

Reflecting on the Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC)@30

A symposium was held on 1st December 2023 to reflect on the 30years of HURIPEC's existence. Mr. Nicholas Opiyo, Executive Director – Chapter Four Uganda was the guest speaker at the event.

HURIPEC is a department under the School of Law established by Makerere University in 1993, as the first human rights center of its kind in Sub-Saharan Africa. HURIPEC was established solely to foster on teaching, research and activism on human rights and peace issues at the University. The centre pursues a vision of contributing to the establishment of a human rights conscientized, educated, activist, academic society in Uganda and countries beyond. The centre seeks and has consistently engaged in events geared at promoting the understanding and respect for human rights, democratic governance and sustainable peace in the East Africa sub-region specifically and Africa generally through teaching, research, policy and advocacy.

In his presentation, Mr. Opiyo commended HURIPEC and the School of Law for the pivotal role played in providing a platform where stakeholders convene to discuss the issues affecting our nation Uganda. He recognised that Makerere University as an institution is known as for its brand where robust debates are possible and ideas flourish giving opportunity to voice people's thoughts. He noted however, that the situation is changing where Makerere University is seen as a gated community with the faculty and students living in fear and unable to share ideas openly.

In commemoration of its 30years, HURIPEC is launching a new initiative, 'Reconstituting Uganda'. The initiative aims at reviewing the Uganda constitution and study issues of whether it serves its purpose for the rapidly changing nation. In support of the initiative, HURIPEC has identified 7 Doctor of Laws prospective candidates who will be registered provisionally as students of Makerere University. Dr. Busingye Kabumba, Director-HURIPEC expressed his excitement about the new initiative to reconstitute Uganda considering the capabilities of HURIPEC in the past, present and the future. Dr. Kabumba voiced affirmation that Uganda is ours and we all must work to make it better for all of us.

The Reconstituting Uganda Initiative was launched Mr. Opiyo who expressed an appreciation of the privilege to launch the project noting that everyone looks forward to the fruits from it. He added, 'we wish you well and hope you won't fear to tease out the key issues that are required to make change for Uganda which is experiencing a crisis at the moment'. Further, he said, 'I implore members to challenge the wall around the university and discuss the real problems affecting Uganda, get the right diagnosis so that the right treatment is decided for the deep crisis that we are facing'.