



SPEECH

BY

**PROFESSOR CHRISTINE DRANZOA
VICE CHANCELLOR DESIGNATE, MUNI UNIVERSITY
ON THE OCCASION OF THE GROUND-BREAKING
CEREMONY AT MUNI UNIVERSITY**

"Today knowledge has power. It controls access to opportunity & advancement"

DATE: 13TH DECEMBER 2011

VERY SPECIAL GUESTS OF MUNI UNIVERSITY

- Hon. Minister of Education & Sports, (Chief Guest, Hon Lt. (Rtd) Alupo Jessica Rose Epel (MP)
- Hon. Minister of Health Dr. Christine Ondo
- Hon. Minister of State for Higher Education (Hon. Dr. Chrysostom Muyingo)
- Hon. Minister of State for Finance (General Duties Hon. Fred Jachan-Omach)
- Hon. Minister of State for Energy (Hon. Simon D'ujanga)
- Hon. Minister of State for Internal Affairs Hon. Ambassador James Baba
- Hon. Members of Parliament,
- Hon. Simon Ejua (former MP Vuraa County)
- Permanent Secretary, MoES
- Vice Chancellor, Gulu University
- Vice Chancellor, Busitema University
- Vice Chancellor, Mbarara University of Science & Technology
- Deputy Vice Chancellor, Makerere University
- Director, HE/BTVET
- Commissioner Higher Education
- The South Korean Team led by Professor H. Kook Park
- The Contractor (Ms Ambitious Constructions Ltd)
- The Technical Team from Kampala
- LCV Chairman: Hon. Sam Nyakua Wadri
- All Hon. LCVs from West Nile Region
- RDC, Arua District
- Your Worship the Mayor for Arua Municipality
- CAO, Arua District
- Religious Leaders (My Lord Bishops, The District Khadi)
- All Principals of Constituent Colleges (Both Public and Private Universities)
- Council Members of NTC, Muni
- LCI Chairman, Oluko Sub County, Muni Village
- Elders of Oluko Sub County Muni Village
- Staff of NTC Muni
- All chairpersons of Head Teachers Association in West Nile Region
- Representatives from GIZ, Arua
- Manager Stanbic Bank, Arua
- All invited Guests and Dignitaries
- Colleagues from Muni University
- Ladies & gentlemen

You are all most welcome to this very important occasion, marking the ground breaking for Muni University. This is a historic moment for us in Higher Education. On behalf of my team and

on my own behalf, your presence here today on this Hill is a very humbling experience. Hon. Minister, what started as papers (Memoranda and TOR) have now translated into reality today, we are proud to host you, Chief Guest, all the Hon ministers, Members of Parliament present, our Permanent Secretary and all the dignitaries present.

The Taskforce is working very closely with the parent Ministry of Education & Sports (MoES), Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development and other line ministries, Local Governments and other stakeholders. As a principle, the Taskforce made consultations its mantra for operations. We consult the Local Governments of MAYANK and Technical staff from each district. We continue to benefit from the involvement of other key stakeholders. We are also happy that there is tremendous support for this project locally, nationally and internationally.

We claim an **Overwhelming support** for this University at all level as our first and foremost achievement, for without these various support, we would not have progressed this far. Our utmost gratitude goes to His Excellency the President and Government of Uganda for the Gift of a Public University for this region and to our parent Ministry MoES; Ministry of Works, Transport & Communications; Ministry of Lands & Survey; and the University of Sangmyung in South Korea.

In a Very Special way, allow us thank MAYANK and the Governing Council of Muni for the Land parcels they offered for the development of Muni University gratuitously (these as are Bidibidi; Okollo; Muni; Adjumani has also made an offer for us as well as Zombo. The latest piece of Land handed over last month by late Chief Rwoth Omach of Parapaketo, Pakwach, juts the banks of River Nile.

We thank all the political leaders, elders from the region for relentlessly pursuing the Vision for Higher Education as the driver for knowledge economy in West Nile region. A word of thanks to Hon. Simon Ejua, former Minister of State for Works & Transport, who earlier (from 2007 to 2008) presided over the initial meetings that led to the technical committee that I had the privilege to chair to generate a position paper for a fully fledged university in the region.

Very Special thanks to the Minister of State for Finance, Hon. Fred Jachan Omach, Chairperson West Nile Parliamentary group and his technical team who have consistently ensured that some fund is allocated for this Project. You gave us your lasting words, **your doors will remain open and they have remained open. We know you will never desert us!!**

Hon. Minister, the Ministry of Education & Sports has very special persons: Under your leadership and technical leadership of the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Francis Lubanga; The Director HE; the Commissioner HE; the Procurement team lead by Mr. Isaac Kyangonza, and the constructions team have made our task and operations largely easy and enjoyable. We give you very special appreciation.

Hon. Minister, today you have unveiled the site plan for Muni University, and thereafter lay a foundation stone to symbolize the genesis of Higher Education Family in Northwestern Uganda. This University is strategically situated in Uganda to roll on and produce highly qualified Human Resource for Africa. For a region, with over 1,009 Primary Schools with over 629,486 total enrolment of pupils, over 124 secondary schools with a total enrolment of 35,863 pupils, 4 Technical Institutes, two nursing schools, 4 Primary Teachers' Colleges, one National Teachers' College and one National College of Commerce, the coming up of Muni University will provide increased access to higher education for these potential students who will soon emerge out of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE) Programmes, at the same time providing a second chance for further education to adult learners.

At this stage, we are here because of the enormous support of the Technical team from the Ministry of Works and Transport, and the Ministry of Lands and Surveys. In a very Special way allow me to single out Eng. Michael Sentongo, our South Korean Guests (in absentia) headed by Professor Hung Kook Park who in a record time, produced for us a plan that is worthy for a university.

Hon. Minister, I now highlight what my team has achieved since FY 2009/2010.

- This FY 2011/2012 we received 1.2 billion to kick start Construction
- There is an operational University website www.muni.ac.ug
- Two well furnished and established Taskforce offices (A rented head office at Independent Road; and a liaison office in Kampala courtesy of Makerere University).
- Three vehicles were purchased for the three taskforce members, who for the first one year operated the project using their personal vehicles and public transport.
- Within less than two months into operations, my team produced a Strategic Plan (2010/2015) for Muni University as required by National Council for Higher Education. The Vision statement ***“to be an innovative and specialized university for transformation and development*** and the Mission, ***“to provide quality education, generate knowledge, promote innovation and community empowerment for transformation”***. Muni University Strategic Plan is closely linked to the National Development Plan of Uganda 2010/2015 for relevance, quality Human Resource productivity and advancement of knowledge economy.
- Equally, these planned programmes of Bachelor of Computer, Information & Telecommunications; Bachelor of Information Sciences; Bachelor of Science with Education; Bachelor of Technical & Vocational Education and Bachelor of Nursing Sciences and the Cross-cutting foundation courses in Entrepreneurship and small businesses; Ethics and Communications Skills and others shall undoubtedly play crucial roles in shaping the academic landscape of Uganda and West Nile sub region.
- Muni University Physical Plan was developed with technical input from Ministry of Lands & Survey under the Leadership of Ag Commissioner Joseph Pade
- Topographical map of this site was developed with support from the District Surveyor Mr. Gad Aziku

- The Taskforce with support from many technical team has designed and developed five academic programmes that are already with NCHE for accreditation
- Several draft policy documents (Academic guidelines, ICT, Human Resource Manual, Investment policy are waiting for Council approval
- A skeletal staff of 17 have been contracted to assist the Taskforce in core and technical areas and we shall continue recruitments as work carries on. Here, I must add our gratitude to Arua District Service Commission for the technical role they have played in the recruitment exercise so far.

We wish to record that the University will commence by 2012/2013 with Faculty of **Techno-Science**.

As is a typical trend, establishment of a public university in the region, whilst increasing access to higher education, will trigger economic multiplier effects and provide business opportunities, with backward flows of resources and social amenities to grassroots communities. Hence, a distributed development and we can envision the development already coming to Arua and the rest of this region.

We look at the opportunity your presence offers us in developing Muni University. We need your support in overcoming the ever growing challenges,

- a) In the energy sector, my taskforce implores the area MP and others in this sector to lobby and advocate for solarization of Muni University as a Model Green University in Sub-Saharan Africa. To ensure an adequate learning environment we desire solar farms in Muni University. This need is demonstrated in the desired building models
- b) We appeal to PRDP for fund support to Muni University in re-tooling vulnerable people for employability. Subjects like sciences, mathematics, entrepreneurship and business management, and technologies will be introduced for remedying programmes. Our proposed Faculties of Techno-Science, Health Science, Business Science, and Education Engineering are tailored to address these gaps. Students-scholarship with a focus on the female gender.
- c) We need additional funds for the completion of Muni University phase I that is estimated to cost 7.031 billion UGX, with recurrent estimates, a humble fund of 15 billion for adequate staffing.
- d) We beg Ministry of Finance to commit to development of the proposed modern Campus of Muni estimated at over 40million USA Dollars, to allow us make our humble contribution to the national development and in Transforming Lives.

We wish to congratulate Ambitious Constructions Ltd., who came out meritoriously amongst a large pool of competitors, to take up this Contractual award, for putting up the first ever, Faculty of Techno-Science in sub Saharan Africa (**worth over 7 billion UGX**). We trust you will put-on your best professional attire from today, and accomplish this job efficiently and effectively without any delays.

Finally, allow me to thank my own staff and organizing committee who have been working tirelessly to make this occasion a success.

We also wish to be the first to wish you Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year (2012).