



GUILD LEADERS'  
ANNUAL SUMMIT  
**REPORT 2024**





# GUILD LEADERS' ANNUAL SUMMIT REPORT

**MONDAY 15TH APRIL, 2024**  
AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY  
**YUSUF LULE CTF2, AUDITORIUM**

## THEME:

Legacy and Leadership Continuum: The Power of Knowledge and Cross-generational Learning.

## CHIEF GUEST:

**HE Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete** Fourth  
President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

**Compiled by:**  
**Phillip Muliisa and Douglas Drake Onen.**

2024



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout Uganda's history, universities, particularly Makerere University, have played a pivotal role in shaping political discourse and contributing to the country's political landscape. In the lead-up to Uganda's independence in 1962, these academic institutions served as breeding grounds for nationalism and advocates for self-rule. Makerere University, in particular, emerged as a focal point for political activism and intellectual exchange, fostering discussions on governance, democracy, and socio-economic development.

Student movements and academic circles have been actively engaged in political issues, advocating for democratic governance, human rights, and socio-economic development. The contributions of academics and intellectuals from Ugandan universities have been instrumental in shaping political thought, policy formulation, and critique, influencing public opinion and policy decisions.

Despite these contributions, the relationship between university leadership and national politics has faced challenges, including government interference, repression of academic freedoms, and crackdowns on student protests. However, amidst these challenges, Uganda, with over 40% of its 18 million voters being young people, recognizes the crucial role of universities in harnessing the energy and potential of its youth while providing them with direction.

In this context, the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy-GPLA has embarked on a prestigious leadership development program aimed at equipping outgoing Guild Presidents from Higher Institutions of Learning in Uganda with the necessary knowledge and skills to actively participate in elective political and public policy processes. To further this mission, the proposal to organize a Guild Leaders' Summit seeks to bring together former university student leaders across generations

to reignite civic participation and contribute to national development and the strengthening of Uganda's democracy.

The Guild Leaders' Inaugural Summit was able to bring together at least 700 former student leaders from both University and other Institutions of higher learning across the country of the different generations, who have held Students' Guild leadership positions during their university years, in an attempt of having a unified movement that will contribute to the strengthening of our democracy. The summit provides a platform for meaningful dialogue, collaboration, and exchange of ideas.

We were privileged to have hosted the Fourth President of the United Republic of Tanzania, HE. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete as our Chief Guest, also the President sent the Vice President HE. Jessica Alupo to represent him. Other dignitaries included the High Commissioner of Uganda to Tanzania, The High Commissioner of Tanzania to Uganda, The European Union Ambassador to Uganda, Prime Minister Emeritus of Uganda, The Electoral Commission Chairperson, Members of Parliament, Makerere University Administration among others.

The summit also, had keynote addresses from Justice Simon Byabakama, Chairman Electoral Commission, Hon. Mathew Rukikaire, former Finance Minister and Guild President Makerere in 1962-1963. With Panel discussions comprising alumni excelling in politics, business, education, and social work discussed the role of student leadership in shaping their trajectories.

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The recently concluded Guild Leaders' Summit, organized by the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy, brought together a diverse array of student leaders under the theme "Legacy and Leadership Continuum: the Power of Knowledge and Cross-Generational Learning." Held at Makerere University, this summit provided a platform for current and former guild leaders to engage in meaningful dialogue, share experiences, and explore the intersection of legacy and leadership. With the honorable presence of HE. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete as the Chief Guest, the summit aimed to harness the power of knowledge and cross-generational learning to

inspire and empower the next generation of leaders. This report aims to encapsulate the essence of the discussions, insights, and outcomes of this significant event.

**Vision of Guild Presidents Leadership Academy;** is to bring a new generation of politicians into parliament and political party offices. We want to enable them to tackle the major challenges of our time and solve them across party lines

**Mission:** Is to foster strong leadership, facilitate knowledge exchange, and empower young leaders to create a positive impact on their communities.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE SUMMIT

### Re-ignite Civic Participation:

Promote political engagement and awareness among former Guild Leaders to actively participate in political discussions and activities in Uganda.

01

### Promote Freedom and Integrity:

Explore strategies for promoting academic freedom and integrity within higher education institutions.

02

### Facilitate Collaborative Initiatives:

Foster collaborative initiatives among student leaders across generations for national development and governance.

03

# 3.0 KEY DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS

## 3.1 ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GPLA



*The Academy will offer training to Guild Leaders every Six (6) months, the training is intended to sharpen and equip the young leaders with the needed skills to actively go participate in the elective political positions in their different communities, locally and nationally."*

Demiano Masesa, in his welcoming remarks at the inaugural Guild Leaders' Summit, begun by thanking partners like GIZ under the Civil Society in Uganda Support Program (CUSP), National Enterprise Cooperation (NEC), CivLegacy, Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Akina Mama Wa Afrika, Centre for Excellency in Notions of Identity, ActionAid Uganda, University Forum on Governance, Uganda Youth Network, who made the Summit possible through the different support mechanisms.

Demiano, went on and welcomed the Guild Leaders to their first gathering to which he stated that "History has been made". He noted that the idea behind the Summit is to reawaken the Students' Movement through their Leadership to re-ignite their civic participation and fully take charge in the development of Uganda.

Demiano, also noted that the Summit will be a driver through which different advocacy initiatives will be created picking from the different recommendations that will come out strongly in the different conversations across the entire Summit.

He also, added on that the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy will offer a secretariat where coordination of the different activities will happen. Here, he also added that the



**Demiano Masesa**  
*Executive Director, GPLA*

Summit was also a platform for Launching the Academy. The Academy will offer training to Guild Leaders every Six (6) months, the training is intended to sharpen and equip the young leaders with the needed skills to actively go participate in the elective political positions in their different communities, locally and nationally.

As he concluded, he made a call to action to the Guild Leaders: "let us rise to the occasion. Let us rekindle the flame of civic participation, reignite the spirit of activism, and reclaim our rightful place as architects of change. Together, we can build a future that honors the legacy of those who came before us and paves the way for those who will follow in our footsteps. Let us embrace the power of knowledge, let us harness the energy of cross-generational learning, and let us leave a legacy that will inspire generations to come".

## 3.2 ADDRESS BY PROF. SARAH SSALI

The GPLA is a pivotal platform for fostering collaboration, sharing insights to create impactful change in Uganda, the region and the continent. She highlighted the fact that over time student leadership races have become a contest of money and violence as opposed to ideas crowding out intellectualism. Young leaders have lost focus on the contributions they want to make or even not aware, that is why even when given opportunity they have failed to influence or made the situation worse.

In light of that, the emergency of this idea, the GPLA and Summit is worthy celebrating. There are many failed development programs on the continent underscored by many years of slavery, colonialism, plunder and these have marginalized the conti-

ment. This requires concerted effort of all the African peoples in the attempt to de-colonize young people in being pivotal.

The youth must therefore among others: Seek knowledge critically from all corners not the usual Euro-centric point, understanding the contradictions so as to manage well; know that leadership is service; draw inspiration from our forefathers like Julius Nyerere who was a teacher, Amilcar Lopes Cabral of Guinea Bissau, Ghanaian Kwame Nkrumah and Gen. Yoweri Museveni among others; seek to be responsible citizens of the country, region and Continent.

Therefore, the need to leverage on the academy drawing from the



**Prof. Sarah Ssali**

theme: Legacy and Leadership, the power of knowledge and cross-generational learning to impact the future.

For God and my Country.

## 3.3 ADDRESS BY STUDENT LEADERS GUILD PRESIDENT OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY



Lubega Vicent Nsamba, the 90th Guild President of Makerere University expressed gratitude for being the host Guild President of the monumental Guild Leaders' Summit, welcoming with all the guests and students to Makerere University. Preceded by the theme, "Legacy and leadership, the power of knowledge and cross-generational learning", Nsamba reiterated Makerere's commitment and strive to building Leaders and setting legacies sighting example of former President of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, and President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya among others who built

their Leadership footing from the great hill of endless possibilities.

He related to the above as the propelling force for the young generation to continue pursuing and doing well as Pan Africanists and states men. Mr. Nsamba concluded by wishing everyone the very best from the summit and God's blessings.

# UGANDA NATIONAL STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (UNSA)



**Okot Francis**  
*President - UNSA*

The 34th President of the Uganda National Students Association (UNSA), Mr. Okot Francis who doubles as the 22nd Guild President of Gulu University expressed gratitude for being at a sister University, which is an opportunity to share knowledge, ideas and learn at the feet of great elders of the land. He also appreciated the University for agreeing to host them and the summit specifically thanking the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy (GPLA) and its partners for organizing such an important event.

Okot, noted that young leaders need to borrow from the experience of the past, punch into the present as they look to create a desired future for all. He implored the student

leaders to focus on being servants rather than upholding their status feeding into the foundation laid by our regional forefathers on the aspect of integration.

He called on all student leaders to be a part of the process of creating the Africa, East Africa and Uganda we want through drafting research questions and findings answers to the challenges.

Okot, reiterated the commitment of the UNSA to representing the students of this Nation from Post Primary to University level promising to pass the aspirations drawn from the summit to all the students in the country.

He concluded by challenging all the students to walk away with something, rhetorically posing to them "what have you done with your youthful days" as an igniting factor for them to do something.

## 3.4 ADDRESS BY THE JUSTICE SIMON BYABAKAMA

The Chairperson of the Electoral Commission (EC), Justice Simon Byabakama, thanked the organizers of the summit for having invited him and the Electoral Commission to be part of the dialogue of current and former Guild Leaders highlighting the critical nature of this constituency present to the work of the Electoral Commission and the country at large.

Young people contribute a key demography to the country with people between 18 years to 35 years constituting about 70% of the population as such being specific 7,392,686 youth above 18 and below 30 years were registered for the 2020-21 general elections which constitutes 40.8% of the total number of registered voters that was 18,103,603. This makes young people Key stakeholders in Uganda's political, social and economic spheres.

The Electoral commission (EC) therefore, considers it critical to sensitive and engage youth with respect to their rights, duties and responsibilities in promoting a prosperous, stable and peaceful Uganda through peaceful participation in elections, governance and public administration.

Justice Byabakama stated that the association of Guild leaders and the EC is further seen in the readiness to support institutions that often ask for materials to organize internal Guild elections. In this way,

the EC has partnered with you in promoting the culture of choosing student leaders through open, transparent and participatory processes.

The Chairperson took the gathering through the mandate the institution he leads as follows:

The EC is established under article 60 of the 1995 constitution of the Republic of Uganda and is mandated under article 61 of the same constitution to do the following;

1. Ensure that regular free and fair elections and referenda are held.
2. Organize, conduct and supervise Elections and referenda in accordance with the constitution and other laws related there to.
3. Demarcation of constituencies.
4. Formulate and implement voter education programs related to elections.
5. To compile, maintain, revise and update the voter's register.
6. To hear and determine election complaints arising before and during polling.
7. To ascertain, publish, declare in writing under its seal results of the election and referenda.

These functions are undertaken in fulfillment of the aspirations and declarations of the sovereignty of the people of Uganda as enshrined



**Justice Simon Byabakama**  
*Chairperson of the Electoral Commission (EC)*

in Article 1 (1-4) of the Constitution which stipulate "1- All power belongs to the people who shall exercise their sovereignty in accordance with this constitution ,4- The people shall express their will and consent on who shall govern them and how they should be governed through regular free and fair elections of their representatives or through referenda. "

Justice Byabakama stated that therefore the EC can be likened to a vehicle or channel to which the people's aspirations are carried to their final destination and that is determining leaders of their choice.

With reference to the Constitution which states that everyone of 18 years and above is eligible to vote and be registered as a voter, Justice Byabakama indicated that everyone at the Guild Leaders' Summit is a customer, client or potential client to the EC underpinning the value of wide and inclusive participation of all stakeholders including young people in the Electoral process as a key ingredient to democratic elections.

He pointed to the already existing passion and commitment by student leaders to leadership and service having been through competitive processes and therefore are agents of positive values and practice that are needed in nurturing democratic conduct among their peers.

Byabakama referred to the vision of the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy (GPLA) which is "To bring a new generation of politicians in parliament and political structures." as this makes the Academy Mutual allies and indeed critical partners in the work of the EC.

He pointed to the many attributes of young people that should be harnessed to enhance their participation in the democratic processes of the country, "You have energy, you have stamina, you have the vibe, and you have skills and the resilience."

However, the trajectory of our elections has at times not seemed to have the above attributes bear positively on the Electoral process by our youth.

Participation of our young people in voter registration, voting or as candidates remains low. Youth gather at rallies in large numbers but many are not registered as voters relating to the importance of being on the national voters register as the first step of being a participant, then seeking information on how one can actively be engaged in the process.

There are important questions we need to answer as a people which include:

1. Why are our young people of eligible voting age not registered as voters?
2. Why do only few of them offer themselves as candidates?

3. Why do the registered ones fail to turn up on polling day to cast their vote?

4. Why should our young people accept to be used in Electoral related violent episodes?

5. Why should our young people accept their vote to be bought at Shs 1000, 2000, 5000?

6. Why do our young people allow to be agents of hate speech especially when using social media?

These questions are of great concern to the EC but Uganda as a whole.

Accordingly, the EC took cognizance of the above state of affairs and deliberately included a fully-fledged component of youth engagement in the strategic plan of 2022/2023 to 2026/2026 as well as the road map for the 2026 general elections. We have (EC) a deliberate voter education program targeting youth in secondary schools and tertiary institutions.

"When you do not participate in elections, then do not complain about the quality of leaders that have been elected."

Young people have a duty to among other have the following qualities if they are to impact this country positively i.e

- o Love your country
- o Be well organized
- o Be disciplined
- o Be reliable and honest
- o Be law abiding

- o Be patient
- o Be good managers of time, money, health, environment, facilities at the workplace, institutions and communities
- o Be productive and adaptive
- o Be Informed
- o Be respectful and tolerant of each other.
- o Have respect for elders ,allow to be mentored
- o Be confident
- o Avoid corruption
- o Desist from acts of violence this be agents of peace and harmony in your institutions and communities.

The only substitute for peace is anarchy and whereas it is easy to generate anarchy, the restoration of peace is very difficult therefore, everyone has a duty to protect the peace Uganda enjoys over other nations.

The Chairperson emphasized the advantage of all stakeholders engaging positively reiterating as a promise "I can assure you it is very possible to have a peaceful, credible election in this country devoid of anything that taints a free and fair election."

Justice Byabakama emphasized the commitment of the EC to engage with all stakeholders as it executes the road map to the 2026 general elections that are happening in less than two years.

"Come we engage, the election is not for Byabakama but for the people of Uganda, I am a mere servant" said Justice Byabakama.

## 3.5 ADDRESS BY HE. JAN SADEK

It is a great pleasure to be here today at this Summit for former University Student Leaders in Uganda. Allow me to thank the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy for organizing such an inclusive event that takes stock of how youth leadership over time has been instrumental in contributing to Uganda's development journey.

It was Julius Nyerere who once said: "Leadership is not an individual quality, but a collective one. It is not the lone voice in the wilderness but the many voices in unison that make the difference". Today, leaders from different generations are gathering together.

As we reflect on the theme of this summit, "Legacy and Leadership: The Power of Knowledge and Cross-generational Learning", it becomes evident that the transmission of knowledge and experiences across generations is crucial in ensuring a leadership continuum. The insights gleaned from experience, coupled with the innovative ideas and perspectives of today's youth, serve as the cornerstone for building a brighter future. It is in this spirit of collaboration and mutual learning that we today have the honor of welcoming distinguished guests, such as His Excellency Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Uganda's legal framework encourages young people to engage in development and democratic processes. Platforms such as the National Youth Council and the Youth Members of Parliament ensure that youth issues

are heard and addressed from local to national levels.

Institutions of Higher Education also play a pivotal role in nurturing career growth and fostering discussions on governance, democracy and socio-economic development. The representation of student leaders on the University Councils facilitates meaningful dialogue between students and university leadership and provides opportunities for youth engagement in Uganda's education policy. This has produced influential leaders who shape policy and public opinion as manifested in the stories of many of you present today.

Team Europe, in this case the European Union and Germany, appreciates to be among the development partners supporting this event as we are committed to empowering youth, offering them opportunities and supporting them as key drivers of change. In partnership with the German Cooperation, we support various youth organizations through the GIZ Civil Society Support Programme (CUSP) and strengthen their capacities to engage with state partners in developing policies and opportunities for youth representation. Among them, we support the Uganda Youth Network and the National Youth Parliament.

I would like also to mention here the EU-funded Erasmus+ programme which we are proud



**HE. Jan Sadek**

of. Erasmus+ offers mobility opportunities for Ugandan students and academic staff in Africa and Europe. In 2023, more than 400 Ugandan students and academic staff benefitted from the programme that offers them the opportunity to study and continue their research in Europe and Erasmus partner countries, gaining not just knowledge but also valuable international experience and new friends and connections.

In addition to our support to youth, we are thrilled about the Youth Sounding Board that we established last year. This board is composed of 20 young, dynamic Ugandans from across the country. Their mission is to advise the European Union's cooperation in Uganda, ensuring it is more participatory and better able to address the needs of young Ugandans. This board represents a concrete step towards engaging youth, and we are excited about the fresh perspectives and innovative ideas they bring.

In closing, I extend my sincere gratitude to the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy for organizing this event that advances the aspirations of young leaders across the country. The European Union is fully committed to supporting Uganda in harnessing the incredible potential of its young and talented people. Let us continue to utilize the power of collaboration and cross-generational learning towards a prosperous Uganda.

Thank you for your attention.

## 3.6 ADDRESS BY HON. MATHEW RUKIKAIRE

It is a pleasure and an honor for me to stand before you once again and share a few thoughts with you at this great institution of learning, as we launch the Guild Presidents' Summit.

In my view, the highlight of this launch is the presence of His Excellency Jakaya Kikwete, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, as our Guest of Honor.

Bear with me as I remind you of what I told you on a previous occasion. Sixty years ago, in 1963, I stood on the rostrum of the Main Hall as Guild President of Makerere University to welcome Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, then President of Tanganyika, Milton Obote then Prime Minister of Uganda, and James Gichuru, Minister of Finance of Kenya representing Jomo Kenyatta, Prime Minister of Kenya. The occasion was to launch the University of East Africa and mark the break-away from the University of London.

I proudly stood with the three leaders as we made historic statements. Benjamin Mkapa, later to become President of the Republic of Tanzania, had graduated from Makerere the previous year, in 1962, one year before I was elected Guild President by an East African constituency. Benjamin Mkapa was to return to Makerere in 2009 to receive an Honorary Doctorate for his service to Tanzania and East Africa.

Today, therefore, is another momentous occasion when we are hosting another former President of Tanzania, the fourth President of the Republic. His Excellency, Jakaya Kikwete, remains a focus of attention and interest in the region of East Africa and beyond.

While on a State visit to Uganda in

November 2006, President Kikwete pronounced himself unambiguously on the subject of East African integration project. He said, and I quote: "The East African integration project gives concrete expression of the sentiments we share as East Africans, that we are one people and seek to free ourselves from the territorial imprisonment by historical circumstances." (end of quote).

The theme of this Summit, "Legacy and Leadership. The Power of Knowledge and Cross-generational Learning", is a theme of enormous complexity. In it is encompassed what we learn at school as immutable – Science, Philosophy, Geography, History, etcetera. These are universal truths that apply to everyone everywhere in the world. The knowledge we are concerned about is what is required to create a stable, just, free and democratic society; and the conditions and circumstances to achieve this are variable and have been different from generation to generation from the beginning of time.

As things stand today, 11 million African youth are being turned out into the labour market, but only 3 million new formal jobs are available for them, meaning that we already have a deficit of about 8 million.

How then can we in Africa ensure that we reap the demographic dividend? How can Africa tap into the potential of these young people to grow its economies at a faster rate than its populations are growing? How can Africa provide decent jobs, food, health care, housing and infrastructure for its youth?



**Hon. Mathew Rukikaire**

We must think again.

In my opinion three things will matter the most:

**1. EDUCATION:** Education is probably the single most critical sector for the future of Africa. Africa's youth must be educated and equipped with sufficient skills to navigate their way in the economies of the future.

**2. REGIONAL INTEGRATION:** We can say with confidence, that with this kind of population growth, no African country will be able to meet the demands of its youth by itself. Regional Integration of markets and economies, and even politics, is critical. If we integrate our countries and act together, it will be easier to achieve.

**3. MACROECONOMIC STABILITY:** African economies have grown over the last thirty years largely as a result of overcoming inflation by instilling fiscal discipline and maintaining macro-economic stability. A return to inflationary behavior and fiscal indiscipline would be disastrous for Africa's economies. This discipline must be maintained.

Finally, let me make yet another proposal to the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy to consider. I want to propose that, as well as becoming an annual event, this forum should be expanded to become an East African Leadership Academy; and that His Excellency Jakaya Kikwete be requested to become the Academy's Patron. Further consultations with Kenya and Tanzania would be required with the help of His Excellency Jakaya Kikwete.

## 3.7 ADDRESS BY RT. HON. RUHAKANA RUGUNDA

The former Prime Minister of Uganda, Rt. Hon. Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda having addressed protocol saluted the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy (GPLA) for having organized such a great summit to discuss "serious" institutional but also national and Pan African issues. Prime Minister Emeritus, took the audience down into living history citing for example how the 27 armed young Men and women that attacked Kabamba Military barracks in 1980, an incident that initiated the five yearlong National Resistance Army (NRA) guerilla war camped at Mr. Rukikaire's home in Makindye for two to three days prior to the attack.

He (Rukikaire) has been able to put at disposal for Ugandans his knowledge, experience and resources, and in the protracted people's war he was the chairman of the NRA external wing, "so really have confidence, if you have question marks about student politics, dismiss them and get actively involved because that is important training for your future."

Dr. Rugunda expressed his gratitude to President Kikwete for having made it underscoring his vast experience in issues to do with the youth and students having grown through the ranks serving the people of Tanzania in the military and political spaces, serving his Country 10 years as President and with distinction. "We are extremely happy that we are discussing this with him."

The Prime Minister highlighted the contribution of Makerere University in producing people that have had indelible impact to the politics and other spheres in Uganda, East Africa and beyond citing the example of his University time Guild President Prof. Peter Anyangnyong who has since served as



**Rt. Hon. Ruhakana  
Rugunda**

the Secretary General of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) and Governor of Kisumu in Kenya pointing to the focus of credentials and issue based then as opposed to originality and political affiliation.

Mr. Rugunda stated that at a certain point in time, it was hazardous to be a student leader in Uganda pointing to the times of Dictator President Iddi Amin, students endeavored but it became difficult to operate. Indicating now Gen. Kahinda Otafire and Rt. Hon. Amama Mbabazi as the last two that operated a highly hot race that summoned the then regime to put a halt to the processes in fear of having this momentum yield to the whole country rendering Makerere without elected student leadership for a number of years.

He gave more examples of leaders that went through the University including former president of Kenya Mwai Kibaki, Long time Kenyan opposition leader Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere who because of distance challenges was hosted by the Nkata family that

stayed near the University, "Makerere has been a center for training East Africans, East Africans who have had a very important role to play."

Dr. Rugunda, encouraged the GPLA and student leaders to identify their responsibilities, tasks and goals so as to enable them do great things irrespective of their age, 'start your life early, plan, define on what you should do for yourself, for society, the country, the continent and humanity'; "I believe when you are clear with that you will score highly."

The highly motivational Bush war veteran, President Yoweri Museveni Tibuhabwe who together with other students at Ntare school organized pastoralists to be more settled than moving all over looking after cows, a program that has over the years transformed that area to a wealth one due to organization. He advised the student leaders to start early the agenda of finding solutions working with the people so as to uplift their standards of living with support and guidance of the elders.

Rt. Hon. Rugunda cemented the proposal by Mr. Rukikaire Mathew on expanding the scope of the GPLA to benefit the entire East African Community (EAC) and also, decisively asking the GPLA leadership to request President Jakaya Kikwete to patron the Initiative.

He related to his student day complaints about colonialism and the balkanization of Africa proposing a mission to Guild Leaders in Uganda and the region of sensitizing the people about the need for East African co-operation and Integration among others which would increase our capacity to deal with the population challenges as raised by Mr. Rukikaire.

"We request you the leaders of the students Movement in your respective capacities to be the champions, so that the dream of our forefathers can be realized", relating to Mwalimu Julius Nyerere's call for an integrated East Africa at Independence. Had this been done, we would not be where we are now.

He concluded by inviting the Chief Guest, H.E Jakaya Kikwete to address the Summit.

## 3.8 ADDRESS BY THE CHIEF GUEST, **HE. JAKAYA MRISHO KIKWETE**

Allow me to begin by thanking you, Mr. Demiano Masesa, for inviting me to speak at this esteemed gathering of former university student leaders in Uganda.

I humbly recommend that this summit's scope extend beyond the significance of legacy and the importance of passing on the torch from one generation to the next. Let it be part of the broader discussion and reflection on the responsibilities that come with leadership. Through good leadership, nations have made enviable progress in the shortest time. But where there is leadership deficits, nations have stagnated.

The development task before us is complex but crucial and it needs leadership. Poverty, food crisis, climate change, diseases and ignorance are among the challenges that still continue to confront our respective nations and region. They demand the unwavering attention and concerted effort of current and future leaders.

### **May we all rise to this challenge?**

I am delighted to get the opportunity to visit Makerere University for the first time. Being the first University to be established in East Africa, I can rightly say Makerere is the cradle of higher education in East Africa. The first higher learning institution in our region, the University of East Africa (UEA), was established in 1963 with its main campus here in Makerere.

As I mentioned earlier, I am the Chancellor of the University of Dar es Salaam. It will be amiss of me if I don't say a few words about the role of a University, particularly a State University such as Makerere, in a country's development



**HE. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete**  
*Former President,  
United Republic of Tanzania*

agenda. A university is a conscience of the nation. Universities are expected to be an integral part of any nation's traditions. The very life of a University has to be intimately associated with the ways of life of a particular nation and its values.

Nonetheless, this does not happen automatically. It is a product of constant and deliberate pursuit by the University academia, staff and students alike. They have to ensure that the work of the University is in harmony with the objectives of the nation building agenda of the day. Here are three key questions which are important to consider:

- i.) First, how much is a University an agent of change for social and economic development of the country?
- ii.) Second, how committed is the University to

relate its work to the community it seeks to serve? , and

iii.) Third, how can the University play the above two roles while at the same time maintaining its intellectual objectivity and respect for truth?

Again, I intend to leave these questions to you as food for thought.

As we gather today to reflect on the theme of legacy in leadership, I would like to request you to take interest in one big undertaking with profound benefit to all of us now and in the future. This is the African integration agenda. Fortunately, His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the President of the Republic of Uganda has made and continues to make an incomparable legacy in this regard.

As we explore topics of leadership legacy today, allow me to use this opportunity to remind the youth of East Africa that you have a special role to play to ensure the remaining two stages in the integration process are attained.

I am convinced and confident that EAC will attain both the Monetary Union and Political Federation stages in your lifetime.

I, therefore, urge you, to pick up the mantle and own the integration process. Your active participation will promote social, economic, and political cohesion within our region. This will inevitably make the integration process a people-centered affair. Be active in contributing your ideas, your energy and your talents. The region needs you now. Your actions today will shape the future of our region and build a brighter tomorrow for all.

## 3.9 ADDRESS BY THE VICE PRESIDENT, JESSICA ALUPO

I thank the organisers of the Inaugural Guild Leaders' Summit, for inviting me to join you today. In a special way, I welcome my brother, HE. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, for gracing this important Summit of Student leaders and young intellectuals.

The Inaugural Guild Leaders' Summit-2024 has been convened under the theme: "Legacy and Leadership Continuum: The Power of Knowledge and Cross-generational Learning."

I am one of the pioneers of organised student leadership in East Africa. I started working on changing the people around me, changing Uganda through the student Movement. In 1968, our student group visited the liberated areas of Mozambique while still a University student. Our student groups, in the mid-1960s, triggered the resistance against sectarian politics. Therefore, I recognise the importance of student leadership. However, it must be anchored on correct ideas by making a correct diagnosis of the problems of society and how to solve these problems.

It is, therefore, important for young leaders to understand the challenges or bottlenecks that precipitate social backwardness and engage in efforts to address those challenges. Our student movement was able to identify 10 bottlenecks to Uganda's development. They include:

- I. Ideological disorientation;
- II. A weak State, especially the Army;
- III. Under-developed infrastructure (i.e. the railways, the roads, the electricity, the telephones, piped water, etc.);
- IV. The underdevelopment of the



**Jessica Alupo**  
*Vice President of the Republic of Uganda*

human resource (lack of education and poor health for the population);

- V. Interfering with the private sector (either by policy or by corruption);
- VI. A fragmented African market on account of colonialism;
- VII. Exporting unprocessed raw materials and, therefore, getting little money and losing jobs; this was caused by lack of industrialization;
- VIII. The underdevelopment of the services sector (hotels, banking, transport, insurance, etc.);
- IX. The underdevelopment of agriculture;
- X. 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.

**3. Socio-economic transformation** so as to change Uganda from being a peasant society into a middle-class, skilled working class society.

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

Therefore, I invite the young leaders gathered here today to make a critical study of the above bottlenecks and how to apply the NRM's principled solutions to these challenges. This will enable you to make a meaningful contribution to the socio-economic transformation of your country.

In today's rapidly evolving world, knowledge is more than just information—it is the currency of progress. It empowers you to innovate, to adapt and to overcome the challenges that lie ahead. But knowledge is not static; it is dynamic, ever-changing. And it is through cross-generational learning that you can unlock your full potential.

Cross-generational learning is not merely about passing down knowledge from elders to youth—it is a two-way exchange, a dialogue between experience and innovation. It is about harnessing the wisdom of age and the energy of youth to forge a brighter future together. In this room, we have leaders from different backgrounds, different walks of life, each bringing their unique perspective to the table. By bridging the gap between generations, we create a synergy that propels us forward, driving innovation and fostering inclusive growth.

I urge you to harness the power of knowledge, embrace the spirit of cross-generational learning and build a legacy of leadership that will stand the test of time.

I thank you all.

## 3.10

# PANEL DISCUSSIONS

## Panel 1:

*Exploring the Influence of Political Parties in Student Guild Elections: What Our Present Says about the Future in Uganda.*

**Moderator:** Isabella Akiteng-Independent Development Consultant

**Hon. Anna Adeke** - (Guild President, Makerere University, 2013-2014)

**Amongin Prisca Nangiro**-(Guild President, Uganda Christian University-Mukono, 2016-2017)

Christopher Okidi- (Guild President, Gulu University, 2008-2009)

**Hon. Fred Mbidde Mukasa** - (Guild President, Makerere University, 2001-2002)

**Hon Mbidde:** I stood for Makerere University Student Guild Presidency at a time when political parties were discontinued. Political parties are the beginning of nurturing of ideological understanding of elections. So, banning political parties in Universities is dictatorship since it curtails people's right to express their opinions. Political parties need to be left to flourish in institutions for a better Uganda.

Whoever tells you something matters. Young people need to be open for guidance but need to filter perspectives from which they get the advice.

**Prisca:** Political parties exhibit freedom and ignite creativity in society and academia. They are not the origin for violence as many perceive, rather violence emerges from militarization of politics at all levels.

Have friends that support you and your vision. Distinguish yourself as a female in politics, be excellent in all you do.

**Hon. Adeke:** Young people should engage and allow themselves be challenged through political party identification, because that's how the world is so, they should not perceive political persecution as the end. Political parties ease transition of students from institution politics to the society and national politics. It is understandable for private universities to not have political party tolerant system though there

should be room for adjustment.

It is fairer to let students choose what they want other than being forced to obey. Always get mentored, don't navigate alone. You're not the first to do what you want to do.

**Christopher:** Liberal pluralism which associates with political parties is a sign of modernity. Political parties are simply presentation of views and they catalyze student leadership by molding students into the kind of leaders needed.

Electoral commission is always given a constitution for each political party where it is always indicated about the existence of the youth league. So it should regulate and guide accordingly. Young leaders need to be nurtured and mentored so as to create a generation of strong leaders. Our political parties are in a worrying state and it's a failure of liberal pluralism. Let the leaders of Uganda understand the vision of Uganda to establish a strong nation.

**Sheila:** We had elections without political parties and that saved us a lot of chaos. Politics in institutions is not all about political parties because in some institutions, religion is considered but with or without parties, politics need to continue and not focus on divisions.

Universities should keep censoring political parties to increase student exposure without bias and when they are out, they can genuinely choose where to fall. We should be focused on service delivery other than political divisions.

## Panel 2:

*Exploring role of Student Leaders in Tertiary Institution Policy Framework; Gender inclusivity processes analyzing challenges and opportunities for Gender inclusivity in Political participation.*

**Moderator:** Hellena Okiring Oketcho-Board Chairperson, UYONET

**Mariam Iculet Arikosi**- (Guild President, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, 2021-2022)

**Moses Kidega**- Secretary for Labor Affairs, National Youth Council

**Phillip Baitwa-** (Guild President, Uganda Christian University-Mukono, 2013-2014)

**Hon. Namazzi Olive-** (Guild President, Kyambogo University, 2012-2013)

**Nambassa Shamim-**(Guild President, Makerere University, 2021-2022)

**Marion Kirabo-** Lawyer and Political Activist.

**Bashira Nantongo** - (Guild President, Islamic University in Uganda-Female, 2020-2021)

**Moderator:** The discussion will be on gender inclusivity and youth engagement in policy formation, our conversation will touch both aspects.

### Panelists experiences in influencing policy;

**Olive:** My experience in influencing policy at a

Guild leadership level, is not an easy walk in the park, as a Guild President on University Council only two students represent on this supreme body of the University. Here you get beaten by numbers because you are only two in a council of 23 members. That is why Guild Leaders resort to strikes as a better avenue to influence any given policy. I therefore, would recommend that University Administrators look into this issue if strikes have to end in Universities.

**Phillip:** I will probably share with you what most people will not share, my weaknesses as I entered that office. I had no clue on which policy to influence but to only take on the leadership role, I realized I needed to work on personal growth first. So by the time I began to influence policy, I had first to win very many private battles. So, all I can say is the few things we were able to influence at university and have them changed and have them successfully done was after we had to first deal with our personal discipline to deal, to conquer our own issues. And that's when we were able to convince other people. We are seen as unserious, we were seen as mediocre until we had to first, understand different approaches, what methodologies work. So, for me, I must say 1 year is a very short time if you have to first organize yourself, and then you have to organize others. This is a challenge that I really see with the leadership in different places.

**Marion:** Somehow we are expected to know it all, and once we get into these positions that we are voted and because we won the election the next day, suddenly you know how this position works. You should be knowing all the policies in the University. That you suddenly know how to negotiate certain things. That you are automatically supposed to get

into arguments with these professors (who have been around for over 20 years doing the same stuff), and outsmart them and bring forth policies that actually work for students. This is not largely talked about, yet I believe this is critical and also there is no one to guide you through all this.

**Bashira:** When I got to swear in as a Guild President, the following day the President announced the Covid 19 lock down, where all institutions had to be closed. My leadership was basically online and much of the policies I took part in influencing were basically provision of facilities for online studies but also advocated that the University allows that we reach out to some students that were stranded and would not afford using the online facilities. We have registered cases of students that dropped out in the process.

**Kidega:** I happen to hail from a region that is very underprivileged in this country. I was born and raised in Gulu and that's a sub region. And for those of you who are well versed with our history, you know that, the 20 years of the Lord's Resistant Army was a very difficult time for us, the people who were born and raised in that time. I grew up in a state where there was absence of policy and absence of the law. Anyone could do anything that they wanted and that experience to me made me appreciate, the values of all of us subscribing ourselves to a given set of rules and regulations so that we can limit the excesses.

I also, served in UNSA before National Youth Council and you realize the experiences and skills cut across. In our tenure of leadership NYC, we have managed to advance and advocate for policies, that we think that are going to be very crucial in influencing the lives of the day to day young person for example the Startup Bill for young business people, and the PPDA to favor young business people.

**Shamim:** There is constant fear of making mistakes especially when you come into leadership, at a time when your predecessor is accused of signing the 15% tuition policy. Seating in council and you are constantly praying that they don't introduce any policy that will again affect students. Being that you represent about 15,000, 20,000 students yet you are only 2 representatives in the council is unfair. So I believe that it was a learning opportunity, and I'm taking this year off for me to enrich myself with knowledge and skills to further myself politically.

**Iculet:** Do not be the person who disqualifies yourself from anything before those who may have been given the authority to do that are able to. So it's not my job if I'm aspiring for Guild Leadership to disqualify myself through self-reject.

# 4.0

## ACTION ITEMS AND FOLLOW-UP

01

The Summit made an endorsement to the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy, as a driver and platform for training and offering transition to outgoing Guild Presidents and Leaders into active political participation.

02

**Freedoms in Universities:** The need to allow students to freely express themselves especially along political party lines. Important aspect in leadership grooming.

03

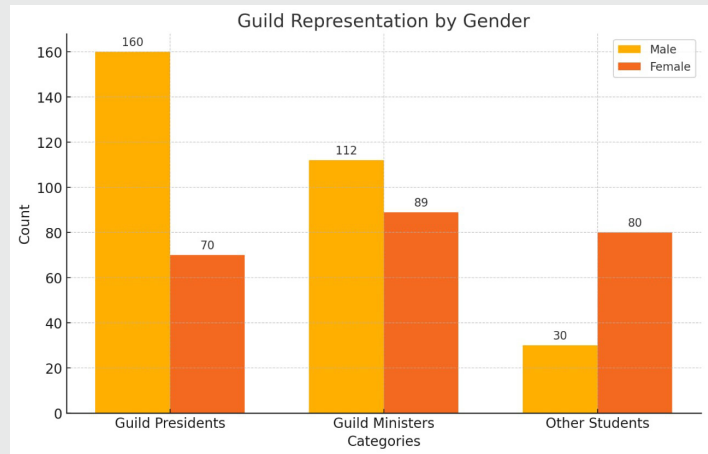
**Expanding the summit to the region:** In the spirit of East African Integration that this be made a regional initiative for a progressive region.

04

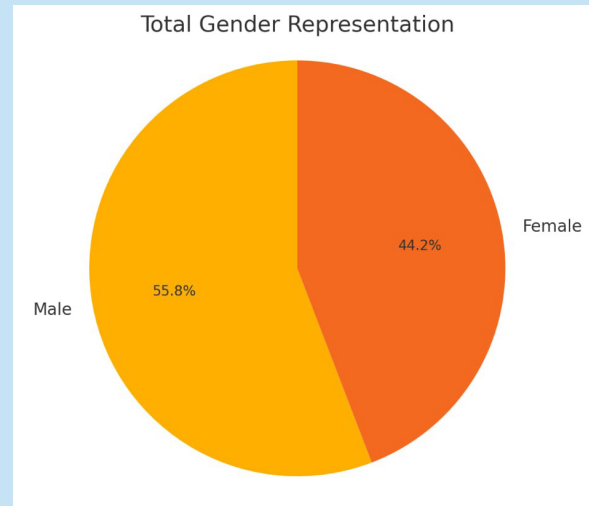
**Patron:** The agreed position that HE. Jakaya Mrisho be made the Patron of the Summit once it opens up to the region.

05

**Leadership Development:** There is a request that Guild Leaders receive training before and into their leadership to allow them navigate through their tenure of office impactfully.



This chart shows the distribution of males and females across different categories (Guild Presidents, Guild Ministers, and Other Students)



This chart represents the overall gender distribution among the total of 541 individuals.

## CONCLUSION

The Guild Leaders' Summit is a platform, offering former student leaders a unique opportunity to reconnect, share experiences, and grow as leaders contributing to the strengthening of Uganda's democracy and beyond. Through collaboration and knowledge exchange, the summit will inspire commitment to support the Guild Presidents Leadership Academy, contribute

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