

# MAKERERE AWARDS SOLDIERS MASTERS

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**F**ourteen senior officers of the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) were awarded with a master's degree in defence and security studies at Makerere University's 69th graduation ceremony.

These, according to the university vice-chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, are pioneer students of the course

The Makerere University Council, the institution's highest decision making body, in 2015, approved a Masters of Arts in Defence and Security Studies for soldiers in the East African Community (EAC).

The two-year programme, is aimed at reinforcing the skills of soldiers within the region, to tackle the ever growing threat of terror.

Lt. Gen. Andrew Gutti, the chairperson of the General Court Martial, who graced the ceremony, said whereas this year's number of graduates was small, a bigger group is expected to graduate in 2020, adding that many officers had enrolled for the programme.

"People have been looking at the army as failures, but that is not the case. We are continuously professionalising the force and have already trained some of our officers in disciplines, such as engineering," Gutti said.

"Soldiers are not only meant to hold the gun. We are also dealing with issues that can promote development in the country."

## The soldiers, according to Makerere University vice-chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, are pioneer students of the course

Brig. Richard Karemire, the UPDF spokesperson, said to be eligible for the programme, one has to be a soldier at Grade 2 level. These, he said, are mainly officers from the senior command and staff college in Kimaka. One also has to have a bachelor's degree, to be enrolled.

Lt Col Harriet Mwebaze, who spoke on behalf of the graduates, said the course content covers areas that are needed to better security and the society as a whole.

Some unique course units for the programme include the theory and practice of military intelligence; global politics; command, leadership and management; training doctrine in defence forces; theory and practice of modern warfare; joint war planning; issues in African international studies; and research methodology in defence and security studies.

Nawangwe hailed the UPDF for collaborating with the university towards providing higher education to the armed forces.

He promised to establish a



Gutti interacting with some of the graduates after receiving their master's degrees in defence and security studies during the fourth session of the 69th graduation at Makerere University on Friday. Photo by Juliet Kasirye

Makerere employment liaisons desk in his office, which will help in co-ordinating employment opportunities for the graduates.

A total of 13,350 students were awarded degrees and diplomas in various disciplines at Makerere University's 69th graduation ceremony.

Of these, 56 received PhDs, 1,254 masters degrees and 101 postgraduate diplomas. The bulk of the number, 11,939, were awarded undergraduate diplomas and bachelor's degrees.

The last session, which occurred on Friday, saw students from the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the School of Law graduate.

Steven Kavuma, the former Deputy Chief Justice, who was awarded a master's degree in international relations and diplomatic studies, said he wanted to send a message that studying was a continuous undertaking and that age was not a factor.

"One should, therefore, strive to

satisfy one's intellectual curiosity to the highest level," he said.

Asked whether he will practice as an advocate since his retirement, Kavuma said he can only engage in mediation.

"Coming down from the bar may not be so comfortable," he said, adding that he wants to become a writer and consultant.

John Ken Lukyamuzi, the former Member of Parliament for Rubaga South, graduated with a bachelor's degree in law.

"I wanted to become a lawyer to help my constituents who have challenges in accessing justice," he said.

Polly Namaye, the newly appointed deputy Police spokesperson, graduated with master of arts degree in journalism and communication. She said obtaining the qualification will help her become not only an experienced, but professional Police officer.

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