



UGANDA MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

23RD GRADUATION CEREMONY

SPEECH

BY

JUSTICE BART MAGUNDA KATUREEBE

CHANCELLOR

**ADDRESS BY THE CHANCELLOR OF UMI, JUSTICE BART. M. KATUREEBE
DURING THE 23RD GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON 8TH MAY 2025**

The Chief Guest, His Lordship Hon. Justice Dr Flavian Zeija, The Chief Justice, Uganda
The Hon. Minister for State for Higher Education and Sports
Honorable Members of Parliament
The Head of Public Service
Permanent Secretaries
Chairperson and Members of UMI Governing Council
The Director General
The Graduands
Distinguished Guests in your respective capacities
Ladies and Gentlemen.

My **Lord Chief Justice**, I am most honoured as your predecessor to host you today as the Chief Guest at this 23rd graduation convocation Ceremony of UMI. Our presence here, retired and current, should add to the body politic of this country, that there's enough space for all to peacefully coexist. There are enough roles for all of us to serve the country, service is not about the current office. Dear Guests, Members of the Governing Council, Faculty, Staff, Graduands, Alumni, Friends of Uganda Management Institute, and the broader community — good morning.

It is my honour to stand before you today as Chancellor of the Uganda Management Institute. We gather not only to celebrate our graduands here today, our institution's achievements, but to reaffirm the purpose that guides us: to serve society through learning, research, and partnership. Today, I speak about three interlinked responsibilities that must guide our work: community engagement, knowledge dissemination, and ensuring that those in power are accountable to the public we serve.

Universities have long been places where ideas are born, tested, and refined. Yet ideas that remain confined to lecture halls, journals, or ivory towers fail to realise their highest purpose. Knowledge becomes meaningful only when it informs choices, improves lives, and empowers people to shape their future. Community engagement is the bridge between intellectual endeavour and social impact. It ensures that our research addresses real problems, that our teaching develops relevant skills, and that our resources serve citizens, institutions, and the sectors that drive Uganda's development.

At UMI, we have distinct strengths: experienced faculty, practical curricula in public administration and management, strong ties to government and civil society, and a growing cohort of alumni serving across public and private sectors. We must leverage these strengths deliberately to deepen our engagement with the communities we exist to serve. This means three practical commitments.

First, listen and co-create. True engagement begins with listening — to local leaders, public servants, community organizations, and beneficiaries. Let our research agendas and training programmes be co-created with those on the front lines of service delivery.

Participatory research, policy clinics, and community advisory boards can help us ask the right questions and design solutions that are locally feasible and culturally informed.

First: deepen meaningful community engagement. True engagement begins with respect and listening. Our faculty and students must co-design research and training with district leaders, civil society, private sector partners, and ordinary citizens. Field practicums, policy clinics, community advisory boards and participatory research must be core to our pedagogy. Communities are not merely recipients of knowledge; they are co-producers and essential validators of what works.

Second: broaden and simplify knowledge dissemination. Academic rigor matters, but so does clarity and reach. We will commit to packaging research into policy briefs, implementation guides, public lectures, radio scripts, and digital open-learning modules accessible to non-specialists. Short courses and executive training for local government officials, parastatals, and civic organizations will translate evidence into tools for better service delivery and governance.

Third: strengthen accountability and citizen capacity. Universities have a dual role here: generating evidence and empowering citizens to use it. UMI must develop curricula and public programmes that teach citizens, journalists, watchdog organizations, and public servants how to track budgets, evaluate programmes, interpret performance data, and use legal and civic channels to demand answers. We will support independent, evidence-based oversight through policy labs, civic technology partnerships, and public scorecards that benchmark service delivery and institutional performance.

To make these commitments real, I propose a three-point pledge on practical institutional changes:

- Integrate community engagement and accountability metrics into promotion and research evaluation so faculty are rewarded for public-facing, impact-oriented work.

- Expand our outreach unit and establish a Centre for Public Accountability and Knowledge Exchange to host trainings, convene stakeholders, and produce citizen-focused evidence products.
- Strengthen partnerships with Parliament, local governments, anti-corruption bodies, media, and civil society to ensure research informs policy, and that oversight is constructive, evidence-based, and solutions-oriented.

To our graduands: UMI is unique, almost all of you are not looking for jobs, but career growth, promotions, change of career direction and deepening knowledge in areas where you have been practicing, to you, I say: You are the generation of public managers, auditors, advisers, and civic leaders. Learn to combine technical skill with humility, to listen before prescribing, and to use knowledge to strengthen institutions rather than undermine them. To our alumni and partners: lend your expertise, open practice sites, and support initiatives that scale accountability and public engagement. To government and public officials: welcome scrutiny that is grounded in evidence; collaborate with us in testing reforms and sharing data that allows citizens to judge results.

We must be clear: calling power to account is not adversarial for its own sake. It is the foundation of trust. Constructive accountability—driven by data, dialogue, and inclusive participation—improves service delivery, reduces waste, and restores public confidence. UMI will be an anchor for that constructive approach, supplying evidence, training guardians of the public interest, and convening spaces where citizens and leaders can engage in transparent, solution-focused dialogue.

You are not merely graduates; you are custodians of Uganda’s future institutions. Lead with integrity, innovate with courage, and serve with humility.

In closing, let us recommit the Uganda Management Institute to a model of scholarship that is outward-facing, accessible, and civic-minded. Let our knowledge serve communities, let communities shape our knowledge, and let both be tools for holding power accountable. In doing so, we will honour our mandate and strengthen the democratic, social, and economic foundations of our nation.

To the wider community and government partners: UMI is ready to be a partner of choice. We will offer evidence-based advice, tailored capacity building, and opportunities for co-creation. We ask in return for honest dialogue, access to practice sites, and shared responsibility for implementation and evaluation.

In closing, let us remember that the value of a university is measured not solely by publications or rankings, but in the lives it transforms and the institutions it strengthens. To our graduands — go forth as leaders of integrity. By committing to meaningful community engagement and purposeful knowledge dissemination, Uganda Management Institute can deepen its impact, honour its public mission, and play a decisive role in Uganda’s development journey.

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In closing, let us remember that the value of a university is measured not solely by publications or rankings but by the extent to which it improves the lives of people and strengthens the institutions that sustain society. By committing to meaningful community engagement and purposeful knowledge dissemination, Uganda Management Institute can deepen its impact, honour its public mission, and play a decisive role in Uganda’s development journey.

I would like once again to applaud you, dear graduands. Congratulations on this remarkable achievement. I congratulate the Director General and the entire faculty on yet again a job very well done, I thank the various partnerships and collaborations that have brought us this far as an Institute.

I wish you all happy celebrations.

For God and My Country.

JUSTICE BART M. KATUREEBE

UMI CHANCELLOR