

Press Release



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HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT PROF. ARTHUR PETER MUTHARIKA MEETS RUFORUM DELEGATION IN MALAWI



Kampala 03 September 2018. A delegation from the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) was on Thursday 23 August 2018 received by His Excellency Prof. Arthur Peter Mutharika at the Kamuzu Palace in Lilongwe, Malawi. The purpose of the visit was to update His Excellency about RUFORUM's progress in implementing His Excellency's agenda related to higher education in Africa as well as deliberate on issues affecting higher education space in Africa. Also to congratulate His Excellency for ably leading the Republic of Malawi and to request the Government of Malawi to endorse the RUFORUM Charter.

In his introductory remarks, Mr Bright Msaka, SC, the Malawi Minister of Education, Science and Technology briefed the Head of State about the delegation and said that his ministry had worked very well with the Vice Chancellors of the RUFORUM member universities in Malawi and the RUFORUM Secretariat. He said that RUFORUM shares a common vision with his Ministry and his Ministry would do everything possible to achieve that common Vision. He thanked RUFORUM for supporting the preparatory arrangements for the upcoming Summit of the Committee of 10 African Heads of State championing Education, Science, Technology and Innovation development in the continent.

Prof. Mabel Imbuga, the RUFORUM Board Chair and the head of the delegation updated His Excellency about the progress so far made in relation to higher education in Africa including

the progress made by RUFORUM in implementing STISA 2024 Priority One on reducing poverty and ensuring food and nutritional security in Africa as well as RUFORUM's institutional growth from an initial 10 universities in five countries in 2004 to today 85 universities in 36 African countries.

Prof. Adipala Ekwamu, the RUFORUM Executive Secretary, noted that RUFORUM had worked closely with the World Bank and the Government of Malawi to prepare the Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa (SHAEA) Project and thanked the Government of Malawi for accepting to participate in the SHAEA Project which will bring close to \$250 million for Higher Education Sector in Africa. This Project brings together six African countries (Malawi, Cote D'Ivoire, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, and Mozambique) to strengthen regional anchor universities to lead agri-food systems transformation in Africa. He also applauded His Excellency for having proportionally the highest budget allocation to Education in Africa.

During the meeting with His Excellency, Prof. Arthur Peter Mutharika acknowledged that higher education plays a critical role in development and that no country can develop without higher education and skills. He re-assured the delegation that he shared in this unit of purpose on higher education and noted the need to increase the number of qualified staff at PhD level in African Universities and therefore suggested an investment in training the trainers. He said the fruits of RUFORUM work need to be expanded to accommodate more universities in all the 54 African countries. His Excellency called for increased mobility of students and faculty across universities in Africa and the need to work towards developing a common curriculum that integrates common thinking. His Excellency confirmed that Malawi Government will endorse the RUFORUM Charter that will enable RUFORUM to work across Africa to implement Africa's Universities Agenda for Building Agriculture Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity (BASIC) for supporting attainment of Africa's Agenda 2063.

Related Links

1. Mutharika pledges support to Regional Universities Forum. See [Link](#)
2. More PhD holders needed in Malawian universities – Mutharika See [Link](#)

Notes to Editors:

Established by African university vice chancellors in 2004, the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a consortium of 85 African universities operating in 36 countries on the continent with a vision to create “a vibrant agricultural sector linked to African universities which produce high-performing graduates and high-quality research responsive to the demands of Africa's farmers for innovations and able to generate sustainable livelihoods and national economic development”. RUFORUM Secretariat is hosted by the Ministry of Education and Sports in Uganda with Secretariat at Makerere University in Kampala. In 2014, RUFORUM signed an MoU with the African Union Commission to support implementation of the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA 2024) Priority One on reducing poverty and ensuring food and nutrition security. As of August 2017, RUFORUM has supported the training of 1,716 MSc and 436 PhD graduates of whom 94% work

in their home countries or region, generated over 300 agricultural technologies and mobilized over US\$169 million for strengthening postgraduate education in Africa. Please visit www.ruforum.org for more information.

For additional information, photos and interviews, contact the RUFORUM Corporate Communications & Advocacy Officer below;

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