



UGANDA MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

“Empowering you to Excel”

23RD GRADUATION CEREMONY

**ADDRESS BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF UMI, PROF. JAMES L. NKATA DURING
THE 23RD GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON 8TH MAY 2026**

The Chief Guest, His Lordship Hon. Justice Dr. Flavian Zeija, The Chief Justice of the Republic Uganda,

The Hon. Minister of State for Higher Education and Sports

The Chancellor of Uganda Management Institute

Honorable Members of Parliament

The Head of Public Service and Secretary to Cabinet

Permanent Secretaries

Chairperson and Members of UMI Governing Council

Distinguished Guests in your respective capacities

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your lordship the Chief Justice, Mr Chancellor Sir, Distinguished Guests, staff, Parents, and, most importantly, our Graduates here today, good morning.

Your Lordship the Chief Justice, Your Lordship the Chief Justice Emeritus and UMI Chancellor sir, distinguished guests, faculty, families, graduands, and policymakers; UMI is honored to hold this convocation with the Chief Justice as Guest of Honor and the Chief Justice Emeritus presiding as a Chancellor. Their Lordships the Chief Justices’ presence here today is both an honor and lesson in humility and Institutional continuity. To the

graduands, this presence sends a clear charge to each of you graduating today: whatever path you take, be just.

Mr. Chancellor, as you may be aware, the strategic direction of the Institute is to transform into a research and innovation led Institute. In line with this strategy the Institute embarked on strengthening and building the faculty capacity. Since last graduation the Institute has been able to recruit 15 new lecturers and all of them are PhD holders. Allow me to report our faculty staffing levels now stand at 85%PhD holders. This year the Institute has promoted 9 senior lecturers, 8 Associate Professors and 5 Professors. For the first time in the history of this Institute people have been promoted to Full Professors. Allow me to introduce to you the newly promoted full professors and request them to standup for recognition.

However, before they standup, allow me to declare my conflict of interest as am one of those promoted.

- Professor Rose B. Namara- (Professor of Development Management)
- Professor Maria Karuhangire Barifaijo, (Professor of, Education leadership and Management)
- Professor Gerald Kagambire Karyejja, (Professor of Public Administration and Management)
- Professor Proscovia Namubiru Ssentamu, (Professor of Education) (This one has been picked up by the Ministry of Education and Sports to lead the setup of The National Institute for Teacher Education, and as an Institute, we are very proud of the evident affirmation.)
- James Luyonga Nkata- (Professor of Education Leadership and Management)

Mr. Chancellor, the Institute now stands as one the best staffed higher education Institute in this country in terms of required qualifications. Eighty-five percent (85%) of the faculty are PhD holders. The existence of this strong team has contributed to the strong profile the Institute commands both in the country and internationally. In a recent biometric ranking of Universities, UMI was ranked the fourth best University in this country.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, and our Chief Guest, UMI is committed to providing guidance to our policy makers and citizens of this country through our trainings and services, by offering core values that guide effective services.

At this graduation, allow to mention a package of three core values to our graduands. Put humanity at the center of development. Development that excludes human dignity and wellbeing is no development at all. In projects large and small, let human needs, rights, and flourishing shape your goals and measures of success. Embed equity in your organizations and decisions. As managers, leaders, and policy-makers trained here, ensure that everyone you serve—across rank, background, and circumstance—feels fairly recognized and supported. Equity requires attending to differences and needs, not applying identical solutions to unequal situations.

Practice continuous learning and meaningful community impact. A diploma is a beginning, not an endpoint. The educated professional of the twenty-first century must learn, unlearn, and re-learn; must interrogate systems and policies rather than repeat them. Let your qualifications translate into deliberate interventions where you were raised and where you work—improving education, energy access, sanitation, food systems, and civic life. A UMI graduate should be visible in the betterment of their community.

To our PhD graduands: the doctorate is a key to knowledge, not the final destination. Publish and disseminate your findings; continue rigorous inquiry; challenge prevailing ideas; and expand the boundaries of what we know.

Graduands, go forth with justice, humility, and courage. Let humanity be the compass for your development work, your workplaces, and your public service. Serve with compassion and competence, and make your communities—and our nation—better for your having been here.

My Lord Chief Justice and Mr. Chancellor sir, here today and through the journey of this convocation, we shall present to you 11 PhD graduands, 801 Masters, 3,266 Post graduate Diplomas and 9 Ordinary Diplomas. We as an Institute community, we welcome you dear graduands into the enviable community of UMI alumni.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, since the last graduation the Institute units have scored tremendous achievements and allow me to highlight a few.

The School of Business and Management

Our School of Business and Management (SBM) has remained committed to strengthening its academic depth, strategic partnerships, and societal impact. The School continues to

expand its portfolio of graduate programs to ensure they are rigorous, relevant, and responsive to evolving demands in business and public management, while extending its global reach through targeted collaborations.

A key milestone is the forthcoming International Public Procurement Conference in August 2026, organized by the Institute's Research and Innovation Centre with strong support from this School. This conference will bring together leading scholars and practitioners to examine current trends in public procurement, and we warmly encourage graduates and stakeholders to participate.

The establishment of the Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability Management Studies marks a significant step in translating sustainability from concept to practice, integrating it across the Institute's activities. These developments underscore a School in motion—dedicated to adding value for students, the community, the nation, and the global society. To our graduating class, we offer an ongoing commitment to cultivate your analytical, ethical, and leadership capacities as you shape the future of business and management.

The school of Management Science

The school of Management Science (SMS) is on a journey for the international re-accreditation of our MPA program. In this bid, the school hosted and had a reinforcing engagement with the ICAPA. The process underscored the Institute's commitment to quality and continuous improvement. In the same spirit of advancement, the Institutes' graduation of 11 PhDs marks a significant milestone in strengthening our research capacity as we transition from a predominantly teaching-based institution to a research-led university.

The School of Distance Learning and Information Technology

Mr Chancellor, the school is advancing access to AI-enabled, technology-driven education in management and administration. Aligned with National Vision 2040 and the Institute's Strategic Plan, it equips professionals with essential ICT competencies to support socio-economic development.

For the 2026/2027 academic year, the school has introduced a number of in demand Postgraduate Diploma programmes:

- Postgraduate Diploma in Procurement and Supply Chain Management (Distance Learning)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Business Computing Management
- Postgraduate Diploma in Cybersecurity and Computer Forensics
- Postgraduate Diploma in Data Science and Business Analytics

The School of Civil Service, Public Administration and Governance

The School of Civil Service, Public Administration and Governance (SCSPAG) is devoted to training, research, and consultancy for government and public-sector actors, building on the legacy of the former Institute of Public Administration. Targeting primarily mid-career professionals, its curriculum encompasses public administration, urban governance, public policy, health service management, and higher education leadership, with the aim of enhancing service delivery and institutional management. Supported by the Islamic Development Bank, the school hosted an inaugural Professorial Chair from Cuba, which facilitated the introduction of a Postgraduate Diploma in Diplomacy and International Relations and the development of a proposed master's programme in the same field. The institution seeks sustained support from government ministries, international agencies, NGOs, and diplomatic missions to enrol staff in its programmes, and it maintains partnerships with the UPDF and Uganda Police to strengthen leadership and management capacities.

Projects & Consultancy Department

Uganda Management Institute (UMI) provides consultancy to public and private sectors across East and Central Africa, including gas and oil, banking, health, and aviation. Through Memoranda of Understanding with agencies such as the Uganda Prisons Service, Uganda Police Force, and training institutions of the UPDF (Senior Command and Staff College, Kimaka; Air Force Training School, Nakasongola), UMI delivers leadership and management capacity-building for middle and senior officers, reinforcing security and justice sector leadership.

In partnership with the Ministry of Public Service, UMI has developed a 10-year Public Service and Administrative Reform Model to guide public-sector operations, performance, and management. With World Bank funding and the Ministry of Education and Sports,

UMI trained over 6,600 secondary school headteachers and deputies under the Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Project (USEEP), enhancing school leadership and management.

Additionally, under the World Bank-supported GROW Project and in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Makerere University, and Nsamizi Institute, UMI is developing social risk management skills to strengthen project leaders' capacity to anticipate, mitigate, and manage social risks in development programmes.

UMI, in partnership with the COMESA Competition and Consumer Commission, is pleased to invite the Judiciary to participate in the forthcoming training on *Competition Law and Consumer Protection*. With COMESA's regional expertise and UMI's academic leadership, the programme will provide judicial officers with practical insights into the interpretation and enforcement of competition and consumer protection frameworks. Your participation will be invaluable in ensuring that the justice sector is fully equipped to safeguard consumer rights and promote fair competition for the good of our country.

Research and Innovation Centre

Mr Chancellor Sir, UMI is transforming into a research- and innovation-led institute, shifting from traditional teaching to practical, research-driven learning (design thinking, hackathons, incubation). This has produced 90+ publications, higher national rankings, and initiatives such as a fast-track Research Ethics Committee, weekly Research Clinic, and a Management Business Incubation Centre that supports entrepreneurship through mentorship and national partnerships. UMI influences policy via research and quarterly dialogues with ministries and partners, collaborates with institutions like Gulu University and the Uganda AIDS Commission, and emphasizes knowledge translation for community impact. The Institute will host the 10th International Public Procurement Conference (IPPC10) in August 2026.

The institute continues to contribute to national policy through research and quarterly dialogues with ministries and development partners, while investing in translating research into practical solutions for societal impact.

Mr Chancellor Sir in enhancing continued research, the Institute has launched a Centre for Doctoral and Postdoctoral Studies to strengthen advanced training, leadership, and policy-relevant scholarship. On a happy note, Government has allocated UGX 2.0 billion towards research and innovation. This has come at a time when the world is being challenged with societal conflicting loyalties. We thank Government for the trust and we commit, to deliver quality, reliable and impactful research products and protocols that drive the National Development agenda.

Chief Guest and Mr Chancellor Sir, this congregation is only part of a journey of the convocation through our footprint in the country. We shall be in Mbale, Gulu and finish the convocation congregation in Mbarara. These branches are a mission to ensure that the whole country is served with our training niche, our services are as well available to countries with in the region on our online and distance learning platform.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, and our Chief Guest, Uganda Management Institute has been successfully reaccredited as an ISO-certified institution (ISO 9001-2015), affirming our adherence to international quality standards. This milestone reflects the strength of our systems, our commitment to continuous improvement, and the professionalism of our staff, while reinforcing stakeholder confidence and supporting our transition to a research and innovation-led institution.

Mr Chancellor Sir, may I mention that, the Institute is currently challenged in terms of Infrastructure growth. The Institute is short on funding for Capital and infrastructure developments at Mbarara, Mbale and Kampala yet we face increased demand for UMI services. This has stifled infrastructural developments across the regional branches. Here the Institute requires UGX 15.4bn to commence the development initiatives and we are not in doubt that you will lend your voice to this cause.

I once again congratulate the graduands here today on a feat well achieved go and have an indelible footprint wherever you step as a graduate of UMI.

For God and My Country.

Prof. James L Nkata

DIRECTOR GENERAL