

## comm

## quote of the day

Justice  
and the

## EDITORIAL

Quickly resolve  
Makerere strike

**W**e condemn the on-going clashes at Makerere University that have disrupted lectures and other businesses at the campus and neighbourhood. By yesterday, an uneasy calm hung over Makerere hill, the seat of the country's oldest university and finest centre of higher learning. The violent crackdown left scores of students brutalised, detained and hospitalised.

The fact that guns and brute force, and not logic, are now deployed to resolve differences, is a disgrace to all who have passed through the gates of the Great Makerere University. It condemns both the current university administration and the students' guild for failure to use their minds creatively.

Worse still, there seems to be no immediate end in sight to this violence, now rolling into its second week.

## The issue:

Makerere strike

## Our view:

The Council should get to the bottom of break-ins by soldiers and the police, torture of students, including those with disabilities, and destruction of property.

The university administration has rejected outright, calls by the students' guild to reverse the new fees increment, while the students have vowed to press on with their demands.

Just what could have gone wrong with the consensus reached on tuition increment between the immediate former guild leadership and the university administration in 2018? Was that consensus arrived at under duress or after application of underhand methods?

Nonetheless, it should be now that the University Council, the highest decision making body of the university, steps in quickly to look into this controversy. These clashes should end and students and lecturers return to class.

The University Council should inquire why the outgoing students guild reneged on the deal it struck with the university and why the current guild leadership should protest an agreed position on the tuition. Similarly, the Council should go beyond the noisy talk of acting vice chancellor Prof Umar Kakumba that the strike leaders are driven by drugs and are incited by former guild leaders.

The Council should task both the university administration and police to provide solid evidence that the striking students are drug users, and are financed by external political players.

Likewise, the Council should inquire into the 'speedy and without formality' modus operandi of the university administration under Prof Barnabas Nawangwe, in dealing with challenges from both staff and students.

No less, the Council should get to the bottom of who ordered violent break-ins by soldiers and the police, torture of students, including those with disabilities, and destruction of students property. The errant officers should be brought to justice. The Council should also evolve non-ambiguous rights and obligations of the students as dutiful citizens in addressing their grievances and respecting their rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

These investigations, should help the Council get to the bottom of the issue, sort out the Impasse and come up with durable solutions to the incessant strikes over increment of fees.

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