SPEECH BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR JOHN DDUMBA-SSENTAMU

AT THE NELSON MANDELA COMMENORATIVE LECTURE

THURSDAY, 31ST AUGUST, 2017, 9:30AM
MAIN HALL, MAKERERE UNIVERSITY
The President of the Republic of Uganda, H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni
The First Lady and Honourable Minister of Education and Sports Mama Janet Museveni
The Head of Mission, South African High Commission and Honourable Delegates from the South African Government
Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Honourable Ministers and Members of Parliament
The Chancellor Makerere University
The Keynote Speaker, Ms. Zoleka Mandela and Distinguished panelists
Members of Makerere University Community
Ladies and gentlemen,

I respect and recognise each and every one of you in your various capacities

I warmly welcome you all to Makerere University for this very important ceremony to recognize the life of a great statesman of Africa; Nelson Mandela. I sincerely thank you for honouring our invitation. In a special way, I welcome the President of the Republic of Uganda and Visitor of Makerere University, H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. Thank you for sparing time. We indeed appreciate your presence.

I would like to thank you for your continued support and commitment to the development of Makerere University especially with regard to the salary enhancement for the staff during my tenure as Vice Chancellor, which ends today.

In the same spirit, allow me to welcome the First Lady and Honourable Minister of Education and Sports Mama Janet Museveni. You are most welcome to this function.
May I also take this opportunity to welcome our keynote speaker, Ms. Zoleka Mandela and all delegates who have travelled all the way from South Africa to attend this function. The Makerere University community is greatly honored to host you.

Makerere is the leading University in East Africa and is currently number four in Africa, in terms of research output and publications. I must mention that the top ten most published researchers in the region are from Makerere University.

Our ninety-five year old institution prides itself in being the home of the country’s intellectual elite with the obligation to champion social-economic change in society. Indeed the University has trained thousands of people who are making significant contribution towards the transformation of the African Continent. Many of the great statesmen of Africa like Mwalimu Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Mwai Kibaki of Kenya, ‘Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania, Joseph Kabila of D.R.C, to mention but a few have trained here at Makerere University and we are very proud of their achievements.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as part of our mandate to promote intellectual debate and academic excellence, we revived the Makerere University African Lecture Series in 2011. Since then, the University has hosted several dignitaries who have given inspiring lectures on various issues affecting African. In 2012, the former South African President H.E. Thabo Mbeki delivered a lecture on “The Architecture of Post-Cold War Africa” emphasising governance issues affecting Africa. In 2013, the
former Ghanaian President H.E. John Kufuor addressed the University community on “Oil resource management and its utilization for economic transformation”.

In the same year, Makerere University hosted the former President of Mozambique H.E. Joaquim Chissano, who delivered the keynote address on “The role of the Police in upholding and promoting democracy”.

Today’s event is not only in line with these preceding lectures but also marks the beginning of the Annual Nelson Mandela Lectures aimed at carrying forward the legacy of Nelson Mandela. We are hopeful that the lecture to be delivered by Ms. Zoleka Mandela and the subsequent discussions by our panelists will instill a great sense of patriotism amongst our young people. The legacy of Nelson Mandela attained through his struggle for peace and social justice in Africa and other parts won him universal respect. I am hopeful that today’s lecture will inspire even more youth to follow his great example.

I thank the Department of Political Science and Public Administration under the College of Humanities and Social Sciences which has spearheaded the initiative to recognize the contribution of the Mandela family. The proposal was timely and was highly supported and endorsed by the University Senate and Council. I am also pleased to note that the Makerere University Senate unanimously agreed to award an Honorary Doctorate of Laws to Ms. Winnie Mandela. This ceremony should have taken place today, but it was not possible due to her ill health. However, I am pleased to inform you that the ceremony will take place during Makerere’s 68th Graduation week in January 2018. We pray that the Almighty grants her a quick recovery.
I take this opportunity to sincerely appreciate the South African High Commissioner to Uganda and the entire staff at the South African High Commission for the support rendered to Makerere University in our effort to recognize the great works of the Mandela family.

On behalf of Makerere University, we pledge to accord all the support required for the continuity of the Annual Nelson Mandela Lectures and any other activities in that regard.

Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, once again, you are most welcome.

I thank you.

It is now my great honour and pleasure to invite the South African High Commissioner to introduce the keynote speaker.

I sincerely thank our Minister of Education and Sports for sparing time to be here with us today. Thank you very much for supporting Makerere University.

Ladies and gentlemen, join me in welcoming Mama Janet Museveni