For immediate release | 08 July, 2015

RUFORUM Installs His Excellency Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika, State President of the Republic of Malawi as Champion for Higher Education in Africa.

08th July, 2015

On Sunday 5th July 2015, as part of the Malawi 51st National Independence celebrations, RUFORUM honoured and installed His Excellency Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika, State President of the Republic of Malawi as the Champion for Higher Education in Africa. The ceremony was held at the Sanjika Palace in Blantyre, Malawi and was attended by several dignitaries including Ministers, Honorable Members of the Parliament of Malawi, and a delegation of African Vice Chancellors led by the Vice Chancellor, University of Zimbabwe - Prof. Levi Nyagura. This is part of RUFORUM’s commitment to strengthen knowledge generation for development by African universities.

In 2010, the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) organized an Africa-wide Ministerial Conference on Higher Education in Agriculture in Africa.
(CHEA) as part of its efforts to advocate and lobby for policy support and investment in the Higher Education sector in Africa. During the conference, the Ministers committed to;

1. A renewed and vigorous emphasis by African governments on restoring the quality of higher education in agriculture;
2. Increased investment in higher education in agriculture in Africa and to be included as an integral agricultural development investment in CAADP Country Compacts and Medium Term Agricultural Productivity Programmes;
3. Take urgent actions to develop an Africa-wide action and investment plan for implementing the African Union Commission and NEPAD-PCA strategies for strengthening capacity development in agriculture that are designed to support CAADP;
4. Ensure that Ministries responsible for Higher Education, education institutions and other relevant actors create conducive and friendly environments for women and girls education and career advancement at all levels;
5. Advocate for increased support and engagement of the African higher education networks in policy making and programme implementation for agricultural training and research by the African Union Commission and the Regional Economic Communities; and
6. Support local and international partnerships which address critical capacity needs for sustainable agricultural development.

To achieve the above commitments, RUFORUM is engaging various bodies and actors, including African Heads of State and Governments to realise the CHEA commitments. Notably, we are pleased that His Excellency Prof. Arthur Peter Mutharika, State President of the Republic of Malawi has accepted to champion the cause of Higher Education in Africa. As part of his commitment, His Excellency will engage with other African Heads of State and Governments, the African Union Commission, Regional Economic Commissions, International partners and others, to advocate for the creation of policies and frameworks to strengthen Higher Education, Science and Technology in Africa. RUFORUM, and indeed, the wider African Higher Education fraternity are indeed honoured and privileged to get such support from an African Head of State and Government. We thank His Excellency Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika for his support to African Higher Education.
Notes to editors

Higher education for Africa*

- Africa needs to produce future leaders who will promote better governance and management in all sectors, and facilitate innovative solutions to society’s problems.
- Universities are best placed to provide the trained labour force needed as the drive for knowledge-based economies takes hold on the continent through producing more PhDs and more ‘industry-ready’ graduates.
- Postgraduate enrolment both in master’s and PhD programmes in Africa rose from 6.9 per cent of the total enrolment in 1997 to 9.3 per cent by 2014 as a result of educational reforms.

* Source: Sci Dev Net. Article: Making higher education work for Africa: Facts and figures by Irene Friesenhahn.

RUFORUM
Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a dynamic regional network of 46 member universities operating in 22 countries that fosters collaboration, coordination, training and research amongst member universities. Its vision is to help build a vibrant agricultural sector. We help African universities produce high-performing graduates and high-quality research, responsive to the demands of African farmers for innovation to generate sustainable livelihoods and national economic development. To share our work, call +256-417-713-300, email communications@ruforum.org, or visit us online at www.ruforum.org or on our blog at http://blog.ruforum.org/

For additional information, photos and interviews with key delegates, contact Ms Joan Apio, Communications Publicity and Marketing Officer, below.

Contacts:

Name: Joan Apio
Program Officer - Communications, Publicity & Marketing
Email: communications@ruforum.org

Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)
Plot 151/155 Garden Hill, Makerere University Main Campus
P.O. Box 16811 Kampala, Uganda
Tel: +256-417-713-300 (office) | Direct Line: +256-417-713-317
Twitter: #RUFORUM | @ruforumsec
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ruforumnetwork
Blog: http://blog.ruforum.org/
Website: www.ruforum.org