

Who is Dr. Meshach W. Katusiimeh

By

Prof. Mushemeza Elijah Dickens (PhD).

Today is great day for Ankole Western University. As we celebrate this day Mr. Chancellor Sir, and distinguished guests allow me to say something about Dr. Meshach Katusiimeh. An academic in his own right, Dr. Katusiimeh is my former student in the Department of Political science and Public Administration, Makerere University, a colleague and a selected child of God. He was born in Ngoma, Kagango Division, Sheema Municipality, on May 26, 1977.

He is married to one wife and that wife is a woman. With his wife Dianah Kemegisha Katusiimeh, they are blessed with four children. My first encounter with Dr. Katusiimeh was at Makerere University. At the time, one could observe a positively modest young man, articulate, ambitious and knew what he wanted.

We participated in international conferences which were organized by academic and research organisations such the Council for the Development of Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA) where he distinguished himself as a promising scholar. He had the opportunity to interact with best minds in social sciences in Africa and those in the diaspora. The likes Prof. Samir Amin, Prof Ali Mazurui, Prof. Okwadiba Nnoli, Prof Arche Mafeje, Prof. Mohamood Mamdani, Prof Adebayo Olukoshi, Prof. James Katoroobo, Prof. Apolo Nsibambi and many others. Some are alive while others moved on. These interactions and keeping to the popular saying that “you either publish or perish”, Dr. Katusiimeh has been shaped to a scholar Uganda should rely on.

Amil Cabral a Pan Africanist and great revolutionary once remarked that theory guides practice but practice shapes theory. Dr. Katusiimeh is a man of experience. He has worked as Senior Lecturer at Makerere University and Uganda Christian University. He also previously taught Political Science and Public Administration at Makerere University and Kyambogo University. For more than ten years he was at Uganda Christian University, Kampala, Uganda, where he served as head of Department of Public Administration and Governance. He has also served on Boards of various schools including being the current Chairperson Nganwa High School Board of Governors.

Ladies and gentlemen, one key quality you would want in a Vice-Chancellor is academic leadership. You will not find Dr. Meshach W. Katusiimeh wanting. He

holds a PhD from Wageningen University, MA degree in Public Administration and Management and a Bachelor's Degree in Social Sciences (Political Science) from Makerere University Uganda. With a research interest in local and urban governance, public private partnerships and the politics of African development, Dr. Katusiimeh has contributed chapters to academic books and articles to internationally refereed Journals. Dr. Katusiimeh has served as a consultant for the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) as well as other national and international organizations resulting into working papers that have been published.

Dr. Katusiimeh has also worked as Academic Coordinator Master of Research and Public Policy (MRPP). The MRPP program is a Pan African academic program that is taught at 8 universities in Africa including University of Ibadan, University of Lagos, University of Dar es salaam, University of Botswana, Egerton University, University of Sierra Leone, among others.

He has been a Steering Committee Member for Partnership for Africa and Social Governance Research (PASGR) Education Wing (Based in Nairobi) 2012 – 2015. He also served as Assistant Academic Coordinator: Ugonzi Program (This is a leadership program of the University of Dar es salaam, Nairobi University and Makerere University) 2002 & 2003.

As a chief executive, a Vice-Chancellor by necessity is a mobiliser of financial resources. In this regard Dr. Katusiimeh brings a rich experience in collaborative research and competition for grants. He has won research grants from leading research and professional organizations like OSSREA, CODESRIA, APSA, IPSA ETC.

Some of the Research Grants he has won include:

- Politics of Domestic Resource Mobilization for Social Development in Uganda funded by United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

- Political Economy of Universal Social Protection Policy Uptake in Africa.(Funded by Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR).In collaboration with the Department of Peace and Good Governance, Uganda Martyrs University (Nkozi).
- Cost of Motorcycle Accidents in Kampala funded by Management Agency of the Cross Road Challenge Fund, Kololo Kampala.
- Research Fellow on the project entitled “Elites and New Poverty Agenda coordinated by the Department of Development Economics, Makerere University and Institute of Development Studies, Denmark.
- Towards more effective and equitable service delivery for local communities: comparing the impact of different accountability mechanisms. (In collaboration with University of Antwerp, Belgium; Kyambogo University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology and Uganda Christian University).
- Analyzing the politics of service delivery & Urban Governance in Kampala: A Research Partnership.(In collaboration with University of Antwerp, Belgium, Uganda Christian University, Gent University and Makerere University).

Dr. Katusiimeh is active in other academic endeavors. For example, is a:

1. Visiting Researcher IOB University of Antwerp, Belgium
2. Visiting Lecturer International Leadership University (ILU) Burundi up to date on the Inter University Council of East Africa (IUCEA)Exchange Program arrangements.
3. External Examiner, College of Humanities and social Sciences, Kampala International University.
4. External Examiner, Faculty of Management Sciences, Mbarara University of Science and Technology.
5. Steering Committee Member - Religion, Rights and Peace Fellowship at the Human Rights and Peace Centre, School of Law, Makerere University.
6. Previously: External Examiner Department of Political Science and Public Administration Makerere University and College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Makerere University

Dr. Katusiimeh is well travelled. He has visited many countries around the world including the USA, Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Nigeria, South Africa etc. This is a rich experience he is bringing to Ankole Western University.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, and distinguished guests, let me also touch on the other side of Dr. Katusiimeh. He is a social critic. Typical of University Professors, he calls a spade a spade. He cherishes accountability, transparency and integrity. In short he believes in democratic governance of African states and their societies.

Dr. Katusiimeh is not selfish. His philosophy is “to serve others unselfishly.” He runs a private school in his home village – the school is “Rwebiita Preparatory School”. Dr. Katusiimeh for the last two years has been popularizing the go back to home ‘giving back’ projects and has inspired many to give back and support various projects especially related to the involvement of the alumni in the development of their schools. His vision has led to the revival of many schools around the region.

In his free time, Dr. Katusiimeh loves playing with children, reading newspapers, watching soccer and political documentaries. Dr. Katusiimeh is a fan of social media and believes social media has the ability to transform the world positively beyond what we imagine. That is why you find him as an administrator of various whatsapp groups, and Facebook forums.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, and distinguished guests, let me also give some advice to Dr. Katusiimeh. I have already pointed out that academic leadership and financial resource mobilization are critical in your work. Besides, those responsibilities, I bring your attention to the wisdom from One scholar Hsiou-Hsia who observes and correctly so that ‘the intellectual depth, elegance, vision and most of all courage of a Vice-chancellor are direct reflections of the heart, soul and quality of the university’. He further observes that ‘the quality of any university’s leadership reflects that of the university. If one excels, so would the other; if one falters, so will the other.’ A Vice-chancellor for instance or any other senior administrator in higher institutions of learning must be aware and cognizant of the ‘optimisation principle’ commonly taught in economics schools. Such an administrator needs to be ‘aware of the dichotomy that often arises between the interests of proprietors/institution (such as its survival, growth and development) on one hand; and the interests, needs and demands of staff and students on the other. He/she

needs to be constantly aware of the possible implications and consequences of his/her decisions and actions as some of these will be positive and others negative’.

Dr. Katusiimeh I know you have the competencies, you know the principles of management, you also have the physical abilities and capacities to get things done given your age. But one other important thing is the need to have a sense of purpose and contribution. This is what others call the need to leave a legacy. I wish you all the best.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I have the honour to present Dr. Katusiimeh Meshach for installation as the 1st Vice- Chancellor of Ankole Western University.

Thank you very much.