GUILD
PRESIDENTS
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



3RD
ANNUAL EAST AFRICAN
GUILD LEADERS SUMMIT REPORT
2026

GUILD PRESIDENTS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

3RD ANNUAL EAST AFRICAN GUILD LEADERS SUMMIT REPORT

2026

23RD-24TH JULY 2026
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

THEME:
Youth Leadership, Production and Regional Integration: ***Building a Competitive East Africa in a Changing Global Order.***

CHIEF GUEST
H.E. YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 3rd Annual East African Guild Leaders' Summit 2026 was convened by the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy (GPLA) at Makerere University from 23rd-24th July 2026 under the theme "Youth Leadership, Production and Regional Integration: Building a Competitive East Africa in a Changing Global Order." The Summit brought together 1,500 university student leaders, Government Leaders, University Leaders, Development Partners, Private Sector Actors and Youth Representatives from across East Africa to strengthen youth participation in Governance, Production, Trade, Innovation, Education Mobility, Energy, Agri-tech, Sports Economy and Regional Integration.

The Summit has grown from a National Student Leadership Platform into a Regional Youth Movement that Mobilises Guild Presidents, Student Leaders and young people across the East African Community around Integration, Production, Governance, Innovation and shared prosperity. Its central belief is that East African Integration must move beyond Presidential Summits, Ministerial Communiqués and Technical Protocols into the Minds, Universities, Businesses and daily lives of young people.

Over the two days, the Summit hosted six high-level conversations that generated renewed commitment by student leaders to promote East African Identity, Production, Innovation and cross-border collaboration. The discussions produced practical recommendations on Trade, Education Mobility, Youth Enterprise, Energy and Agri-tech, while calling for stronger Government and Institutional support to transform GPLA and the Summit into a Permanent Regional Youth Integration Platform.

A key outcome of the Summit was the call for structured support towards the Institutionalisation of the East African Guild Leaders' Summit. GPLA seeks Presidential Recognition and Championship of the Summit, support for a permanent Secretariat, formal linkage with the Ministry of East African Community Affairs and EAC structures, establishment of an East African Young Leaders Integration Fund, and support to rotate the Summit across EAC Partner States.

The Summit reaffirmed GPLA's commitment to Mobilising Universities, Educating Student Leaders, Promoting Kiswahili and East African Identity, Challenging Tribalism, Sectarianism and Narrow Nationalism, and Building Networks among future Public Servants, Entrepreneurs, Diplomats, Journalists, Innovators and Civic Leaders. Through this Summit, GPLA positions young people not as spectators, but as partners in advancing the East African Integration Agenda.

> "... from a National Student Leadership Platform into a Regional Youth Movement that Mobilises Guild Presidents, Student Leaders and young people across the East African Community around Integration, Production, Governance, Innovation and shared prosperity."

BACKGROUND

The East African Guild Leaders' Summit is a flagship regional platform convened by the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy (GPLA) to mobilise Guild Presidents, Student Leaders and Young People across the East African Community around Integration, Production, Governance, Innovation and Shared Prosperity. The Summit has grown from a National Student Leadership Initiative into a Regional Youth Movement committed to ensuring that East African Integration moves beyond Presidential Summits, Ministerial Communiqués and Technical Protocols into the Minds, Universities, Businesses and Daily Lives of Young People.

The 3rd Annual East African Guild Leaders' Summit 2026 was held at Makerere University from 23rd–24th July 2026 under the theme "Youth Leadership, Production and Regional Integration: Building a Competitive East Africa in a Changing Global Order." It brought together 1,500 University Student Leaders, Government Leaders, University Leaders, Development Partners, Private Sector Actors and Youth Representatives from across East Africa to strengthen Youth Participation in Governance, Production, Trade, Innovation, Education Mobility, Energy, Agri-tech, Sports Economy and Regional Integration.

The Summit Hosted Six High-level Conversations and generated renewed commitment by Student Leaders to promote East African Identity, Production, Innovation and Cross-border Collaboration, while calling for Government and Institutional Support to Build GPLA and the Summit into a Permanent Regional Youth Integration Platform.

MISSION

To Mobilise, Mentor and Develop East African Guild Leaders into Ethical, Productive and Regionally Conscious Leaders who advance Governance, Innovation, East African Integration and Shared Prosperity through Universities and Youth Leadership Structures.

OBJECTIVES

1. ***To strengthen youth participation in East African integration*** by mobilising Guild Presidents and Student Leaders across EAC Partner States around Regional Citizenship, Unity and Shared Prosperity.

2. ***To equip Guild Leaders with Leadership, Governance and Policy Skills*** that enable them to Influencedecision-making, Promote Accountability and lead student institutions responsibly.

3. ***To promote Production, Innovation and Youth Economic Participation*** by positioning Young Leaders to champion Enterprise, Trade, Agri-tech, Education Mobility and Regional market Opportunities.

4. ***To build a Permanent Regional Youth Leadership Platform*** through the East African Guild Leaders' Summit, Fellowships, Mentorship, Student Exchanges, Policy Dialogues and Partnerships with EAC Institutions.

LIST OF **UNIVERSITIES AND INSTITUTIONS** AT **THE GUILD LEADER SUMMIT 2026**

Uganda

1. Makerere University
2. Kyambogo University
3. Uganda Christian University (UCU)
4. Kampala International University (KIU)
5. King Ceasor University
6. Kabale University
7. Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST)
8. Muni University
9. Lira University
10. Soroti University
11. Nkumba University
12. Uganda Martyrs University
13. Ndejje University
14. Kampala University
15. International University of East Africa (IUEA)
16. ISBAT University
17. Jeph International University
18. Metropolitan International University
19. Uganda Technology and Management University (UTAMU)
20. Team University
21. Victoria University
22. Uganda Pentecostal University
23. St. Lawrence University
24. St. Peter's University
25. University of Kisubi (UniK)
26. University of Saint Joseph Mbarara (USJM)
27. Mountains of the Moon University
28. Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU)
29. Seeta University
30. Valley University of Science and Technology
31. Equator University of Science and Technology
32. Livingstone International University
33. Nexus International University
34. Rwenzori International University
35. Ibanda University
36. Kumi University
37. Uganda Institute of Information and Communications Technology (UICT)
38. Management Training and Advisory centre (MATC)
39. Uganda College of Commerce Aduku – Kwania District
40. Uganda College of Commerce Kabale – Kabale District
41. Uganda College of Commerce Pakwach – Pakwach District
42. Uganda College of Commerce Soroti – Soroti District
43. Uganda College of Commerce Tororo – Tororo
44. Makerere University Business School (MUBS)
45. UGANDA PETRORIUM INSTITUTE KIGUMBA
46. Uganda Technical College Bushenyi – Bushenyi District
47. Uganda Technical College Kichwamba – Kabarole District
48. Uganda Technical College Lira – Lira City
49. Uganda Technical College Kyema – Masindi District
50. Uganda Technical College Elgon – Mbale City
51. Uganda Cooperative College Kigumba
52. Uganda Cooperative College Tororo
53. Institute of Survey and Land Management (ISLM), Entebbe
54. Fins Medical Univetsity Fortportal
55. Bukalasa Agricultural College
56. Arua School of Comprehensive Nursing - Arua City
57. Butabika School of Psychiatric Nursing
58. Hoima School of Nursing and Midwifery
59. Jinja School of Nursing Midwifery
60. Kabale School of Comprehensive Nursiing
61. Lira School of Comprehensive Nursing
62. Masaka School of Comprehensive Nursing
63. Kaabong College of Nursing and Midwifery
64. Mulago School of Nursing and Midwifery
65. Ntungamo Health Training Institute
66. Public Health Nurses College Kyambogo
67. Soroti School of Comprehensive Nursing
68. African Rural University
69. Namasuba college of Commerce
70. Bishop Stuart University
71. Busitema University
72. Ernest Cook University
73. Livingston International University
74. Avance International University
75. Apex International University
76. Gulu College of Health Sciences
77. Uganda Wildlife Research and Training College (UWRTC)- Kasese
78. St Regina College of Health Professionals-Hoima
79. Mengo Hospital Training Institute
80. Africa Renewal University
81. Great Lakes Regional University-Kanungu
82. Multitech Business School
83. Makerere Business Institute (MBI)
84. East African Institute for Management Science (EAIMS)
85. Bugema University
86. Cavendish University Uganda
87. Islamic Call University
88. Uganda Institute of Allied Health and Management Sciences
89. Clarke international University
90. Ankole Western University
91. All saints University-Lira
92. Muteesa 1 Royal University
93. University of the Scared Heart Gulu
94. Limkokwing University of Creative Technology - Namataba
95. Uganda Management Institute (UMI)
96. Institute of Petroleum Studies -Kampala
97. Buganda Royal Institute of Business and Technical Education
98. Gulu University

TOTAL: 1346

Kenya

1. University of Nairobi
2. Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology
3. Egerton University
4. University of Eldoret
5. Moi University
6. Maseno University
7. Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology
8. Kabarak University
9. Chuka University
10. Machakos University
11. Murang'a University of Technology
12. Technical University of Kenya
13. Technical University of Mombasa
14. Uzima University
15. Bomet University College
16. Mount Kenya University
17. St. Paul's University
18. Tangaza University
19. Kenyatta University
20. Meru University of Science and Technology
21. Aga Khan University
22. Rongo University
23. University Student Leadership Association of Kenya
24. KCA University
25. Technical University of Mombasa
26. Univerity of Embu
27. Open University of Kenya
28. Masai Mara University

TOTAL: 136

Tanzania

1. University of Dar es Salaam
2. Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS)
3. Dar es Salaam Tumaini University (DarTU)
4. Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology
5. Institute of Finance Management (IFM)
6. East African Statistical Training Center, Dar es Salaam

TOTAL: 14

Rwanda

1. University of Rwanda
2. Kigali Independent University (ULK)
3. University of Lay Adventists of Kigali (UNILAK)
4. University of Technology and Arts of Byumba (UTAB)
5. Kibogora Polytechnic
6. Kepler College-Rwanda
7. Rwanda Polytechnic (RP)
8. University of Kigali
9. Adventist University of Central Africa
10. Catholic University of Rwanda (CUP)
11. East Africa University - Rwanda
12. INES-MUSANZE
13. African School of Governance

TOTAL: 34

South Sudan

1. University of Juba
2. Upper Nile University
3. Starford International University
4. Rumbek University of Science and Technology
5. University of Bahr EL-GHAZAL
6. Destiny University College Juba

TOTAL: 26

BURUNDI

1. University of Burundi
2. University of Ngozi
3. Bujumbura Light University

TOTAL: 4

Somalia National Students Association in Uganda
South Sudan Students Association
Tanzania Students Association in Uganda
Rwanda Students Association in Uganda
Congo Students Association in Uganda
Burundi Students Association in Uganda

THE MAKERERE DECLARATION AND YOUTH COMPACT 2026

On East African Integration, Production, Leadership and Shared Prosperity
Adopted at the 3rd Annual East African Guild Leaders' Summit 2026

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY, KAMPALA, UGANDA - 23RD–24TH JULY 2026

PREAMBLE

We, the Guild Presidents, student leaders, youth representatives, university leaders, partners and delegates gathered at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, for the 3rd Annual East African Guild Leaders' Summit 2026, convened by the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy, under the theme: "Youth Leadership, Production and Regional Integration: Building a Competitive East Africa in a Changing Global Order,"

Recalling the historical aspiration of the people of East Africa to live, trade, learn, work and prosper together;

Recognising that East African integration is not merely a diplomatic arrangement among States, but a historical mission of our people;

Acknowledging the leadership of the Heads of State of the East African Community in advancing cooperation, market integration, infrastructure development, peace, security, education, production and people-to-people relations;

Appreciating that the prosperity and security of East Africa depend on larger markets, stronger productive capacity, industrial transformation, technological advancement, peace, political stability and a shared regional identity;

Recalling the Makerere University Declaration 2025, in which student leaders reaffirmed their commitment to East African integration, educational exchange, youth entrepreneurship, regional mobility, peace, gender equality, infrastructure, climate action, democracy and engagement with regional institutions;

Recognising that the East African Community has created a strong foundation through its integration pillars, including customs cooperation, the common market, monetary cooperation and the long-term aspiration for political federation;

Concerned, however, that many ordinary young people still experience integration as a distant policy language rather than a practical reality in their education, education, employment, trade, enterprise, innovation and daily movement across borders;

Aware that East Africa's youthful population is not merely a demographic statistic, but the region's greatest strategic resource;

Affirming that universities are not only centres of learning, but nurseries of leadership, innovation, citizenship, diplomacy, public service, entrepreneurship and regional consciousness;

Convinced that the next phase of East African integration must be people-centred, production-driven, youth-led, institutionally supported and intergenerationally guided;

Do hereby adopt this Makerere Declaration and Youth Compact 2026 as the guiding instrument for a youth-led regional movement to champion East African integration, production, leadership and shared prosperity.

1. DECLARATION OF HISTORICAL PURPOSE

We declare that East African integration is a strategic necessity for the survival, prosperity, security and global competitiveness of our region.

We reject the idea that East African countries can overcome the challenges of small markets, youth unemployment, climate stress, technological disruption, weak industrialisation, food insecurity and global economic pressure by acting in isolation.

We affirm that the borders we inherited must not become walls that limit the imagination, enterprise and mobility of our generation.

We therefore declare that the mission of our generation is to move East Africa:

- From cooperation to community;
- From community to productive integration;
- From productive integration to shared prosperity;
- And ultimately, towards a united, secure and competitive East African future.

2. OUR PHILOSOPHY OF INTEGRATION

We believe that integration must be understood in five practical ways: First, as a market question: East Africa must provide larger markets for farmers, manufacturers, traders, innovators, artists, professionals and young entrepreneurs.
Second, as a production question: East Africa must stop preparing young people only to search for jobs and instead prepare them to produce, add value, create enterprises and build industries.
Third, as a security question: East Africa must build unity, peace and strategic coordination in order to protect its people, resources, infrastructure and future.
Fourth, as a knowledge question: East African universities must become bridges for shared research, student mobility, innovation, professional development and regional problem-solving.

Fifth, as a citizenship question: The people of East Africa must begin to see themselves not only as citizens of individual States, but as members of one regional family with a shared destiny.

3. OUR ROLE AS YOUNG EAST AFRICANS

We affirm that young people must not be spectators in the integration process.
We commit ourselves to becoming organised, disciplined and constructive champions of the East African integration agenda.
As Guild Presidents, student leaders and youth representatives, we shall use our institutions, networks and voices to:

- Promote East African identity and citizenship;
- Defend peace, unity and mutual respect;
- Advance production, enterprise and innovation;
- Support cross-border trade and regional value chains;
- Promote Kiswahili and regional cultural understanding;
- Encourage student mobility and university collaboration;
- Champion climate action and food security;
- Promote ethical leadership and accountable governance;
- Build bridges between young people, governments, universities, private sector and EAC institutions.

We shall not wait for integration to be completed on paper before we begin living it in practice.

4. COMMITMENT TO A PRODUCTION ORIENTED GENERATION

We declare that East Africa cannot achieve integration without production. Political declarations must be matched by productive economies. Larger markets must be supplied by goods and services produced by East Africans. Youth empowerment must move beyond conferences and slogans into enterprise, value addition, innovation, industrial skills and access to capital.

We therefore commit to championing a new mindset among young people:

- From job-seeking to production;
- From dependency to enterprise;
- From consumption to value addition;
- From informality to organised business;
- From isolated national markets to regional value chains;
- From narrow survival to regional competitiveness.

We call upon Partner States, private sector actors, development partners and financial institutions to support youth participation in agriculture, manufacturing, energy, minerals, digital innovation, tourism, sports, creative industries, logistics, trade and professional services.

5. EAST AFRICAN COMMON MARKET FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

We affirm that the East African Common Market must become meaningful to ordinary young people.

- A young graduate should be able to seek opportunity across the region.
- A young entrepreneur should be able to trade across borders with fewer barriers.
- A young innovator should be able to scale ideas regionally.
- A student should be able to study, intern and collaborate across East Africa.
- A professional should be able to have qualifications recognised with dignity and efficiency.

We therefore, call for deliberate action to address the practical barriers that continue to affect youth mobility, including:

- Non-tariff barriers;
- Delays at borders;
- Limited recognition of qualifications;
- High cost of movement
- Weak access to regional information;
- Limited internship and exchange opportunities;
- Fragmented business registration systems;
- Limited youth-friendly trade finance;
- Inadequate awareness of rights and opportunities under regional protocols

6. EDUCATION, STUDENT MOBILITY AND KNOWLEDGE INTEGRATION

We declare universities to be strategic engines of East African integration.
Makerere University, the University of Nairobi, the University of Dar es Salaam and other regional institutions have historically produced leaders, professionals, public servants and intellectuals for the entire region. That historical role must be renewed.

We call upon universities, higher education councils, the Inter-University Council for East Africa, ministries responsible for education and EAC institutions to strengthen:

- Student exchange programmes;
- Regional internship placements;
- Joint research and innovation labs;
- Credit transfer systems;
- Mutual recognition of qualifications;
- Joint leadership academies;

We further propose the establishment of an East African Student Mobility and Leadership Fellowship, allowing selected student leaders to spend time in universities, public institutions, businesses and regional bodies across Partner States joint leadership academies;

7. TRADE, AfCFTA AND YOUTH ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

We recognise that East African integration must be positioned within the wider African Continental Free Trade Area.

East Africa must prepare its young people not only to participate in national economies, but to trade within East Africa and across the African continent.

We call for the creation of youth-friendly mecanisms to enable young people to participate in:

- Cross-border trade;
- Digital commerce;
- Agribusiness value chains;
- Manufacturing supply chains;
- Logistics and transport;
- Financial technology;
- Tourism and hospitality;
- Professional services;
- Creative industries;
- Export readiness programmes.

We propose the establishment of University Trade and Enterprise Cells across participating institutions, linked to private sector bodies, standards agencies, investment authorities, chambers of commerce and EAC trade platforms.

These cells shall train young people in standards, taxation, customs procedures, packaging, branding, export readiness, business formalisation and regional market access.

8. ENERGY, INDUSTRIALISATION AND STRATEGIC RESOURCES

We recognise energy as central to East Africa's industrial future.

No region can industrialise without reliable, affordable and sustainable energy. East Africa's resources in oil, gas, hydropower, solar, geothermal, wind, critical minerals and emerging green technologies must be developed responsibly and strategically.

We call for youth participation in the energy and minerals sector through:

- Technical training;
- Local content opportunities;
- Research and innovation;
- Environmental safeguards;
- Renewable energy enterprises;
- Petroleum and mineral value-chain participation;
- Energy policy literacy;
- Regional energy infrastructure awareness.

We affirm that energy must not divide East Africans. It must connect our industries, power our innovations, create employment and strengthen regional competitiveness.

9. AGRI-TECH, FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

We affirm that food security is a regional security issue.

East Africa cannot be strong if its young people are disconnected from agriculture, land productivity, food systems, climate adaptation and technology.
We call for a new generation of youth-led agri-tech solutions focused on:

- Climate-smart agriculture;
- Irrigation and water management;
- Post-harvest handling;
- Food processing;
- Digital extension services;
- Seed systems;
- Regional food trade;
- Value addition;
- Agricultural finance;
- Youth agribusiness incubation.

We call upon governments, universities, research institutions, farmer organisations and development partners to treat young people as builders of resilient food systems, not merely as beneficiaries of agricultural programmes.

10. AFCON 2027, SPORTS DIPLOMACY AND REGIONAL BRANDING

We recognise the joint hosting of AFCON 2027 by East African countries as a historic opportunity for sports diplomacy, infrastructure, tourism, hospitality, media, creative industries, regional branding and youth enterprise.

We call for deliberate youth participation in AFCON-related opportunities, including:

- Event management;
- Transport and logistics;
- Hospitality and tourism;
- Media and content creation;
- Sports business;
- Security and protocol support;
- Merchandising;
- Digital ticketing and technology;
- Volunteer programmes;
- Regional cultural showcases.

We propose the creation of an AFCON 2027 Youth Economic Participation
Framework, ensuring that young people are not merely spectators, but active economic participants in this regional moment.

11. GOVERNANCE, ETHICS AND PUBLIC TRUST

We affirm that integration requires ethical leadership.
A united East Africa cannot be built on corruption, sectarianism, tribalism, intolerance, misinformation or abuse of public trust.

We commit ourselves to promoting:

- Integrity in student leadership;
- Respect for public institutions;
- Peaceful political participation;
- Dialogue over violence;
- Evidence-based policy engagement;
- Accountability in youth organisations;
- Transparent management of resources;
- Respect for constitutional order;
- Constructive civic participation

We reject violent politics, hate speech, corruption, narrow nationalism and the manipulation of young people for destructive purposes.

We shall build a movement of young leaders who understand that public office is not a platform for personal extraction, but a responsibility to serve.

12. PEACE, SECURITY AND REGIONAL SOLIDARITY

We recognise that peace is the foundation of integration.

The strongest defence against future conflict is a generation of East Africans that has studied together, traded together, worked together, innovated together and built friendships across borders.

We therefore commit to:
- Promote peaceful dialogue among student communities;
- Resist extremism, hate and misinformation;
- Support conflict prevention and civic education;
- Build inter-university solidarity;
- Promote regional understanding;
- Support humanitarian awareness and social cohesion;
- Encourage young people to see neighbouring countries not as competitors, but as partners.

We call upon Partner States and regional institutions to involve young people in peacebuilding, civic education, regional diplomacy and community resilience initiatives.

13. GENDER, INCLUSION AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

We declare that East African integration must be inclusive or it will be incomplete.

Young women, persons with disabilities, refugees, marginalised communities and special interest groups must be represented in leadership, education, enterprise, innovation and policy processes.

We commit to promoting:
- Women's leadership in student governance;
- Inclusive delegations at regional youth platforms;
- Gender-responsive enterprise support;
- Protection from sexual harassment and exploitation;
- Leadership development for underrepresented groups;
- Equal access to education and mobility opportunities;
- Inclusive participation in climate, trade and innovation programmes.

We call upon universities and governments to ensure that regional youth programmes deliberately open doors for those who are often left behind.

14. DIGITAL INTEGRATION AND INNOVATION

We recognise that the next frontier of East African integration will be digital.

Young people are already building communities, businesses and ideas across borders through technology. Regional integration must therefore, include digital systems that enable communication, trade, learning, innovation and policy participation.

We call for:
- A digital platform linking East African student leaders;
- Regional innovation challenges;
- Digital entrepreneurship training;
- University-based technology labs;
- Cyber responsibility and digital ethics education;
- Youth participation in e-governance conversations;
- Data-driven policy research;
- Cross-border startup collaboration.

We commit to building a digital youth integration platform that connects Student Leaders, university leaders, innovators, researchers and regional institutions

15. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EAST AFRICAN GUILD LEADERS INTEGRATION MOVEMENT

We hereby declare that the East African Guild Leaders' Summit shall grow beyond an annual event into a permanent youth-led regional integration movement.

This movement shall be known as the:
East African Guild Leaders Integration Movement

It shall be coordinated by the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy in partnership with universities, student leadership structures, youth councils, private sector actors, development partners and regional institutions.

The Movement shall focus on:
- Annual East African Guild Leaders' Summits;
- Regional student leadership exchanges;
- Youth policy dialogues;
- Integration fellowships;
- Production and enterprise programmes;
- Kiswahili and East African citizenship initiatives;
- Trade and market access training;
- Youth innovation challenges;
- University integration clubs;
- Annual youth integration reports;
- Engagement with EAC organs and Partner States.

16. PROPOSED INSTITUTIONAL ARCHITECTURE

To give this Declaration life, we propose the following structure

a) Regional Advisory Board
An eminent Advisory Board composed of respected East African statesmen, diplomats, scholars, private sector leaders, university leaders and integration champions shall provide strategic guidance to the Movement.

b) GPLA/EAGLS Secretariat
A permanent Secretariat shall coordinate programmes, partnerships, documentation, policy engagement, resource mobilisation and follow-up of Summit resolutions.

c) Country Chapters
Country chapters shall be established in Partner States to coordinate student leadership networks and national-level integration activities.

d) University Integration Clubs
Participating universities shall establish East African Integration Clubs to popularise regional identity, trade literacy, Kiswahili, student mobility and leadership training

e) Annual Youth Integration Report
The Movement shall produce an annual report documenting youth perspectives, barriers, opportunities and recommendations on East African integration

f) Policy and Research Desk
A policy desk shall generate youth policy briefs on trade, education mobility, governance, climate,energy, sports economy, production and regional markets

17. REQUESTS TO THE HEADS OF STATE OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

With humility and respect, we request the Heads of State of the East African Community to support this youth-led integration movement by

1. Recognising the East African Guild Leaders' Summit as a strategic youth platform for people-centred integration;
2. Supporting the establishment of a permanent Secretariat for GPLA and the East African Guild Leaders' Summit;
3. Directing relevant ministries responsible for EAC Affairs, youth, education, trade, agriculture,energy and ICT to engage with the Summit resolutions;
4. Supporting the rotation of the Summit across East African Partner States;
5. Facilitating structured engagement between student leaders and EAC organs;
6. Supporting regional student leadership exchanges and fellowships;
7. Promoting Kiswahili and East African citizenship education in universities;
8. Encouraging universities to establish East African Integration Clubs;
9. Supporting youth participation in regional trade, production and innovation;
10. Supporting youth economic participation in AFCON 2027 and other regional initiatives;
11. Supporting the development of a Youth Common Market Watch Platform;
12. Encouraging the private sector and development partners to invest in youth-led regional integration programmes;
13. Receiving an annual Youth Integration Report from the Movement for consideration by relevant regional and national institutions.

18. REQUESTS TO THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY ORGANS AND INSTITUTIONS

We request the EAC Secretariat, East African Legislative Assembly, Inter-University Council for East Africa, East African Business Council and other relevant institutions to:

- Create structured youth consultation spaces;
- Receive and review youth policy proposals;
- Support university-based integration programmes;
- Provide technical guidance to the Movement;
- Promote student mobility and regional citizenship;
- Include youth voices in integration communication strategies;
- Support research and documentation of youth experiences under the Common Market;
- Collaborate with GPLA in building a regional student leadership database.

19. REQUESTS TO UNIVERSITIES

We call upon universities across East Africa to:

- Partner with GPLA and the East African Guild Leaders' Summit;
- Establish East African Integration Clubs;
- Support student exchanges and regional internships;
- Host public lectures on East African integration;
- Promote Kiswahili and regional citizenship;
- Support women and marginalised student leaders;
- Encourage research on regional development
- Link student innovation to regional market opportunities;
- Treat Guild leadership as a training ground for public service and regional citizenship.

20. REQUESTS TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

We call upon private sector actors and development partners to support youth-led regional integration through:

- Enterprise financing;
- Innovation competitions;
- Trade mentorship;
- Agribusiness incubation;
- Digital skills training;
- Policy research grants;
- Student leadership fellowships;
- AFCON 2027 youth opportunity programmes;
- Climate-smart agriculture support;
- Internship and apprenticeship opportunities;
- Support to the GPLA/EAGLS Secretariat.

We emphasise that investing in young leaders is not charity. It is strategic investment in the region's future markets, institutions, workforce and stability.

21. OUR COMMITMENTS AS STUDENT LEADERS

We, the student leaders of East Africa, commit to:

- Champion East African integration in our universities;

- Promote production, enterprise and innovation;
- Build cross-border student networks;
- Promote peace, dialogue and mutual respect;
- Support women and inclusive leadership;
- Reject corruption, sectarianism and violent politics;
- Promote Kiswahili and East African identity;
- Advocate for youth participation in regional markets
- Support climate action and food security;
- Engage constructively with governments and EAC institutions;
- Submit annual progress reports on integration activities;
- Build a disciplined, credible and non-partisan youth movement for East Africa.

22. IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

Within 3 Months

GPLA shall establish a Declaration Implementation Desk
Participating student leaders shall be registered into a regional database.
The Declaration shall be transmitted to relevant ministries, EAC institutions, universities and youth bodies.

Within 6 Months

University Integration Clubs shall be launched in selected institutions.
The first youth policy briefs shall be prepared on trade, education mobility, youth employment, climate action and student leadership.
Country focal persons shall be identified.

Within 12 Months

The first Annual Youth Integration Report shall be published.
A regional student leadership exchange programme shall be piloted.
A digital platform for East African student leaders shall be launched.
Preparations shall begin for the next East African Guild Leaders' Summit in another Partner State.

Within 3 Years

The Movement shall have active university chapters in multiple Partner States.
A functional Secretariat shall coordinate programmes, research, exchanges and partnerships.
Youth integration recommendations shall be regularly submitted to national and regional institutions.

23. ACCOUNTABILITY AND CREDIBILITY

We recognise that a movement claiming to champion East African integration must itself be credible, disciplined and accountable.

We therefore, commit to:

- Transparent leadership structures;
- Proper documentation of activities;
- Responsible financial management;
- Regular reporting to partners;
- Non-partisan regional engagement;
- Respect for the sovereignty and laws of Partner States;
- Constructive engagement with public institutions;
- Protection of the dignity and safety of young people;
- Avoidance of hate, extremism, sectarianism and misinformation.

Our Movement shall build trust by the quality of its work, the discipline of its leaders and the seriousness of its contribution to the region.

24. CONCLUSION

We declare that East Africa's future will not be inherited passively.
It must be built deliberately.

It must be built in classrooms, farms, factories, laboratories, parliaments, markets, digital platforms, sports arenas, border towns, universities and communities.

The Heads of State can sign treaties. Ministers can negotiate protocols.
Parliaments can pass laws. Institutions can design frameworks.

But it is the people, especially young people, who must give integration life.

We therefore adopt this Makerere Declaration and Youth Compact 2026 as our collective commitment to build a generation of East Africans who are productive, ethical, innovative, peaceful, regionally conscious and ready to complete the historical mission of East African unity.

Let our generation be remembered as the generation that rejected fragmentation.

Let us be remembered as the generation that built bridges across inherited borders.

Let us be remembered as the generation that placed East Africa's shared destiny above narrow divisions.

We are many countries, but one region.
We have different flags, but one future.
We have inherited borders, but we choose to build bridges.

For God and East Africa.

Adopted this 24th day of July 2026 at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda.

Signed by:
Guild Presidents, Student Leaders and Youth Representatives of East Africa
Under the auspices of the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy
3rd Annual East African Guild Leaders' Summit 2026

OPENING REMARKS BY HANAH TERISAH



Distinguished Chief Guest, Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Members of Parliament, university leaders, development partners, Guild Presidents, student leaders, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy, I warmly welcome you to the **3rd Annual East African Guild Leaders' Summit 2026**, hosted here at Makerere University.

This Summit brings together young leaders from across East Africa under the theme: **"Youth Leadership, Production and Regional Integration: Building a Competitive East Africa in a Changing Global Order."** It is a call to young people to move from the margins of leadership into the centre of shaping governance, production, innovation and regional integration.

Today, we gather not only to speak about East Africa, but to build the relationships, ideas and commitments that will carry the integration agenda into our universities, communities and countries.

You are all most welcome.

OPENING REMARKS BY MOSES KIDEGA



Thank you, Hannah.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, this Summit is more than an event. It is a growing regional youth movement that brings together Guild Presidents and student leaders to reflect on the future of East Africa and the role of young people in shaping it.

Over the course of this Summit, we shall engage in conversations on governance, trade, education mobility, energy, agri-tech, youth enterprise, sports economy and regional cooperation. These discussions are intended to inspire action, strengthen partnerships and position young leaders as serious contributors to East Africa's transformation.

We thank all our guests, partners, speakers, panelists and student leaders for honouring this invitation. Let us participate fully, listen deeply and commit ourselves to building a more united, productive and competitive East Africa.

KEYNOTE HIGHLIGHTS - **DAY 1**

PROF. RUTH NSIBIRANO-AG.

DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE OF GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



Prof. Ruth Nsibirano welcomed the Guild Presidents, student leaders and stakeholders to Makerere University, noting that the Summit provided an important platform for mentoring and preparing young people for leadership. She emphasized that youth must move beyond being sidelined and take up responsibility in solving regional challenges such as unemployment, climate change, weak production systems and limited participation in decision-making.

She called on young leaders to use technology, skills, innovation and regional cooperation to improve production, trade and productivity across East Africa. She further reminded participants that integration is about reclaiming shared identity and unity beyond colonial borders, while rejecting corruption, unethical conduct and divisive practices.

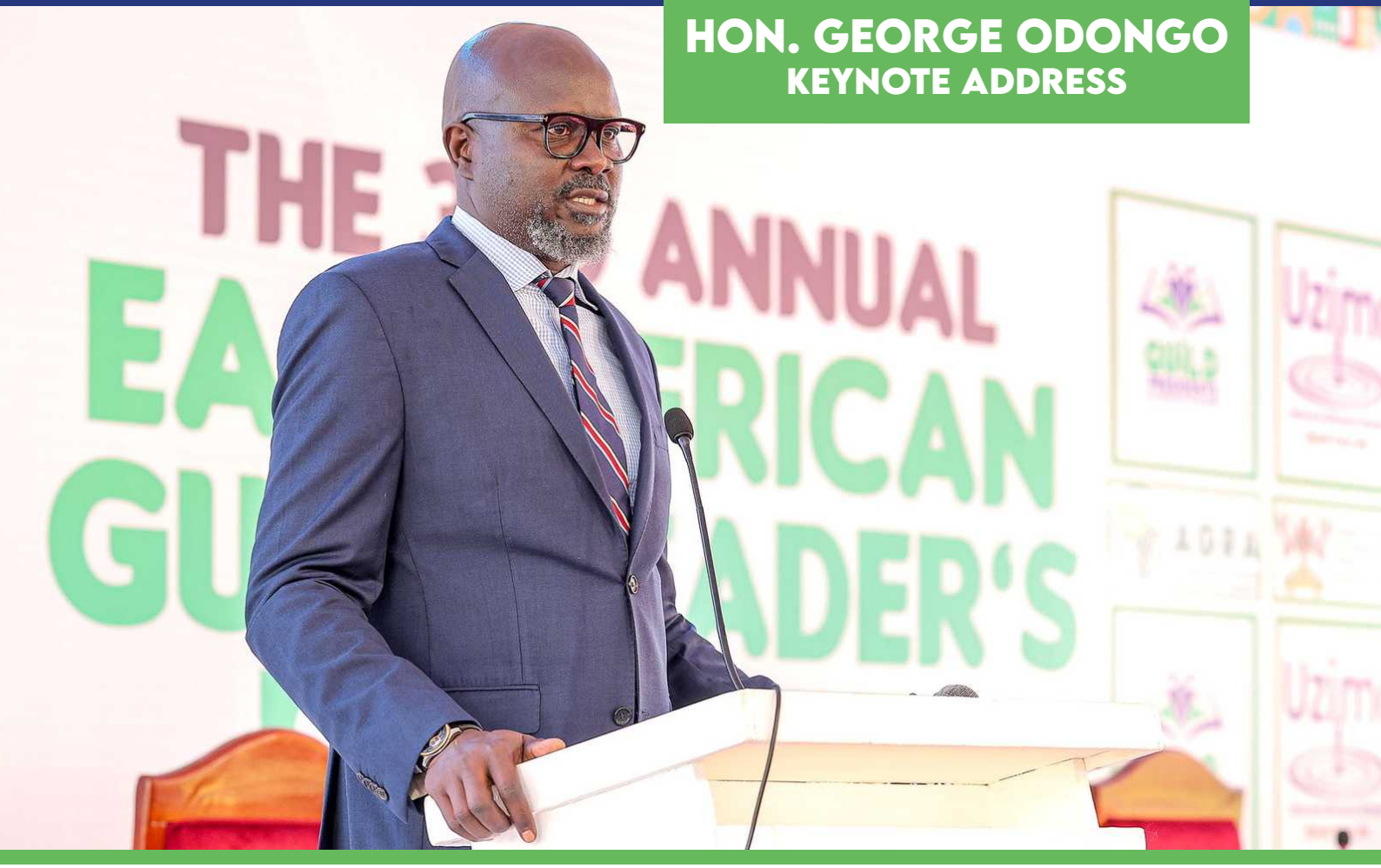
Prof. Nsibirano also stressed the need for inclusive leadership, encouraging women, persons with disabilities and other underrepresented groups to actively participate in leadership. Her central message was that East Africa's future must be shaped by ethical, productive, united and inclusive young leaders.



PANEL DISCUSSIONS

1ST PANEL

ENHANCING TRADE THROUGH EAST AFRICAN INTEGRATION; CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



HON. GEORGE ODONGO
KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Hon. George Odongo, Member of the East African Legislative Assembly, emphasized that trade is a direct outcome of regional and Pan-African integration. He noted that East Africa's small and fragmented national economies cannot compete effectively in the current global order unless they unite and build a stronger regional economic bloc.

He argued that integration today must respond to modern realities such as technology, globalization, shifting production systems and global power competition. He reminded participants that Africa's colonial borders and inherited economic systems continue to limit trade, movement and production, and therefore called for the decolonization of institutions, education, immigration systems and mindsets.

Hon. Odongo further highlighted East Africa's youthful population as a major opportunity for production, innovation and growth. He urged young leaders to embrace integration as a practical strategy for economic transformation, while challenging governments to remove non-tariff barriers and treat East Africans not as foreigners, but as citizens of a shared region.

His central message was that East Africa's prosperity, dignity and global competitiveness depend on unity, regional production, free movement, shared values and the active participation of young people in advancing the integration agenda.

MODERATOR:

HW MATANDA ABUBAKER HASSAN

Advocate of the Courts of Judicature of Uganda



Matanda opened the discussion by underscoring that regional integration must be understood not only as a political aspiration, but as an economic necessity for young people across East Africa. He noted that trade remains one of the most practical pathways through which the promise of integration can be felt in everyday life, especially by student leaders, young entrepreneurs and emerging professionals. The session therefore challenged participants to reflect on the barriers that continue to limit cross-border trade, mobility and enterprise, while identifying the opportunities that a more united, connected and competitive East Africa presents for the next generation.



MS. AIRINE WILLIAM

UNDP Student Ambassador, Tanzania

Ms. Airine William emphasized the need for young people to remain agile, flexible and intentional in positioning themselves for emerging opportunities. She noted that sustainable development cannot be achieved by relying on outdated approaches, but by adapting to the demands of the present time. Drawing from her experience as a UNDP Student Ambassador, she cautioned young people to be disciplined in how they use social media, reminding them that "garbage in, garbage out." She encouraged youth to know who they are, what they want, and the kind of people and content they choose to engage with, so that social media becomes a tool for learning, growth and opportunity rather than illusion, moral decay or distraction.

ROSE NABWIRE

27th Guild President, Makerere University Business School

Rose Nabwire emphasized that East African integration should be viewed not only as a political agenda but also as a major opportunity for economic growth, entrepreneurship and youth empowerment. She reflected on the need to decolonize mindsets, remove trade barriers and intentionally position young people as innovators and entrepreneurs across East Africa. Drawing from her experience as a business student, she noted that although young people are taught to be risk-takers, many still fear starting businesses, making losses or failing. She also observed that many youth are not fully informed about existing platforms such as the AfCFTA, which were created to expand opportunities, and called for greater motivation, awareness and courage among young people to start, fail, learn and grow.





DANIELLA UMUKUNZI

Guild President, Kepler College, Rwanda

Daniella Umukunzi emphasized the importance of preparing young people with soft skills, ethical leadership and digital skills so they can become responsible future leaders of the East African Community. She recommended that institutions and responsible authorities provide practical training on proper use of social media and the internet, noting that young people need guidance on what is acceptable, respectful and culturally appropriate to share. She further argued that youth should play a central role in guiding fellow youth, since they better understand the realities, challenges and language of their generation, and that capable youth representatives should be empowered to mentor and manage their peers.



EMOLOT ALLAN DAVID

Founding Chairperson, ICOYACA

Emolot Allan David emphasized that Africa must urgently and fully operationalize the African Continental Free Trade Area as a powerful tool for continental prosperity, especially by including young people and women. He noted that while trade in goods is already active, many professionals and skilled workers such as doctors, engineers, plumbers and hairdressers have not fully embraced the opportunity totrade services across borders. He challenged young people to be intentional, identify what they can offer, create products or services, and take advantage of the large East African and African market. He also observed that although there is political will for integration, implementation is still frustrated by border and customs barriers, and called for practical support that enables ordinary traders and technical people to add value and trade freely.

RICHARD CHUBAKA

EAC Youth Ambassador

Richard Chubaka emphasized the need to close the information gap among young people regarding the East African Community and the opportunities available for micro, small and medium enterprises. He noted that important frameworks already exist, including efforts to eliminate non-tariff barriers and promote simplified trade, but many young people are not aware of them or how they affect their daily lives. He encouraged youth to actively seek information from EAC platforms, understand policies such as the Common Market and Customs Union protocols, and use that knowledge to participate meaningfully in regional integration, shape policy, and take advantage of duty-free trade opportunities within East Africa.



REMARKS BY **MR. OSBORN TURYASINGURA**
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, NATIONAL SECRETARIATE FOR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Mr. Osborn Turyasingura emphasized that the future of East Africa will not be inherited, but deliberately built by an organised, productive and regionally conscious generation. He noted that with eight Partner States, a population of about **343 million people**, over **70% of whom are below 30 years**, and a combined GDP of about **USD 350 billion**, East Africa has a strategic opportunity to turn its youthful population into a powerful demographic dividend. He called on policymakers and youth leaders to move away from treating young people as a welfare category and instead mainstream them as economic actors in production, trade, innovation and regional integration.



He situated youth production and integration within key global, regional and national frameworks, including **AU Agenda 2063, the UN SDGs, AfCFTA, the EAC Treaty and Common Market Protocol, EAC Vision 2050, AFCON 2027, Uganda Vision 2040, NDP IV and the NRM Manifesto**. He highlighted the **EAC Common Market Protocol**, in force since 2010, as a legal foundation that gives young people the right to trade, work and invest across Partner States. He further challenged Guild Leaders to institutionalise the regional student leadership network beyond the Summit, champion cross-border trade facilitation for young people and Special Interest Groups, and carry the Makerere Youth Declaration into national development planning spaces.

He recommended that the Government should formally include Guild Leaders in Common Market and NDP IV monitoring structures, improve labour mobility data for Special Interest Groups, and link youth enterprise financing to opportunities arising from **AFCON 2027** supply chains. His central message was that East African integration must translate into production, competitiveness, inclusiveness and practical economic opportunity for young people.

> A population of about ***343 million people***, over ***70% of whom are below 30 years***, and a combined GDP of about ***USD 350 billion***, East Africa has a strategic opportunity to turn its youthful population into a powerful demographic dividend.

REMARKS BY THE MINISTER FOR YOUTH AND CHILDREN AFFAIRS **HON. LAKISA MERCY**

Hon. Lakisa Mercy challenged young people to define the kind of generation history will remember them to be, noting that East Africa's large youth population must be transformed from potential into real leadership, production and national development. She emphasized that youth should not be treated as a problem or welfare category, but as trusted partners, innovators, entrepreneurs, farmers, software developers, volunteers and student leaders already contributing to transformation.

She highlighted that governance, production and national development are interconnected, arguing that governance without production creates unfunded promises, while production without good governance benefits only a few. She underscored the importance of guild leadership as a training ground for democracy, accountability, dialogue, compromise and public service, reminding student leaders that winning elections is not the highest achievement of leadership; serving people well is.

The Minister urged young people and universities to shift from politics alone to production, innovation, entrepreneurship, research and problem-solving, stressing that universities should not merely graduate job seekers, but job creators, ethical leaders, innovators and solution providers. She also introduced the Youth Legislative Agenda as a national platform to ensure young people meaningfully participate in shaping laws, policies and investments affecting their future.



> On regional integration, Hon. Lakisa Mercy emphasized that ***East Africa's future cannot be built within national borders alone***.

On regional integration, Hon. Lakisa Mercy emphasized that East Africa's future cannot be built within national borders alone. She called for young entrepreneurs, innovators, researchers and student leaders across Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, South Sudan and the wider region to build partnerships, trust and shared purpose beyond borders. Her central message was that young people must lead with integrity, produce with excellence, serve with humility and take responsibility for building an East Africa where youth have both the freedom to dream and the opportunity to lead, produce and create lasting prosperity.

SPEECH BY **MR. MASESA DEMIANO**
ED, GUILD PRESIDENTS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Your Excellencies, Ministers, Vice Chancellors, Partners, Guild Presidents and fellow young East Africans;

I stand here today with gratitude, humility and renewed conviction.

This Summit was not convened as an ordinary student leadership gathering. It was convened as part of a historical mission: the mission to ensure that young people become active builders of the East African integration agenda.

East African integration did not begin today. Our people have shared railways, universities, markets, ports, institutions and a common destiny for generations. Even when the first East African Community collapsed in 1977, the idea of East Africa did not die. It was revived because our future is stronger together than divided.

Today, as young leaders, we must move integration from treaties and speeches into universities, businesses, farms, innovations, borders and communities.

We are deeply honoured with H.E. President Museveni's long-standing passion for East African unity, expanded markets, production, strategic security and political federation.

This Summit itself is a testimony that guidance matters. What began as a Guild Leaders Summit for Uganda was expanded, through the wisdom of Hon. Matthew Rukikaire, into the East African Guild Leaders Summit, a platform bringing together student leaders from across the region. It was also Hon. Rukikaire who moved the historic motion proposing H.E. Jakaya Kikwete as Summit Patron, a responsibility His Excellency graciously accepted.

We thank H.E. Kikwete for giving this movement regional legitimacy. We thank Rt. Hon. Dr. Rugunda for his fatherly guidance, humility and consistent support. We thank Hon. Rukikaire for expanding the imagination of this movement. We



thank our partners, universities, sponsors, volunteers and my colleagues at GPLA who have worked with limited resources but unlimited faith.

Our humble request to H.E. the President is that this movement receives stronger institutional support.

We request support for a permanent Secretariat for GPLA and the East African Guild Leaders Summit; formal linkage with EAC structures; support for youth integration programmes; and guidance to ensure that this Summit rotates across the Partner States as a true regional movement.

We are not asking governments to integrate East Africa while young people remain spectators. We are offering ourselves as partners.

We shall mobilise universities.

We shall educate student leaders.

We shall promote Kiswahili and East African identity.

We shall fight narrow nationalism, sectarianism and tribalism.

We shall build networks of future public servants, entrepreneurs, diplomats, innovators and leaders who believe in one East African destiny.

Fellow young East Africans, history is watching us.

A previous generation established the Community. Another generation saw it collapse.

A determined generation revived it.

Our generation must ensure that it never collapses again.

Let us be remembered as the generation that rejected fragmentation and built bridges across borders.

We are many nations, but one people. We have different flags, but one destiny.

East Africa must unite—not simply because unity is desirable, but because our prosperity, security and survival demand it.

May God bless GPLA.

May God bless the East African Guild Leaders Summit. May God bless Uganda and the future of East Africa.

For God and East Africa. Thank you.

REMARKS BY **PROF. HENRY ARINAITWE** – DVC, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION, MAKERERE UNIVERSITY



Prof. Henry Alinaitwe, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration at Makerere University, delivered opening remarks on behalf of the Vice Chancellor, who was unable to attend. He warmly welcomed the distinguished guests, university leaders, student leaders and stakeholders to Makerere University, and expressed the University's appreciation for the continued support towards the East African Guild Leaders' Summit. He noted that student leadership provides an important foundation for service at higher levels of responsibility, citing examples of former student leaders who have gone on to serve in national leadership. Prof. Alinaitwe further highlighted Makerere University's historic role in nurturing leaders across East Africa, including prominent figures from Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya. He concluded by inviting Rt. Hon. Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda, Patron of GPLA and former Prime Minister of Uganda, to address the Summit.

ADDRESS BY DR. RUHAKANA RUGUNDA



> He challenged East African student leaders not to remain spectators ***while decisions about their future are made,*** but ...

Rt. Hon. Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda welcomed the large delegation of student leaders from across East Africa, describing their numbers and regional representation as a strong sign of growing momentum for East African integration. He commended the leadership of the **Guild Presidents Leadership Academy** for mobilising young leaders and carrying the integration message into important spaces across the region, urging them to continue building the movement beyond the Summit.

He reminded participants that building the future of East Africa requires understanding the history of Pan-Africanism and regional unity. He traced this struggle from the efforts of **Marcus Garvey**, **W.E.B. Du Bois**, **George Padmore**, **Kwame Nkrumah**, **Julius Nyerere**, and the 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress, noting that many of the key actors in Africa's liberation and unity movements were students and young leaders. He emphasized that young people have historically played a decisive role in shaping Africa's political future.

Rt. Hon. Rugunda further pointed to local examples such as **President Yoweri Museveni**, who as a young student leader at the University of Dar es Salaam chose active participation in liberation struggles. He challenged East African student leaders not to remain spectators while decisions about their future are made, but to take centre stage, demand accountability, and play a vanguard role in advancing unity, integration and the East African federation agenda.

His central message was that the survival, strength and prosperity of East Africa depend on unity. He concluded by encouraging young leaders to use their education, networks and commitment to integration to build on the foundations laid by past generations, before inviting **Rt. Hon. Dr. Crispus Kiyonga**, Chancellor of Makerere University and Second Deputy Prime Minister, to deliver the Chief Guest's address on behalf of H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni.

SPEECH FROM THE **CHIEF GUEST**
RT HON. DR. CRISPUS KIYONGA
2ND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

H.E. YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
THE 3RD ANNUAL EAST AFRICAN GUILD LEADERS SUMMIT

I want to thank the organisers of this annual summit of Guild Leaders, for inviting me to preside as Chief Guest. I have not been able to attend your event due to earlier scheduled national engagements. However, I have asked Rt. Hon. Crispus Kiyonga to represent me; and deliver my remarks to the Guild Leaders attending the Summit.



First, I welcome the Guild Leaders and other distinguished guests that have travelled from outside our borders. I wish you a peaceful and profitable stay in Uganda. I encourage you to visit the Countryside to explore Uganda's natural beauty and diverse cultures and interact with your Ugandan brothers and sisters, who are very hospitable.

I want to commend Guild Presidents' Leadership Academy (GPLA) for promoting the political and economic integration of East Africa and Africa, by uniting the Guild leaders from our universities, in the region. I am glad that the young leaders are coming together to deliberate on issues of regional integration, as the gaurantor of our competitiveness in a changing world order. This has been the focus of the NRM Patriots since our student days in the1960s.

As the Guild Leaders, you must know that a leader is like a doctor, who tries to cure a disease. In order to treat a disease, you must first of all conduct a diagnosis. Once you have correctly diagnosed the patient, then you can make the prescription. If the diagnosis is wrong, the prescription cannot be right and if the prescription is not right the patient cannot be cured. Our student groups of the 1960s and later when we joined the Government, identified ten (10) bottlenecks to Africa's development. They include:

1. Ideological disorientation, manifested through promoting the politics of identity e.g. tribes, religion, etc., instead of the politics of interests.;
2. A weak State, especially the Army;
3. Under-developed infrastructure (i.e. the railways, the roads, the electricity, the telephones, piped water,

> I am glad that the young leaders are coming together to deliberate on issues of regional integration, as the gaurantor of our competitiveness in a changing world order. ***This has been the focus of the NRM Patriots since our student days in the1960s.***

etc.);
4. The underdevelopment of the human resource (lack of education and poor health for the population);
5. Interfering with the private sector (either by policy or by corruption);
6. A fragmented African market on account ofcolonialism;
7. Exporting unprocessed raw materials and, therefore, getting little money and losing jobs; this was caused by lack of industrialization;
8. The underdevelopment of the services sector (hotels, banking, transport, insurance, etc.);
9. The under development of agriculture;
10. The attack on democracy.

After many years of struggle (peaceful and armed) and analysis, the NRM evolved four (4) principles to address the above challenges. These are:

1. **Patriotism** (non-sectarianism of religion or tribe, no suppression of women and no marginalization of the youth, the disabled, the under-developed areas such as Karamoja, etc.);

2. **Pan-Africanism** (working for the Federation of East Africa and beyond) as well as the Common Market of Africa in order to guarantee greater prosperity and strategic security. The unity of the market of Uganda is not enough to guarantee our prosperity (a bigger market means greater prosperity) and strategic security (to defend our sovereignty against the imperialists);

3. **Socio-economic transformation** so as to change Uganda from being a peasant society into a middle-class, skilled working class society. In order to benefit from Pan-Africanism and from Uganda's unity, the society must undergo a group metamorphosis — socio-economic transformation. In our case, this means transitioning from the pre-capitalist or subsistence mode of life to the modern money economy and eliminating bystanders or spectators in the drive towards increasing the household incomes and creation of jobs. As more and more Ugandans wake up and select profitable enterprises in the four sectors of commercial agriculture, industries, services and ICT, production of Ugandan commodities and services will continue to go up. Therefore, it is easy to observe that in the long-run, our internal market of 45 million people, is not enough. Already, with just little waking up of a few Ugandans, we now have surplus milk, sugar, bananas, etc.

4. Finally, ensuring the **development of democracy**.

I urge the Guild Leaders to study the above principles and also make a contribution to the development of their respective countries, East Africa and Africa. By following the above four principles-ideology, the NRM was able to overthrow oppressive and dictatorial regimes in Uganda; we have revived and expanded Uganda's economy and restored democracy and respect for human life and property, etc. We have been able to defeat illiteracy and the killer diseases.

We are now waging an aggressive war against poverty and social backwardness. Already, we are seeing success stories, especially in areas where the people have followed our advice, on wealth and jobs creation. The message of the NRM is that every household must select an economic enterprise in the four sectors of commercial agriculture, industries, ICT and Services. Currently, we still have 33% of the homesteads outside the money economy. They are in the subsistence economy of working only for food. How can one expect to take their children to school or buy medicine and clothes for them, if they have no money? Therefore, in order to build prosperous and stable homes, we are supporting the households to transition from subsistence farming to the modern money economy, through wealth funds like the Parish Development Model, Emyooga, Youth Fund, etc.

The government has put in place the necessary conditions to ensure the profitability of business enterprises. These include: the good roads, electricity, peace and security; integration of the Ugandan market to the regional, African and international markets; pursuing policies that favour the private sector, etc.

However, these economic advantages, that the NRM has created, should be turned into jobs and wealth for the households, in order for this development to be meaningful. The Parish Development Model and theotherwealthfundsareaimed at increasing the number of wealth creators engaged in production, in the four sectors of: commercial agriculture, industries, services and ICT.

Finally, I want to encourage the young leaders to stay healthy. Without good health, you cannot be able to make a meaningful contribution to the prosperity of your families, country and Africa. I urge you to avoid reckless and dangerous lifestyles, such as drunkenness, smoking, sexual promiscuity, etc., which can predispose you to many diseases and complications.
I thank you and wish you fruitful deliberations.

PANEL TWO

TOPIC: AFCON 2027 AS A PLATFORM FOR YOUTH ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

KEYNOTE

DR. DENNIS K MUGIMBA

Spokesperson, Ministry MoES/Local Organizing Committee, AFCON SECRETARIAT

Dr. Dennis K. Mugimba emphasized that **AFCON 2027 presents a major economic opportunity for young people**, especially through the private sector. He noted that while the Local Organizing Committee may only create a limited number of direct jobs, the wider tournament economy will generate thousands of opportunities in hospitality, transport, media, branding, catering, tourism, translation, logistics, security, accommodation and event supportservices.



He placed AFCON within the wider **global sports industry**, which he described as a multi-trillion-dollar economy, with football taking a significant share. He explained that Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania must use AFCON PAMOJA 2027 to tap into this global industry by preparing young people with the right skills, attitude andadaptability.

Dr. Mugimba stressed that young people should not wait until the tournament begins to prepare. He highlighted the importance of **cultural intelligence**, including language skills such as French, Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish, Kiswahili and English, given the international nature of the tournament. He also emphasized practical skills, flexibility and willingness to take up available opportunities, even when they are outside one's academic qualification.

Hechallengedyoungpeopletostopdespisingcertainformsofworkandinsteadfocusonwherevalueand income will be created. He noted that during AFCON, opportunities will emerge in hotels, Airbnb management, transport services, stadium support, fan zones, catering, media movement, tourism and private sector supply chains. His central message was that youth economic participation in AFCON will depend on **preparedness, discipline, adaptability, skills alignment and the rightattitude**.

He concluded by encouraging young people to position themselves early, not only for **AFCON 2027**, but also for future major events such as the **All Africa Games 2031**, where similar opportunities will arise in Uganda.

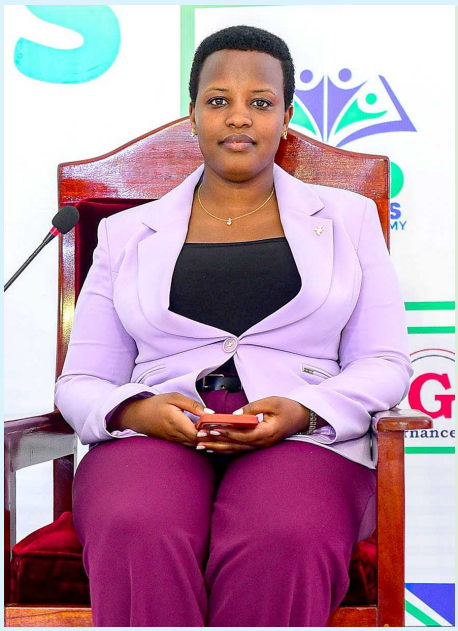
MODERATOR:

GOMA VICTOR HINES
Sports Caster & Football Journalist



Goma Victor Hines opened the session by framing AFCON 2027 not only as a football tournament, but as a major economic opportunity for young people across Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. He noted that the tournament presents practical openings in media, hospitality, transport, tourism, branding, catering, events management, digital content creation and enterprise development. The discussion therefore invited young people to look beyond the excitement of football and begin positioning themselves with the right skills, discipline, networks and attitude to benefit from the wider sports economy that AFCON 2027 will bring to East Africa.

PANEL TWO



MERCY KANYESIGYE
National Female Youth Member Of Parliament

Hon. Mercy Kanyesigye, the National Female Youth Member of Parliament, emphasized that AFCON 2027 should create lasting benefits for young people beyond the tournament. She noted that Government's investment in sports infrastructure, including stadia, should be used to attract future tournaments such as regional competitions, women's leagues and CECAFA events, thereby sustaining revenue and employment opportunities. She further committed to working with GPLA to share information on available AFCON opportunities so that young people can position themselves early. Hon. Kanyesigye also cautioned youth to exercise discipline during the tournament period, avoid reckless excitement and make responsible choices that protect their future beyond AFCON.

DECOLAS KIIZA

Operations Manager, AFCON Secretariat Uganda, D.CEO Football, FUFA.

Mr. Decolas Kiiza, Operations Manager at the AFCON Secretariat Uganda and Deputy CEO Football at FUFA, emphasized that AFCON 2027 is already serving as a practical demonstration of East African integration through the joint PAMOJA bid by Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. He noted that the tournament is expected to generate significant economic activity through infrastructure development, visitor inflows, private sector participation and employment opportunities. He encouraged young people to actively seek accurate information about AFCON, follow official opportunities, position their companies and skills early, and treat the tournament as a starting point for long-term participation in the sports economy. He further stressed that the infrastructure being developed will remain beyond AFCON and should be used to create lasting opportunities for youth, enterprise and regional cooperation.





OMARY MBAHE

PRESIDENT, IFM STUDENTS ORGANISATION (IFMSO)

Mr. Omary Mbahe, President of the IFM Students Organisation, described AFCON 2027 as a major platform for youth engagement, enterprise and regional cooperation. He emphasized that young people should choose to participate actively rather than remain observers, especially in areas such as transport, hospitality, food vending and other services linked to the tournament. He called on governments and stakeholders to provide guidance and open opportunities for youth participation, while urging student leaders to mobilise their peers to be proactive, productive and innovative. He further stressed that the opportunities created by AFCON should not end with the final whistle, but should be sustained beyond the tournament, with young people keeping East Africa first in all their efforts.

DANIEL ONGOM AZIK

CHAIRPERSON, NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OFUGANDA:

Mr. Daniel Ongom Azik, Chairperson of the National Youth Council of Uganda, emphasized that AFCON 2027 presents a major economic opportunity for young people to benefit from Government investment, private sector contracts and thousands of jobs expected from the tournament. He noted that while significant resources are being injected into infrastructure and tournament preparation, youth must be deliberately positioned to take part in the available opportunities. He called on the private sector to mentor, train and subcontract young people, especially those entering business for the first time, so they can participate meaningfully in service delivery. His central message was that AFCON should not end with young people as spectators and spenders, but as earners, service providers and active participants in the tournament economy.



PANEL THREE

TOPIC: ENERGY AS A DRIVER FOR THE FUTURE; POWERING EAST AFRICA' S INDUSTRIALIZATION, INNOVATION AND REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

MR. HUMPHREY ASIIMWE

CEO, UGANDA CHAMBER OF ENERGY AND MINERALS



Mr. Humphrey Asiimwe emphasized that energy is central to East Africa's industrialization, innovation and competitiveness. He noted that Uganda's electricity generation has grown from about **800MW to 2,100MW**, with a target of **52,000MW by 2040**, while major projects such as the **East African Crude Oil Pipeline** are positioning Uganda and the region for greater economic opportunity.

He challenged young people to look beyond job-seeking and become innovators in energy, oil and gas, minerals, technology, logistics and related services. He stressed that energy projects require patience, endurance and long-term thinking, and urged youth to prepare for opportunities arising from Uganda's emerging oil production, regional power trade and the growing demand for electricity driven by industry, AI and data systems.

His central message was that East Africa's future prosperity depends on reliable energy, regional cooperation through platforms such as the East African Power Pool, and young innovators who can help solve energy poverty and power the region's transformation.

MODERATOR:

ANGELA KAMPI
PROCESS ENGINEER,
Petroleum Authority of Uganda



Angela Kampi opened the session by emphasizing that energy is no longer a sectoral issue, but a central pillar of East Africa's economic transformation. She noted that reliable and sustainable energy is critical for industrial growth, technology, innovation, job creation, regional trade and competitiveness. The discussion therefore invited young leaders to reflect on how they can position themselves within the emerging opportunities in oil and gas, renewable energy, minerals, engineering, logistics, technology and regional power cooperation, while contributing to a future where East Africa is more productive, connected and energy-secure.

PANEL THREE



RONNIA TUKAMUHEBWA
HEAD OF PROJECTS, UGANDA CHAMBER OF ENERGY AND MINERALS

Ms. Ronnia Tukamuhebwa, Head of Projects at the Uganda Chamber of Energy and Minerals, emphasized that opportunities in the energy sector are not limited to engineers and geologists, but extend to manufacturing, innovation, logistics, catering, hospitality, technology, software development and other disciplines. She encouraged young people to prepare early by acquiring practical skills, soft skills, digital skills and knowledge beyond the classroom, rather than waiting for job advertisements. She further called on universities to revise curricula to match the realities of the workplace, while urging youth to use platforms such as summits, volunteering and social media to raise their voices, build visibility and position themselves for emerging opportunities in the energy sector.

TONNY OCHIENG

THE SECRETARY GENERAL, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, KENYA

Mr. Tonny Ochieng, Secretary General of the University of Nairobi, emphasized that East Africa has abundant renewable energy potential, citing Kenya's leadership in geothermal power and Uganda and Rwanda's reliance on hydropower. He noted that the region's challenge is not energy scarcity, but how effectively governments design fair policies for energy production, access and consumption. He called on young people to take centre stage in championing clean energy, rural electrification and productive use of available energy resources. He further encouraged youth to use digital tools, artificial intelligence and innovation to accelerate solutions and position East Africa as a competitive, energy-driven region.





MUTONI CHRISTINE

STUDENT LEADER, UNIVERSITY OF KIGALI, RWANDA

Ms. Mutoni Christine, a student leader from the University of Kigali, emphasized that technology and artificial intelligence should be used not merely for coding, but for problem-solving and identifying opportunities. She noted that access to information is critical for young people, but they must be intentional in choosing and applying the right information. She further highlighted that East African youth face common regional challenges, including high transport and trade costs, and therefore must use technology, skills and innovation to develop practical solutions that strengthen integration, reduce barriers and unlock opportunities across the region.

MUTATIINA TREVIS MUHWEZI

92ND GUILD SPEAKER, MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

Rt. Hon. Mutatiina Trevis Muhwezi, the 92nd Guild Speaker of Makerere University, emphasized that Uganda and East Africa should not measure energy success only by generation capacity, but also by how many households, factories, businesses and young people's dreams are actually connected to electricity. He noted that while the region has diverse energy resources, including hydropower, geothermal and oil, greaterattentionmustbegiventotransmission,accessandproductiveuse.Hefurtherhighlightedregional integration as key to building a single East African energy market, where countries can share resources, expand opportunity and power industrial growth across theregion.



PANEL FOUR

TOPIC: **AGRI-TECH INNOVATIONS FOR YOUTH LED SOLUTIONS IN REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE JUSTICE**

MODERATOR:

FORTUNATE ELIZABETH NANDERA
FOUNDER, United Soaring Youth Africa



Nandera opened the session by emphasizing that agriculture remains central to East Africa's economy, livelihoods and future resilience. She noted that young people must move beyond viewing agriculture as traditional subsistence work and begin embracing it as a space for innovation, enterprise, technology, climate action and regional trade. The discussion therefore invited student leaders and young innovators to explore how digital tools, smart farming, value addition and cross-border collaboration can strengthen food security, create jobs and position youth as key drivers of sustainable agricultural transformation in EastAfrica.



DR. MATIA MUKAMA

LECTURER, DEPARTMENT OF FOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, KYAMBOGO UNIVERSITY

Dr. Matia Mukama, Lecturer in the Department of Food Science and Technology at Kyambogo University, emphasized that food security depends on three key areas: production, post-harvest management and marketability. He noted that East Africa's heavy dependence on rain-fed agriculturehas made the region vulnerable to climate change shocks, despite receiving significant rainfall. He called for greater investment in rainwater harvesting, irrigation and dam construction to enable all-year-round food production. Dr. Mukama further highlighted the need to strengthen post-harvest systems, including cooling centres, farmer education, extension services, fertilizers and better storage technologies, drawing lessons from Uganda's milk value chain where deliberate investment has improved production and market stability.

ALBERT MALOBA

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS LEADERS ASSOCIATION (USLA)

Mr. Albert Maloba of the University Students Leaders Association emphasized the need for universities to establish AgriTech hubs that inspire young people to participate in agricultural innovation beyond political leadership. He highlighted value addition as a major game changer for Africa's agricultural transformation, noting that products such as milk, hides, maize, bananas and groundnuts can generate greater income when processed for local and export markets. He further encouraged young people to embrace technology, including artificial intelligence, to improve farming decisions, soil analysis, weather prediction and productivity. His central message was that youth must move from ordinary production to value addition, market readiness and ownership of Africa's agriculturalfuture.





ELOMAMBONI ABRAHAM

28TH GUILD PRESIDENT, UCU

Mr. Elomamboni Abraham, 28th Guild President of Uganda Christian University, emphasized that East Africa's agricultural sector is caught between traditional and technology-driven approaches. He noted that traditional farming methods often discourage youth participation because they are labour-intensive and less attractive, while modern AgriTech, automation, artificial intelligence and smart farming present agriculture as innovative, commercial and youth-friendly. He called on young people to embrace the technology-driven agricultural economy as a pathway to making farming more productive, attractive and profitable.

MS. GRACE MULOKI

YOUTH SENATOR, MURANGA COUNTY, KENYA

Ms. Grace Muloki, Youth Senator of Muranga County, Kenya, emphasized the need to move youth agricultural training from theory to practical application. Drawing from her exposure to agricultural innovation in China, she challenged East African youth to think creatively about specialization, food preservation, packaging and value addition, including how local products such as matooke can be processed for longer shelf life and wider markets. She noted that East Africa has fertile soils, water and strong agricultural potential, but must improve innovation, financing systems, access to land and youth-friendly agricultural support. Her central message was that youth-led AgriTech solutions must be practical, realistic and commercially viable.





KARANGWA SEMWAGA DRIES MARIE

GUILD PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF KIGALI

Mr. Karangwa Semwaga Dries Marie, Guild President of the University of Kigali, emphasized that one of the biggest challenges facing agriculture is the negative perception young people have towards farming. He noted that agriculture is often viewed as backward, while technology and other professions are seen as more attractive, yet farming remains the foundation of life, food security and independence. He highlighted Rwanda's use of innovations such as artificial intelligence, drones, fermentation and companies like Zipline as examples of how agriculture can become modern and attractive to youth. His central message was that Africa can only become powerful and independent when it is able to feed itself through innovation, technology and renewed respect for agriculture.

DAY TWO - KEYNOTE ADDRESS

PROF. IDRIS A. RAI

AG. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY INTER-UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR EAST AFRICA (IUCEA)

ADVANCING EAST AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA, DEVELOPING LEADERS FOR A BORDERLESS REGION



Prof. Idris A. Rai emphasized that universities are central to advancing East African integration by developing leaders who think beyond national borders. He highlighted the **East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA)** as a framework for harmonizing higher education through comparable qualifications, quality standards, student and staff mobility, research collaboration and free movement of labour.

He noted that a borderless East Africa requires borderless leaders who are culturally competent, innovative and committed to regional cooperation. He also outlined IUCEA's role in coordinating higher education, quality assurance, credit transfer systems, scholarships and mobility opportunities across the region.

Prof. Rai commended GPLA for convening the Summit and affirmed IUCEA's willingness to partner with and support the Academy. His central message was that Guild Leaders must become champions of integration, mobility, peace and regional identity, making the East African Higher Education Area a lived reality.

PANEL ONE MODERATOR:

PROF. RUTH NSIBIRANO

Assoc. Prof. of Gender Studies



As moderator of the fifth high-level panel on **Education Mobility**, Prof. Ruth Nsibirano opened the session by emphasizing that universities remain central to building a truly integrated East Africa. She noted that education mobility is not only about students crossing borders to study, but about creating a shared regional learning space where qualifications are recognized, ideas are exchanged, institutions collaborate, and young people develop a common East African identity. The discussion therefore invited university leaders, policymakers and student leaders to reflect on how higher education can strengthen regional integration, expand opportunities for young people, and prepare a generation of leaders who can think, work and serve beyond national borders.

PANEL



JONHSON IRELI KINYUA

DEAN OF STUDENTS AND DIRECTOR OF CAREER SERVICES, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

Mr. Johnson Ireli Kinyua, Dean of Students and Director of Career Services at the University of Nairobi, emphasized that universities have a critical role in developing holistic, marketable and future-ready graduates who can compete regionally and globally. He noted that education mobility requires harmonized qualifications, standardized skills, cultural competence and easier movement of students, staff and families across East Africa. Drawing from practical experiences, he highlighted the challenges caused by differences in education systems and documentation, and commended GPLA for bringing East African student leaders together as a key step toward regional integration, inclusivity and global competitiveness.

JULIA MUHUMUZA

PUBLIC POLICY PROFESSIONAL AND LECTURER, EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCHER

Ms. Julia Muhumuza, Public Policy Professional, Lecturer and Education Policy Researcher, emphasized that education mobility must go beyond enrolment and degrees to focus on outcomes, innovation, economic relevance and inclusion. She called on universities to take a stronger role in removing barriers to regional education mobility, including harmonizing tuition policies, supporting cross-border collaboration and strengthening student leadership participation in university governance. She further highlighted the need for inclusive access to scholarships, stronger protection systems against sexual harassment, and supportive learning environments for female students, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. Her central message was that East Africa must use its best minds and institutions to develop practical, inclusive policies that accelerate integration and enable students to study, compete and contribute across the region.





DR. DORCAS GITHAIGA

DEAN OF STUDENTS, KABARAK UNIVERSITY

Dr. Dorcas Githaiga, Dean of Students at Kabarak University, emphasized that education mobility has the potential to strengthen universities and add value to East African nations by allowing institutions to share their unique strengths, infrastructure, knowledge and expertise. She noted that if mobility is fully actualized, East Africa can build a stronger and more competitive higher education space comparable to other regions with advanced mobility systems. She further stressed the importance of intentional gender mainstreaming, calling for equal opportunities for women in education, research, innovation, technology and cross-border academic exchanges. Her central message was that East Africa must deliberately promote inclusive mobility so that students, especially women and underrepresented groups, can participate fully in regional education and development.

MOHAMED ABDULLAHI ADAN

DEAN OF STUDENTS, MASAI MARA UNIVERSITY, CHAIRPERSON, KENYA UNIVERSITIES DEAN OF STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Adan, Dean of Students at Masai Mara University and Chairperson of the Kenya Universities Dean of Students Association, emphasized that East Africans were historically one community before colonial borders divided them into separate national identities. He noted that young people are agile, technology-driven and best positioned to drive renewed cross-border interaction if supported by stronger policy infrastructure. He called for the reduction of unnecessary movement restrictions, including passport and logistical barriers, so that East Africans can study, work, trade and live more freely across the region. His central message was that education mobility and regional integration must make it easier for young people to reconnect, collaborate and build a borderless East African community.



FINAL PANEL

TOPIC: POSITIONING YOUTH TO PARTICIPATE IN GOVERNANCE, PRODUCTION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

KEYNOTE

MR. ODREK RWABOGO

CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EXPORTS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Odrek Rwabwogo commended GPLA for bringing together young and experienced leaders to confront the structural challenges facing East Africa, especially unity, production, integration and economic transformation. He emphasized that difficult questions such as regional integration require both the wisdom of elders and the energy, drive and courage of young people.

His keynote focused on three major issues: **identity, innovation and leadership**. On identity, he challenged young people to reject narrow ethnic and national identities and embrace a broader East African identity that provides a larger market, stronger unity and greater strategic power. He noted that small, divided national spaces limit enterprise, peace and competitiveness, while a united East Africa creates room for young people and SMEs to scale.

On innovation, he argued that entrepreneurship and science-based problem-solving are key drivers of integration. He urged universities to become seedbeds for research, enterprise and innovation that respond to real needs, reduce imports, create jobs and strengthen regional production. He cited pharmaceuticals, petroleum by-products and industrial value chains as examples of opportunities East Africa can unlock through innovation.

On leadership, Mr. Rwabwogo emphasized the need for meritocratic leadership that brings together both the young and the old, avoiding both rule by age alone and leadership based only on youthful excitement. He called for credible institutions, intergenerational cooperation and leaders who can confront difficult realities, guide society through change and unite East Africa as one of the most important tasks of this generation.

> On identity, he challenged young people ***to reject narrow ethnic and national identities and embrace a broader East African identity*** that provides a larger market, stronger unity and greater strategic power.

MODERATOR:

PHILIP MULIISA
COMMUNICATIONS LEAD, GPLA



Philip Muliisa opened the session by emphasizing that young people must be seen not merely as future leaders, but as present actors in shaping public policy, enterprise, innovation and national transformation. He noted that youth participation must move beyond attendance at events and symbolic representation to meaningful involvement in decision-making, production, community service and institutional leadership. The discussion therefore invited student leaders, policymakers and development partners to reflect on how young people can be better prepared, trusted and supported to contribute to governance, economic productivity and the development agenda of Uganda and the wider East African region.



ANNET MPABULUNGI
HEAD OF GOVERNANCE, UNDP UGANDA

Ms. Annet Mpabulungi, Head of Governance at UNDP Uganda, emphasized that East Africa needs leaders who can unify people, build coalitions and bring together Government, private sector, academia and local communities to address interconnected challenges such as conflict, climate change and unemployment. She noted that effective youth leaders must have vision, embrace continuous learning, use technology and artificial intelligence to improve delivery, and build strong institutions with clear systems for continuity. She further stressed the importance of peacebuilding, trust, time management and accountability. Drawing from UNDP's work with student leaders, she observed that progress is being made, with young leaders increasingly participating in elections, community mobilisation, production, climate action and efforts against gender-based violence.

KADONDI GRACIOUS
GUILD PRESIDENT, MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

H.E. Kadondi Gracious, Guild President of Makerere University, emphasized that effective youth leadership requires unity, teamwork and the ability to bring different actors together around a common agenda. She noted that leaders often fail when they try to carry the burden alone, and called for student leaders to work collectively so their voices can be stronger and more impactful. On youth participation in governance, she challenged the Government to move beyond tokenism and ensure that youth voices are genuinely heard and reflected in public decisions, policies and services. Her central message was that youth representation must translate into real influence, accountability and responsiveness to the needs of young people.





AHMED RASHID BURROW
GUILD PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

Mr. Ahmed Rashid Burrow, Guild President of the University of Nairobi, emphasized that youth leadership must be built on unity, shared priorities and inclusive representation. Drawing from his experience leading a diverse university community of about 70,000 students, including many international students from across East Africa, he noted that successful leadership requires identifying issues that unite students, such as affordable and decent accommodation. He further stressed that young people must demand accountability from Government and ensure that the social contract between citizens and elected leaders is respected. His central message was that youth participation in governance should promote unity, accountability and reforms that respond to the real needs of young people.

CLOTHILDA CHARLES BUKAGILE
VICE PRESIDENT IFMO, TANZANIA

Ms. Clothilda Charles Bukagile, Vice President of IFMSO Tanzania, emphasized the importance of building systems that promote unity, inclusion and youth participation across institutions and regions. Drawing from her experience at the Institute of Finance Management, she noted that shared vision and representation across campuses help strengthen student leadership and collective action. She also highlighted the **Uni-Ladies Gala**, a platform she founded to empower young women to tell their stories and participate more actively in leadership. She commended GPLA for creating a regional space for East African youth to meet, connect and collaborate, urging young leaders to use such platforms to drive change in production, governance and community transformation across the region.





KARANGWA SEMWAGA DRIES MARIE
UNIVERSITY OF KIGALI

Mr. Karangwa Semwaga Dries Marie, Guild President of the University of Kigali, emphasized that creating clean, orderly and responsible communities requires joint effort between Government, institutions and citizens. Drawing from Rwanda's experience, he noted that cleanliness and discipline must become part of people's values, beginning with simple actions such as properly disposing of waste and taking responsibility for shared spaces. He further challenged young people to prepare themselves for leadership by learning from senior leaders, participating in available mentorship and training platforms, and asking what value they can bring to Government, institutions and society when given an opportunity to serve.

SPECIAL KEYNOTE

H.E PROF. PETER ANYANG' NYONG'O, EGH GOVERNOR, KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA

(Former Guild President, Makerere University (1969-1970)

THEME:

YOUTH LEADERSHIP, PRODUCTION, AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION:

BUILDING A COMPETITIVE EAST AFRICA IN A CHANGING GLOBAL ORDER

Distinguished one time guild presidents and student leaders from across our region, fellow academics, policymakers, development partners, and above all — the young women and men who carry the unwritten future of East Africa in your capable hands.

I stand before you today not only as an elder who has walked the corridors of power, but also as one who years back, sat exactly where you sit, burning with the impatience of youth, armed with the conviction that the world could be different, and possessed by that peculiar Makerere spirit that made us believe that ideas could indeed move mountains.



In 1969 to 1970, when I served as Guild President, East Africa was a very different political creature. The original East African Community had been formed only two years prior, in 1967. Brilliant minds from Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, and Kampala moved freely across borders as brothers and sisters, unburdened by the fear of being regarded as foreigners to one another. This was the cohesion that Julius Nyerere, Milton Obote, and Jomo Kenyatta envisioned as a

seamless federation. It tragically unravelled in 1977.And yet here we are today, engaged in the reconstruction of what was once broken. The question I pose to you is not whether regional integration is desirable, but whether the youth of this generation possess the intellectual courage and the practical imagination to render it irreversible.

The Changing Global Order: What They Don't Tell You

Today, ladies and gentlemen, we inhabit an era in which a lot has changed. I submit, the most consequential restructuring of the global political economy since the end of the Cold War is unfolding right before our eyes.New centres of capital accumulation have emerged, and technology is confidently reorganising production. Artificial intelligence on its part, is fast transforming labour, as climate change is altering the argument of comparative advantage. Generally, global value chains are being reconfigured at a very fast rate.Yet history tells us in a matter of cardinal importance, that changes in the international system do not, EO IPSO, generate development.

Development has never been an accident. It has always been the consequence of deliberate political organisation. Much of Africa, sadly, remains integrated into the world economy primarily as an exporter of raw materials and an importer of manufactured goods. One Claude Ake - that indefatigable scholar of the African condition, once warned with foresight, that political independence without economic transformation only reproduces dependence under altered management.

In other words, global shifts favour those who have already built internal coherence. The Asian tigers did not rise because they waited for the global order to become favourable, NO! They rose because they created internal competitive advantages through education, through deliberate industrial policy, and through what the Japanese call keiretsu (a post-World War II network concept of Japanese companies that maintain close business relationships through cross-shareholding, long-term partnerships, and coordination). The Koreans call it chaebol (networked production systems that turned national economies into integrated fighting units like Samsung, Hyundai Motor Group and LG among others)

East Africa, with a combined population approaching 300 million people - a landmass rich in arable soil, freshwater, and mineral wealth – with an average age of under 20, possesses the demographic dividend that aging Europe and East Asia can only dream of. But demographics are not destiny. Demographics are only potential energy. Leadership is the catalyst that converts it into kinetic force.

The Guild President as a Crucible of Leadership;

When I was Guild President, I learned something that no classroom could teach: that leadership is not about holding office, but about holding space. Space for ideas that discomfort the comfortable. Space for voices that the system would rather silence. Space for imagining futures that the present cannot yet accommodate.I learned this not in the grandeur of State House, but in the mess halls of Makerere, in the heated debates at the University Hall, in the solidarity strikes, where we discovered that our Kenyan, Tanzanian, and Ugandan identities mattered less than our shared condition as young Africans hungering forself-determination.

Let me pose a question to you young leaders now: Are you holding space, or are you just occupying offices? The guild presidency is not a stepping stone to political careerism. It is a laboratory for social transformation. This is where you learn that the student who cannot afford meals, the young woman facing gender-based violence in university housing, the refugee student from South Sudan seeking dignity in a Nairobi classroom, is just not an "issue" to be managed. These are structural in-

> "When I was Guild President, I learned something that no classroom could teach: ***that leadership is not about holding office, but about holding space.***"

dictments of the kind of society we have built, and invitations to imagine the kind we must build.

Production, Not Consumption: The East African Imperative;

My dear Comrades, let me speak plainly about something that troubles my generation: we have raised you in a culture of consumption rather than production. Our economies are structured to extract raw materials and import finished goods. Our education systems, despite noble intentions, still produce job-seekers rather than job-creators. Our brightest minds dream of civil service appointments rather than industrial breakthroughs.

Luckily, I see glimmers of hope.

I see young Kenyans in the Silicon Savannah of Nairobi building fintech solutions that have made M-Pesa a global case study. I see Ugandan youth in the Bweyogerere industrial parks, experimenting with light manufacturing. I see Rwandan agrotech startups using drone technology to optimize coffee yields. And yes, I see Tanzanian youth in the Saba Saba grounds trading not just goods, but ideas.

For me and many like me, these are not just anomalies. They are prototypes of the possible. What we need, rather than more individual entrepreneurs, is production ecosystems. The East African Community must become a production community, and not just a trading community. Consider this: why does Ethiopia – a landlocked Country with no coastline-export more finished leather goods than Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda combined? It is because they deliberately decided to ban raw leather exports and to build industrial parks. Industrial policy is not ideology; it isarithmetic.

Therefore good people, while I do not claim to possess exceptional wisdom or a monopoly on ideas, I humbly submit the following proposals on areas where youth leadership must drive production for your thoughtful consideration:First, agricultural transformation. A commendable chunk of the world's uncultivated arable land lies in the East African region. Yet we import rice from Pakistan, wheat from Ukraine, and palm oil from Malaysia. This is not economics. This is a failure of imagination.

Young guild leaders demand that your universities become centers of agricultural innovation. Not just teaching agronomy, but incubating agribusiness models that process, package, and brand East African produce for global markets. The coffee that sells at 1,800 Uganda Shillings per kilo at the farm gate in Mbale goes for an equivalent of 91,700 Uganda shillings in a Berlin café. The difference is not the bean. The difference is value addition, branding, and logistics, all domains where youth energy and digital literacy can disrupt legacy systems.Second, sports as soft power and hard economics. When Eliud Kipchoge runs, when Joshua Cheptegei breaks the world 10,000m record, when soccer star Mbwana Samatta takes to the field in the English Premier League, they are not just entertaining us. They are building East African brand equity.

But look deeper: the global sports industry today is worth over 5 times the annual budgets for Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya combined in the financial year 2026/27. It is about $600 billion. What percentage does East Africa capture? Negligible. Why? Because we have not built the sports infrastructure, the management academies, the sports medicine centers or even the mer-

*The East African Community must become a production community, and not just a trading community. Consider this: why does Ethiopia – **a landlocked Country with no coastline-export more finished leather goods than Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda combined?***

chandising ecosystems. Young leaders, I challenge you to imagine East African sports universities, and to demand that 5% of our national budgets go to sports development not as recreation, but as industrial strategy. The international shot stopper Dennis Onyango from Busia Uganda, is not just a soccer player, he is a production unit in an industry we have failed to build.

Third, academia as the engine of regional integration. When we were here at Makerere, the East African University system was a genuine community. A degree from Dar es Salaam was recognized in Nairobi as naturally as one from Kampala. Today, despite the EAC's protocols, our universities still operate as national silos. Credit transfer systems are weak. Joint research programs are rare and academic mobility is constrained by bureaucratic nationalism.

Young guild presidents, this is your fight. Demand harmonized curricula across EAC universities. Demand-joint degree programs that require study in atleast two member states. Demand regional research funds for collaborative work on shared challenges like Lake Victoria pollution, cross-border pastoralism, regional energy grids, andothers.

The Philosophical Core: Ubuntu in a Transactional World

I want to leave you with a philosophical reflection, because I know that in the quiet moments, when the applause fades, and the political pressures mount, it is philosophy that sustains true leadership.The global order is becoming increasingly transactional. The language of international relations is now the language of "deals," of "quid pro quo," of strategic competition. But Africa has always known a different ethic. Ubuntu: I am because we are. This is not just sentimentality. It is a systems theory of human organization. It recognizes that our individual flourishing is structurally dependent on our collective well-being.

Regional integration is not all about tariff reductions or customs unions. It is about the moral recognition that the young woman in Bujumbura and the young man in Juba are bound by a shared destiny that no border can divide. It is about understanding that when Lake Victoria chokes on pollution, it does not consult immigration officials before crossing from Uganda into Tanzania. That when climate change displaces communities in Karamoja, the refugees do not carry national identity cards; they carry hunger.

The competitive East Africa we must build is not a zero-sum competition with other regions.

It is a competition with our own limitations; our tolerance for corruption, our acceptance of mediocrity, our willingness to let ethnicity and nationalism divide what geography has united.

A Charge to the Young Leaders:

Finally, my dear sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, my grandchildren – because some of you are; I close with a memory. Sometime in 1969, as Guild President I led a delegation of East African students to meet with Mwalimu Julius Nyerere. We were full of demands, full of critiques, full of the impatience of youth. Mwalimu listened patiently, and then said something I have never forgotten: "The youth are not the leaders of tomorrow. They are the leaders of today who have not yet recognized their power."

Young guild presidents, student leaders, future architects of East Africa: recognize your power. Not the power of your offices, but the power of your imagination. Not the power of your votes. But the power of your production. Not the power of your borders, but the power of your integration.Build cooperatives that cross borders. Create academic journals that publish in Swahili, English, and French. Organize sports

leagues that make Arusha, Kampala, and Kigali household names in global athletics. Demand that your governments invest not in your political loyalty, but in your productive capacity.

The changing global order is not a threat to East Africa, but an invitation. An invitation to stop being the objects of global history and become the subjects instead. An invitation to prove that this century need not be the Asian century or the American century, but can be the African century, if we dare to build it.I came to Makerere as a young man from Kisumu, carrying the dreams of a village that had never seen a universitygraduate. I leave you today as a nelder who has seen the arc of African history bend, sometimes toward justice, sometimes toward tragedy, but always—always—responsive to the will of those who dared to lead. Do not wait for permission and do not wait for elections. Do not wait for the global order to stabilize either. Build now. Produce now and Integrate now.

The East Africa you deserve will not be given to you. It must be taken, built, and defended not with arms, but with ideas, not with politics, but with production, and not with borders, but with bridges.

Asante Sana. Webale nnyo. Murakoze cyane. Thank you.

SPEECH BY **HON. MATTHEW RUKIKAIRE**

Advisory Board Member, EAGLS



I warmly welcome the Rt. Hon. Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga and congratulate you upon your reappointment in the ministry of east african community affairs, this will ensure continuity and offer vital support to the young people's efforts in awakening the east african spirit to rise to the call of political unity. I extend a warm welcome to Professor Anyang' Nyong'o, the Governor of Kisumu county in Kenya and our guest speaker today, we have all heard about you and known about the active positive role you have been playing in the kenya political scene but more pertinent to the cause of east african integration. These young people have held your pan african spirit and are anxious to tap into it to drive the east african federation forward.

I was president of the Makerere students guild in 1962-63, seven years before the governor was guild president together with Rt. Hon. Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda, a lot of excitement was occurring at that time in the east african scene, when i was elected as guild president, i was not elected by the ugandan community, i was elected by a constituency of the whole east african students. Makerere university was shared almost equally between kenya, tanzania and uganda so the people who elected me were not just ugandans but kenyans, tanzanians and a few of them from Zanzibar at that time because it was still separate and some from Nyasaland. What was important at that time was the spirit of east africanism,we looked at each other as east africans not as kenyans or tanzanians or ugandans and we hoped at that time that very soon we would have the creation of an east african state. During that time we had a major gathering of the president of uganda, tanzania and kenya who was represented by James Gichuru representing Mzee Kenyatta and we shared the platform together and pronouncing ourselves about the need for east african integration and looking at our selves, the students and the leaders as east africans. But we know because of the failures in some political quarters, it was not possible to move forward as had been anticipated at that time, Mwalimu Nyerere has offered to delay Tanganyika' s independence at that time to wait for Uganda and Kenya to become independent so that they could form one east african federation and that did not happen and we had many advocates that believed in the east african community including Tom Mboya committed to drive the spirit of integration, it did not happen and as a result of that we have lost more than sixty years and we now seem to be starting again. I comment Damiano Masesa and the GPLA to have brought us to a point where we have an audience like you have described and we can see for our selves, from several east african partners as young people who have come together to revive the spirit of east african integration and to push it forward, I must thank you and thank you from every where who have come here, lets not miss the opportunity of moving this spirit forward. This is the 3rd annual session we are having, Rt. Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda and i have been at the centre of it, we have heard occasion to invite very prominent people to come and be guest of honours, we had H.E JAKAYA KIKWETE who gladly agreed to come and participate as patron at the East African level as Patron, H.E UHURU KENYATTA, this is a demonstration that this spirit is being revived by the young people of east africa, keep it going, Your Excellency Anyang Nyong you are the third guest speaker and i want to propose that on the Advisory board that includes former presidents Jakaya Kikwete and Uhuru Kenyatta are members, we ask you to become a member of the advisory board and we will be delighted to have you accept the invitation. I want to thank you again and thank these participants that have come in large numbers to support the driving of this bandwagon forward so that we can see the birth of an east african nation during your time as leaders and i believe that you are going to be able to achieve it , there is good will amongst ourleadersandpleasekeeppushing. Let me thank again the commitment of my young brother Rt. Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda in helping us drive this forward, stick with them and help them meet all important people. I wish you a successful conclusion of this conference. Thank you very much.

RT. HON. REBECCA ALITWALA KADAGA

1ST DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

I am happy to meet so many East Africans and I want to thank the Guild Leaders Summit for putting this together and the senior leaders for walking the journey with the young people in this regard. I am a child of the community , my father worked in the east african community so i am one of those who know better the benefits of the integration and I am committed to ensuring that we get back to where we were. I want to thank the Guild Leaders chair for the elaborate presentation and I like his heading" the generation that must complete the east african project" that is really apt, i thank Mr. Masesa for that. I have noticed there is no female on the advisory board and that is an error and please fix that. The issues here should be put in the cabinet memorandum through the minister of gender so that they are adopted.I will pass on these issues to the president, they are well written to ensure that they are handled because this is a very big plus to the children of east africa.



Youth as architects for the east african community; you have already started organising yourselves,meeting one another, this is a good beginning and it will assist us in organizing ourselves.

Innovation for development; our government priorities under the EAC vision 2050 are food security, industrialization,digital transformation, climate resilience and infrastructure. There are many things we can do and I want to talk about the maritimeindustry. Somalia brings 3000 km of coast available for us but we are not doing much with it so I would like us to pick interest in maritime finance innovation , data driven decision making ,smart operations, digital automation,supply chain visibility, green technology and more.

I want to thank you so much for organising this forum, it should be part of our annual calendar so that we need to work together. I met the business council yesterday during the council of ministers as observers. I am looking for ways of engaging them in the deliberations because they are in the trade and since we have the request from the Guild Leaders Summit, we shall look for ways to integrate your voices in our policies and programmes. I want to take this opportunity to thank you so much for your innovation and input and for working together all these years especially without serious government support and this is something we need to discuss with the president to ensure that the support is focused and more regular. Thank you so much, I now declare the Summit closed.

KEY **RESOLUTIONS**

The Summit resolved that the **East African Guild Leaders' Summit** should be strengthened into a permanent youth-led regional integration platform that mobilises Guild Presidents and student leaders across the EAC Partner States around leadership, production, innovation, governance and shared prosperity. The Summit further resolved that youth leaders should actively champion East African identity, cross-border collaboration, Kiswahili, student mobility, regional trade, innovation and production within universities and communities.

The Summit also resolved that GPLA should pursue formal partnerships with the **Ministry of East African Community Affairs, EAC Secretariat, EALA, IUCEA, universities and other regional institutions** to ensure that Summit declarations and youth policy proposals are considered within regional decision-making processes. It further called for the establishment of a permanent Secretariat and an **East African Young Leaders Integration Fund** to support student exchanges, fellowships, innovation challenges, policy research and regional citizenship programmes.

SUMMIT **OUTCOMES**

The Summit brought together **1,500 university student leaders**, Government leaders, university leaders, development partners, private sector actors and youth representatives from across East Africa under the theme **"Youth Leadership, Production and Regional Integration: Building a Competitive East Africa in a Changing Global Order."**

It successfully hosted six high-level conversations on governance, trade, energy, agri-tech, AFCON 2027, education mobility and regional integration. These discussions generated renewed commitment by student leaders to promote **East African identity, production, innovation and cross-border collaboration**, with practical recommendations on trade, education mobility, youth enterprise, energy and agri-tech.

The Summit also strengthened GPLA's position as a regional youth integration movement and created momentum for future partnerships with regional institutions, universities, private sector actors and development partners. It further reinforced the role of Guild Leaders as present actors in governance, economic transformation and regional cooperation, not merely future leaders.

"These discussions generated renewed commitment by student leaders to promote ***East African identity, production, innovation and cross-border collaboration***, with practical recommendations on trade, education mobility, youth enterprise, energy and agri-tech."

CHALLENGES

The Summit identified several challenges affecting youth participation in East African integration and development. These included limited awareness among young people about EAC protocols and opportunities, persistence of non-tariff barriers, weak harmonisation of education systems, limited student and staff mobility, inadequate youth access to finance, and insufficient preparation of young people for opportunities in production, trade, energy, sports, agri-tech and innovation.

The discussions also highlighted negative mindsets towards agriculture and technical work, over reliance on job-seeking rather than enterprise creation, gaps between university training and labour market needs, limited soft skills, digital skills and cultural competence, and the continued exclusion of women, persons with disabilities and other special interest groups from some leadership and opportunity spaces.

Operationally, the Summit was delivered under serious financial pressure after some expected partner support did not materialise in time. Service providers proceeded on the basis of Local Purchase Orders, leaving GPLA with outstanding obligations that required urgent support and institutional strengthening.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Summit recommended that GPLA be supported to establish a **permanent Secretariat** to coordinate the annual Summit, maintain a regional database of student leaders, support university-based integration activities, undertake policy research and follow up on Summit resolutions.

It further recommended formal cooperation between GPLA and EAC-related institutions, especially the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, EAC Secretariat, EALA, IUCEA, universities and National Councils for Higher Education, to ensure youth voices are linked to regional policy processes.

The Summit also recommended the establishment of an **East African Young Leaders Integration Fund** to support student leadership exchanges, regional integration fellowships, youth innovation and enterprise challenges, Kiswahili and East African citizenship programmes, student policy research and a digital platform connecting student leaders across the EAC Partner States.

Finally, the Summit recommended that the platform should rotate across EAC Partner States, while universities should create stronger programmes on leadership, production, agri-tech, innovation, sports economy, energy, education mobility, entrepreneurship and regional citizenship. Governments, private sector actors and development partners should deliberately open opportunities for young people to participate in production, policy engagement, employment, enterprise and regional integration.

CONCLUSION

The **3rd Annual East African Guild Leaders' Summit 2026** reaffirmed the central role of young people in advancing East African integration, production, governance and shared prosperity. The Summit demonstrated that Guild Presidents and student leaders are not merely future leaders, but present actors who can mobilise universities, promote regional identity, influence policy conversations and contribute to practical solutions for East Africa's transformation.

The Summit further strengthened GPLA's commitment to building a permanent youth-led regional integration movement that promotes Kiswahili, East African identity, ethical leadership, innovation, production and cross-border collaboration. GPLA remains committed to working with Government, universities, EAC institutions, development partners and the private sector to ensure that young people are meaningfully included in shaping the future of the region.



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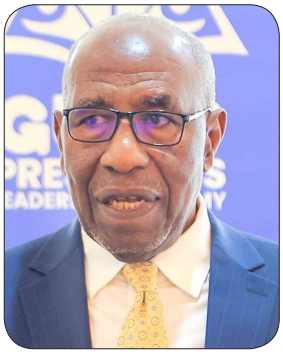

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THE 3RD ANNUAL GUILD LEADERS SUMMIT 2026

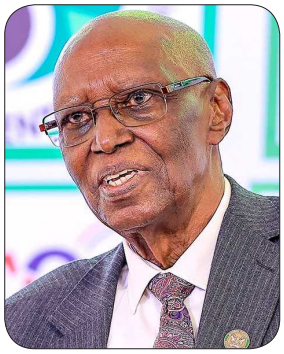
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Patron, East African Guild Leaders Summit



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Chairperson, East African Guild Leaders Summit



HON. MATTHEW RUKIKAIRE
Member, Advisory Board East African Guild Leaders Summit



DEMIANO MASESA
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PROF. RUTH NSIBIRANO
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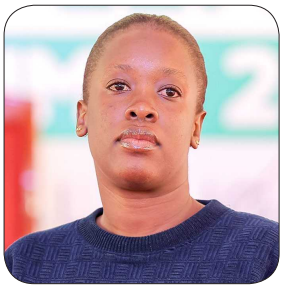
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Host, 3rd Annual East African Guild Leaders Summit



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Co-Host, 3rd Annual East African Guild Leaders Summit



JOHNSON KINYUA
Dean of Students, University of Nairobi



HAHOZAYEZU RODRIGUE
EAGLS Rwanda Ambassador

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