cultivating and involving more and more of our distinguished Alumni to support their *alma mater*?

In this regard, I wish to appreciate the University Administration’s innovations of the **Professor Ali A. Mazrui Endowed Chair; H.E Mwai Kibaki Endowed Chair and Leadership Center**; and the **Professor Emmanuel Tumusiime-Mutebile Policy ‘Think-Tank’ Center**, etc. Please fast track implementation of these innovations during celebrations of Mak@90 so they could also lead to the beginnings of a University wide **Endowment Fund**.

Last but not least, I am grateful for Makerere’s sensitivity to equity in access to higher education for bright but disadvantaged girls, particularly of Greater Northern Uganda. This was demonstrated in the appeal first made to Government through the **Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)**, in **November 2010**, by the Gender Mainstreaming Directorate, GMD.

It was an appeal for **UGX 1.5billion** from the **PRDP** for scholarships at Makerere University for girls of Greater Northern Uganda, namely: **Acholi, Lango, Karamoja, Teso and West Nile sub-regions**.

¹ National Development Plan (NDP) (2010/11–2014/15), Government of Uganda, Kampala, Uganda, April, 2010, page 214.

My predecessor, Hon Rukikaire, supported this call on behalf of Council, and the Chancellor, **Prof Mondo Kagonyera**, echoed it. The Ag Vice Chancellor, **Professor Baryamureeba**, made practical follow-up by visiting and writing to all the District Local Government Leaders of Greater Northern Uganda.

The University Administration even sought help from **outgoing Archbishop of the Church of Uganda, The Most Rev Henry Luke Orombi**, who added his voice and similarly wrote to Government.

As Chairperson of Council, I am privileged to add my voice this year as a “**Jubilee Call**” to our **Guest of Honor and Distinguished Alumnus, Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi, MP**.

I happen to come from Lango, and therefore know firsthand the plight of the youth of Greater Northern Uganda, particularly girls, in **accessing University education on private sponsorship**--especially at Makerere University!

The call for UGX 1.5billion from the PRDP was *vintage* Makerere’s sensitivity to the less fortunate of our society.

For WE BUILD FOR THE FUTURE best by including into our **Ugandan national commonwealth**—but not excluding--fellow countrymen and women who are less fortunate through no fault of their own.

This should be the spirit of celebrating 90 years of Makerere University; and 50 years of Uganda’s independence: FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY!