



STATEMENT

BY
THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF MALAWI - HIS EXCELLENCY
PROFESSOR ARTHUR PETER
MUTHARIKA

ON
MINISTERIAL CONSULTATIVE
MEETING ON STRENGTHENING
HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION
IN AFRICA

21ST OCTOBER 2015- KAMUZU
PALACE

- The Minister of Education, Science and Technology in Malawi Honourable Dr. Emmanuel Fabiano, MP
- Ministers responsible for Higher Education from other countries present here
- The AU Commissioner of Human Resource, Science and Technology, Mr Paul Ikounga

- The Chairperson of RUFORUM, Professor Mabel Imbunga
- The Executive Secretary of Ruforum, Professor EKwamu Adipala
- The Principal Secretaries responsible for higher education present here
- The Vice Chancellors of Universities

- The Directors of Higher Education
- Distinguished invited guests
- Members of the Press
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

Welcome to this great country we fondly call the “The Warm heart of Africa” I take great pride to open this important meeting this morning on the Strengthening of Higher

Education, Science and Technology in Africa within the context of the African Union's Agenda 2063 which aims at realizing an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa.

Excellencies and Distinguished Guests,

Africa must improve its capacity to make use of science

and technology to enhance food production and its own competitiveness in the global marketplace. Science, technology and innovation (STI) is underpinned by the generation and use of knowledge through research, which itself requires the availability of a 'cadre' of highly trained science professionals. It is the role of

universities to train the future workforce for the continent, to undertake research and to ensure that generated knowledge makes an impact on African societies.

However, Africa's Higher Education sector is faced with critical challenges including low quality of education, inadequate number of

qualified staff at PhD level, limited infrastructure, outdated curriculum and pedagogies, lack of innovative delivery methods, inadequate use of information communication technologies (ICTs), inadequate funding to the sector, low research output, and low global competitiveness. The challenges are further

exacerbated by the high demand for access to higher education.

Excellencies and Distinguished Guests

The African Union developed Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 (STISA 2024) to ensure science centered technological

innovation as the driver for economic development in Africa. STISA 2024 identifies ‘conditions for success’ which are:

- a) Upgrading and/or building research infrastructure,
- b) Enhancing technical and professional competencies,
- c) Innovation and entrepreneurship, and

d) Providing an enabling environment for STI.

These four conditions for success have been designed as ‘pillars’ and are prerequisites for the achievement of STISA 2024, and in my view for achieving Agenda 2063.

**Excellencies and Distinguished
Guests,**

Education and particularly higher education is a critical mechanism for creating a cadre of professionals to undertake and oversee research that would create the knowledge base for technological innovation. Our universities must produce graduates with High level skills which are essential to deliver the vision of African leaders through the

Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA) and the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) to diversify African economies through creating new economic growth sectors with higher value added.

Our Governments must commit to national and regional investments in Higher Education, Science and Technology; Commitment to establish an ‘African university ranking system’ that recognizes the specific need for Higher Education in Agriculture and other fields; Commitment to establish a continental ‘accreditation standards and

credit transfer system' and Commitment to develop an 'academic mobility scheme' and making it easy for our academia to travel across the continent.

Excellencies and Distinguished Guests,

On its part, the Malawi Government will continue to put emphasis on higher

education as set out in the National Education Sector Plan (2008-2017), and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MDGS II). The goals and objectives relate to expanded equitable access to education; improved quality and relevance of education; and improved governance and management.

Excellencies and Distinguished Guests,

Lastly but not least, let me commend RUFORUM which is a network of 55 universities in the continent for its effort to foster regional centres of excellence and academic exchanges to train the next generation of scientists; connecting universities to national agricultural research

systems and private sector and rural communities; and championing national and regional policies supporting postgraduate training and research. It is therefore important for our Governments to invest in Higher Education Networks to allow for pooling of resources and wider spill over benefits.

**Excellencies and Distinguished
Guests,**

With these remarks I now
formally declare the Ministerial
Consultative meeting officially
opened.

May God bless you all.