

Opening Remarks at the 1st Reunion Meeting of Past and Present Students, Practitioners and Associates of Political Science and Public Administration, Makerere University

Rt. Hon. Prof. Apolo R. Nsibambi

Former Prime Minister of Uganda

Chief Guest

The Hon. Ministers, Hon. MPs, The Vice Chancellor, The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Administration) The Registrar, Professors, Alumni, Principals and Deans, Lecturers, All our Distinguished Awardees, Ladies and gentlemen.

Allow me to greet you on this day of the 1st reunion meeting of past and present-day students, practitioners and associates of the discipline of Political Science and Public Administration. It is indeed a pleasure for me to be back to my disciplinary home – the Department of Political Science and Public Administration. The Department and Makerere University more generally played a critical role in shaping my academic credentials and my professional values. The norms that define my professional and personal values – such as keeping time with mathematical precision; selfless public service and a positive attitude toward life – were all nurtured during my life as a Budonian and a *Makererean*.

Today, as I walk through the Great Gates of Makerere, I observe a hybridization of continuity and change in this great University. Continuity is clear in Makerere's singular pursuit of excellence in research and innovation; in human capital development and knowledge production; and in the continued struggle to shape national, regional and global agendas that impact humanity. This zeal for excellence has seen Makerere rise to become the third best University in Africa, and indeed, the best-rated University in Africa outside South Africa. Bravo to the leadership and students of Makerere.

Alongside continuity at Makerere, however, is a clear sense of change. I see the change in the growing number of students and staff. Makerere had a humble beginning as vocational training institute in 1922 with only 14 students. The number of students has since grown consistently, as the University extends its reach nationally, regionally and globally. When I was an undergraduate student in the 1950s, Makerere had less than 3,000 students. Today, the number has grown to over 40,000.

