

MRS. ESTHER KALIMUZO SPEECH

The Chancellor, Makerere University, Prof.
Ezera Suruma,
Chairperson of the Makerere University
Council, Mrs. Lorna Magara,
The Vice Chancellor, Makerere University,
Professor Nawangwe,
The Vice Chancellor, Kabale University, Mrs.
Joy Kwesiga,
Dignitaries present,
Students and staff of Makerere University,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Protocol Observed

I greet you all warmly on this momentous occasion. On behalf of my family and myself, please permit me to express my gratitude to God. I thank the Vice Chancellor Professor Barnabas Nawangwe and the entire Makerere University Administration for deciding to set aside a day to remember the service of my

husband, the late Frank Kalemura Kalimuzo, even though it has been many decades since he was taken from us. Many years ago, our family organized a Memorial Service for him, at which Canon John Bikangaga was the Guest of Honor. In his speech, Canon John Bikangaga told the congregation that Frank's **memorial** was too big for the family and should be done by either Makerere University or the Government of Uganda. Since we had no power as a family to influence either of the institutions that he suggested, we had no option but to wait and see whether it would be proposed. We are extremely grateful that the administration of Makerere University has chosen to recognize Frank's service to the institution during these Centenary celebrations.

In the course of this morning multiple people who worked with my husband will tell us about what it was like to work with him. My contribution will be to share some personal memories which will introduce him to the many who were too young to have met him. I met Frank in Rwanda in 1956 when he, and a few other people, were invited to attend the Jubilee celebration of King Mutara Rudahigwa. At the time, my father was serving as a CMS Missionary there. I will not share with you the secrets of how he proposed marriage to me, but suffice it to say that by 1957 he was planning our wedding.

Unfortunately, in that year he had a terrible car accident in which he was badly injured. With physiotherapy, and excellent health care, Frank recovered **well** from his injuries. Our wedding took place on 4th

October 1958 in St James Cathedral Ruharo - Mbarara. He was working in Mbarara as A.D.C. at the time. Three months after our wedding, Frank was promoted to serve as "**Establishment Officer**" in the colonial Government headquarters in Entebbe. He was in charge of recruiting Africans to replace Colonialists. We lived in Kyambogo at the time and met many Ugandans in our neighborhood who had recently returned to the country from their studies abroad.

Our first child, Annette was born in 1959. Shortly after that, Frank was posted to Kitgum as Uganda's first African Assistant District Commissioner. While in Kitgum, he was also working as Secretary to the Wild Committee. The purpose of this Committee was to go around Uganda asking people how they would like Uganda

to be governed. In 1960, our second child Phyllis was born. In 1961, Frank was posted back to the colonial Government headquarters in Entebbe and we moved to a home there. In 1962 our third child Rosalind was born. When Uganda attained independence on October 9th 1962, my husband was appointed first Permanent Secretary in the President's Office and Secretary to the Cabinet. He served as Head of the Civil Service until 1970. During that time, we had three more children. Grace was born in 1963, Daniel was born in 1965 and Paul was born in 1967.

One day, at the end of 1970, we were attending a tea party at Nakasero State House, when President Milton Obote announced that he had appointed Frank Kalimuzo as the Vice Chancellor of Makerere University. It was a shock to

everyone! My husband took up the new appointment in 1971 and we moved to Makerere. A few months after we moved to Makerere, there was a Military Coup. The following year, as Makerere was preparing for the Jubilee Celebrations, some men came to the Vice Chancellor's residence and told us that they had been sent by Government Officials to take Frank in. They took him away and he was never seen again. Even though we had witnessed Frank being taken away by these gentlemen, neither Radio Uganda nor UTV mentioned anything about it in subsequent weeks. Three months after Frank had been taken, I went to see Minister Edward Rugumayo to see if he could give me any information. Minister Rugumayo informed me that someone from Makindye barracks had told him that Frank was killed on the same day that he was taken from the Vice

Chancellor's residence. He advised me not to ask anyone else about the matter and urged me to go and take care of my children. At the time, the eldest of our six children was thirteen and the youngest was five. By the grace of God, our family moved from the Vice Chancellor's residence to our house in Nakasero. For many years after we moved, we continued to hear stories that Frank managed to escape. But none of the stories has ever been confirmed. Our lives have never been the same since Frank was taken from us. We continue to miss him dearly.

Through his hard work Frank blessed many people around him - giving hard working people promotions and helping young people with school fees. By the time he died, Frank was paying school fees for 22 children. He helped so many people to find

jobs and cared for so many. I call these gifts of love, respect and humility 'gifts from God'. He did his best to improve the lives of the Rwanda refugees who were in camps, including finding good and clean water and land for new settlements.

Frank's gift of communication also helped him to make many friends from all walks of life, whether they were rich, poor, Kings or ordinary people. He had a great sense of humour and was able to communicate in several Ugandan Languages.

After it became clear that Frank would not be returning to us, my main prayer was that my children be educated. By God's grace and miracles, all of my children were educated up to University level. I have since been blessed with sons and daughters in-law, eleven grandchildren

and five great grandchildren. We give God the glory.

My humble appeal to the new generation is that we continue to pray for Uganda to have leaders who fear God and respect for one another. May we also pray for a society that values life because we still hear stories of premature death.

May God have mercy on us all and continue to take care of widows and orphans.

God bless you all.