

Handover at the School of Law: New Ag. Principal & Ag. Deputy Principal assume Office

Professor Christopher Mbazira handed over office to Dr. Ronald Naluwairo (Assoc. Professor), the incoming Ag. Principal, School of Law, Makerere University at a ceremony held on Monday, 20th November 2022 at the School of Law premises. Professor Mbazira had served as Ag. Principal of the School of Law since June, 2016 until 14th November, 2022 when Dr. Naluwairo was appointed. Dr. Naluwairo also handed over office to the new Ag. Deputy Principal, Dr. Zahara Nampewo.

The handover ceremony was witnessed by Mr. Walter Yorac Nono, Director – Internal Audit and Ms. Janet Nabukeera, Human Resource Officer, School of Law who represented the Director – Human Resources. Others in attendance were Dr. Phiona Muhwezi Mpanga, Ag. Head – Department of Commercial Law, Dr. Maria Nassali, Head – Department of Public & Comparative Law, Professor Ben Twinomugisha, Mr. Abigaba Vincent, College Registrar, Ms. Zaaam Ssali, College Communication Officer and Mr. Percy Mpindi, President – Makerere Law Society (MLS).

In his remarks, Professor Mbazira thanked all staff of the School for the support during his service. ‘In a special way, I wish to thank Dr. Naluwairo for the support while he was Ag. Deputy Principal, we co-shared the Office of the Principal and consulted each other for every decision that I took’, Professor Mbazira added. He congratulated the incoming Ag. Principal and Ag. Deputy Principal and assured them of his support whenever called upon.

Presenting his handover report, Professor Mbazira highlighted the achievements of the School of Law during his term of office:

- ✓ The LLB Curriculum has been reviewed by the School and awaits submission for accreditation by the University Management to the National Council for Higher Education. Specialised LLM programmes i.e., Human Rights and Commercial Law programmes have been adopted by the School and await approval by Senate.
- ✓ Entrenchment of the Clinical Legal Education (CLE) methodology for all courses at the School of Law
- ✓ Giving School visibility and relevance in the community
- ✓ Celebrating 50th Anniversary of the School of Law in 2018
- ✓ Lobbying for a new administrative block for the School which is under construction and expected to be opened in early 2023
- ✓ Improving the relationship between faculty and administrative staff.
- ✓ Building partnership with key stakeholders, including the Judiciary and Alumni.
- ✓ Conducting the LLB Pre-entry examinations with credibility.

He also highlighted the challenges: Inadequate funding with progressively declining budget; Staff deficiencies, arising from inadequate number of staff; Over reliance on development partners for project activities; Dilapidated infrastructure; Lack of automation of administrative functions; Transport gaps, the School van is old and replacement required; and the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown.

‘There is outstanding work which I believe the new Ag. Principal will take forward because we worked on it together’ Professor Mbazira said. The outstanding issues include: Completion of new Administrative Block on time; Accreditation of revised LLB Curriculum ; Accreditation of the new Specialised LLMs and Modules; Preside over recruitment of a new Director for Refugee Law Project; New recruitment of staff replacements need to follow-up on response to adverts; Undertake LLM Curriculum Review; Training and induction of new Examinations Officer; Table before Board Report on Honorary Degrees Committee Report; Printing of strategic plan; Lobby for new furniture for the new building.

'As we Build for the Future, we should not lose the critical role which the School of Law plays in ensuring rule of law and good governance within and outside Makerere. Increasingly, institutions which promote adherence to rule of law are being shunned and pressured to abandon this as political leaders and other leaders at all levels view rules as inconveniences. The School should not lose its place and should not allow to be pressured. We teach the law and therefore have a role to place in ensuring rule of law at all levels of society.' ~ Professor Christopher Mbazira

In his acceptance remarks, Dr. Naluwairo thanked Professor Mbazira for the service to the School of Law, Makerere University and the nation, Uganda. 'I sincerely thank Chris for the dedicated service, you have left an indelible mark which is clear for all to see. Lobbying for the new building, introducing CLE, mobilizing alumni to work with the School are some of those issues you have achieved', Dr. Naluwairo added. He also said that Chris' leadership has been consultative, collegial and a listening ear for staff and students, this is a lesson for me and something that I will endeavor to carry forward.

Dr. Naluwairo explained that the major role of the Deputy Principal is to coordinate academic programmes and he highlighted some of his achievements while serving as Ag. Deputy Principal: review of the LLB Curriculum; preparation of the School of Law Strategic Plan (2020-2030); and improvement of the graduation rate for LLM and LLB among others. 'I appreciate the support and teamwork from colleagues, Heads of Departments and Registrar's Office during my time of office', he further said.

'Professor Mbazira' leadership has been highly consultative, collegial with staff and very empathetic. We appreciate you for all that you have done to shape the School of Law going, we are going to draw lessons from your service' ~ Dr. Ronald Naluwairo (Associate Professor), incoming Ag. Principal, School of Law

Handing over the Office of Deputy Principal to Dr. Zahara Nampewo, Dr. Naluwairo congratulated her on the new appointment. 'I hope you find fulfillment in the office, be sure I am here to support you as your immediate supervisor and colleague', he said.

Accepting the instruments of Office, Dr. Nampewo thanked Professor Mbazira and Dr. Naluwairo for the record and pace that they have set as leaders of the School of Law. 'I call for the support from all staff and hope we can all work together', she added.

Dr. Nampewo who has served as Ag. Director of the School of Law Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPPEC) explained that she hopes to handover the Office by end of the year when a new office bearer is appointed.

In his remarks, Mr. Walter Yorac Nono, Director Internal Audit, Makerere University thanked Professor Mbazira for the service to the School of Law and Makerere University. 'On behalf of management, we appreciate your legal advice and will fondly remember your commitment to service as well lobbying for the School during your term', Mr. Nono added. He congratulated the new team on their appointment and noted that management looks forward to working with them.

'Professor Mbazira has been a great mentor, we appreciate your humility, encouragement, listening ear and open door policy while you served as Ag. Principal. Dr. Naluwairo, we have worked with you as Ag. Deputy Principal and we look forward to the same; we support you and we will work with you' ~ Percy Mpindi, President
– Makerere Law Society