

Press Release



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RUFORUM honours former Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission, Her Excellency Rhoda Peace Tumusiime

Kampala, 25 February 2019



Her Excellency Rhoda Tumusiime (L) with RUFORUM Executive Secretary Prof. Adipala Ekwamu

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity building in Africa (RUFORUM) on Friday 22 February honoured the former Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture at the African Union Commission, Her Excellency Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, for her **“Outstanding contribution and leadership in advancing agriculture and agri-business in Africa”**. She was honoured during a courtesy visit to the RUFORUM Secretariat based at Makerere University. Among other career achievements at national, regional and international level, Rhoda Tumusiime was instrumental in championing the [Malabo Declaration](#) on accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods made by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union in June 2014.

Speaking on receiving the award, Rhoda Tumusiime, an agricultural economist by profession, expressed her deep appreciation to RUFORUM and urged RUFORUM to continue on its current path to building capacity for agriculture in Africa. She acknowledged that the task ahead is big, but expressed optimism that with the dynamism and diversity of staff at the RUFORUM

Secretariat, as well as the connections with member universities and other development partners, the Network is up to the task.

During the visit to the RUFORUM Secretariat, Rhoda Tumusiime was also taken through an exhibition showcasing RUFORUM's journey since its inception in 2004 through to its current strategy, [RUFORUM Vision 2030](#). She commended RUFORUM on its expansion to a continent-wide network covering 37 countries and was elated to see that its programmes now include gaps areas like supporting student entrepreneurship and establishment of agribusiness incubation hubs. She informed that the Network is highly regarded in various international fora and recommended that it engages more closely with African governments and the African Union Commission.

Since her retirement from the African Union Commission in 2017, Rhoda Tumusiime, a Ugandan citizen has resettled in her home country, but continues to lend her expertise to the cause of promoting agricultural prosperity and food security in Africa. She currently serves in key positions on national, regional and international organisations, including the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa, the World Potato Centre (CIP) and the International Fertiliser Development Centre (IFDC).

Notes to Editors:

Established by 10 African university Vice Chancellors in 2004, the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a consortium of 105 African universities operating in 37 countries on the continent with a vision to create *"vibrant transformative universities to catalyse sustainable inclusive agricultural development to feed and create prosperity for Africa"*. 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 60 Under graduates, 1,883 MSc and 503 PhD graduates of whom, 94% work in their home countries or region, generated over 300 agricultural technologies and mobilized over US\$201 million for strengthening postgraduate education in Africa. Please visit www.ruforum.org for more information.

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