

The chief guest, Prof. Timothy Wangusa,
The Vice Chancellor
The Deputy Vice Chancellor
Principals and Deans Present
Distinguished guests,
Staff and Students
Ladies and gentlemen.

It is with much please that I welcome you all to this very important event, at which we celebrate the illustrious life and work of Professor Timothy Wangusa. An alumnus of this University, Professor Wangusa distinguished himself in several areas, including being the first person to graduate with a PhD in Literature of Makerere University (1975) and being the first Ugandan Professor of Literature at Makerere University (1981). The two firsts show Prof Wangusa as a man of achievement, one to emulate and learn from. He also served the University in different capacities, including as Dean, Faculty of Arts (1984-1985), Head of the Department of Literature (1981-1984), and Member of the Makerere University Council, representing Academic Staff Association (1981-1984).

As a writer, he is a household name. His first novel, *Upon this Mountain* (1989) has been a set book in Ugandan secondary schools, and his poems are taught, read and recited far and wide.

Many times, we never get the chance to celebrate the life and work of our icons while they are still with us in flesh and blood. It is therefore a great honour and privilege to celebrate Professor Wangusa today, with the icon himself in our midst.

As a college, we deeply appreciate our alumni and former staff, because it is upon their shoulders that we stand today. Without the priceless contributions of people like Professor Wangusa, our College would not be as outstanding as it is today. Look at the caliber of staff we have in the Department of Literature, for instance, all of them taught by Professor Wangusa – either directly (himself doing the work) or indirectly (his students doing the work). What kind of person, to give just one example, produces a scholar and diplomat of Professor Arthur Gakwandi's caliber? You may wish to know, Mr. Vice Chancellor, that Prof. Arthur Gakwandi, here with us today, was Prof. Wangusa's first doctoral student. He graduated with a PhD in Literature of Makerere University in 1986.

In the life and work of Professor Wangusa, we in the Humanities and the Social Sciences hold our heads high, because it is evident that we are doing amazing work in contributing to the development of this country. It also feeds into our college Mantra: CHUSS on the Move, because we are indeed on the move. With his incredible gifts in writing and communication, Professor Wangusa has served the nation in several capacities, some of which I have already mentioned. I should add that he has also served as a Vice Chancellor of Kumi University (2002-2003); a Presidential Advisor on Literary Affairs (2001-2017); a member of the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (1990-1994), a Member of Parliament (NRC), Bubulo County, Mbale (1989- 1996); and a Minister of Education of the Republic of Uganda (1985-1986), to mention but a few.

Professor Wangusa, I thank God for the manifold talents and blessings He has bestowed upon you, and I thank you for accepting to serve your nation in a powerful way. As you celebrate your

80th birthday, I congratulate you upon the numerous achievements you had had, and wish you the best as you continue to build for the future of this country.

Happy birthday, Professor Timothy Wangusa!

Associate Professor Josephine Ahikire

Principal, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Makerere University