

# MAKERERE

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# UNIVERSITY

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DATE: March 17, 2023

The Chairperson University Council

Makerere University,

**MS. LORNA MAGARA**

THROUGH THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

**RE: A PETITION TO HAVE THE 15% TUITION INCREMENT POLICY REVIEWED AND DROPPED.**

My name is Oremo Hillary Odwee, a student of Makerere University pursuing Bachelor of arts in Journalism and Communication with registration number 20/U/9874/PS and students' number 200070894.

On Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018, the Makerere University Students guild special committee presented a report proposing a 15% tuition increment for new students across all programs effective academic year 2018/19. According to the recommendation of the report, the committee stated that students' welfare, students support services and facilities should be improved as a result of the increment.

However, the Makerere University student's guild special committee, without tabling the report before the GRC for debate and possible modifications, the same handed over the report to the University Council and immediately implemented the recommendations of the report.

The policy was supposed to be implemented every academic year since 2019 for the next 5 years with a projection of ending in 2023. This meant that after 5 years a student who would join the institution at the end of the 5 years of the policy implementation would pay 75% from that which was paid by the students before the 15% tuition increment policy.



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It later emerged that besides sidelining the GRC house, the committee had not adequately consulted the students' population and the general University stake holders before recommending the tuition hike.

After one year of effective implementation of the policy, on a Tuesday morning, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2019, a group of female students led a peaceful demonstration at campus to protest the prohibitive tuition policy which has reportedly seen thousands of students miss exams and/ or drop out of university ever since it took shape.

During that peaceful demonstration, the 85<sup>th</sup> students' guild government challenged the University Council for having illegally implemented the 15% tuition increment on functional fee yet it had to only be affected on tuition.

In a meeting, held between the university council and selected students' leaders, the increment on functional fee was dropped but maintained on tuition.

During the 86<sup>th</sup> government, in 2021, the students' guild cabinet petitioned the university council to halt the implementation of the policy due to the economic challenges faced by the students, guardians and the benefactors. The same policy is expected to see reactivation in the forthcoming academic year, 2023/24.

Having the above background Madam chair, I therefore petition the university council to have the policy dropped because of the following reasons:

1. The revenue collected from the policy, do not reflect a change or an improvement in students' services, especially in the areas of student's hygiene, laboratory facilities, teaching facilities, the low and poor internet connection around campus, health services and the continuous poor and wanting state of halls of residence at the university.
2. It is very true that the existence of the 15% cumulative tuition increment is the biggest barricade that has caused students to drop out of the university. The policy itself is very unfair and unrealistic given the nature of students and parents who opt for public universities because they can't afford education in private universities that have an element of profit generation.
3. A letter from the Vice Chancellor dated 9<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023 addressed to the 88<sup>th</sup> guild President and the students' community. The Vice Chancellor Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe waved the

surcharges on late registration with respect to the prevailing economic hardships faced by parents and guardians. He went ahead to instruct the university bursar to drop the surcharges immediately. This shows that indeed Prof Barnabas Nawangwe is aware of the economic handicaps being faced by students and guardians.

4. Madam chair, the policy contravenes what we stand for as Makerere university which is "BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE", because it will see thousands of students continue to drop out of the university. For instance, before it was implemented in the academic year 2016/17, a first-year student of bachelor's degree of medical radiography was paying 1,344,000 as tuition and 618,500 as functional fess which totals to 1,962,500 compared to close to 4,000,000 I.e. (3,108,753.14 tuition + 860,954 as functional fees), 3,969,707.14 which will be paid by a student of bachelor's degree of medical radiography in the academic year 2024/25 at the end of the implementation span. This means that a student or parent, shall require more than six million to join Makerere university which will be unfair to the economically underprivileged young people of this country and the region at large.

Madam Chair, we must be the change we want to see. The prospect of the 15% annual cumulative tuition increment is an unfair economic apartheid and Makerere is not only defined by its buildings but by its students.

It is in my prayer therefore, that the above well stated reasons are considered to water and guide a resolution that will see the 15% tuition increment policy enter its coffin with an immediate burial that is if we must with our legendary and historical cause of "BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE"

Yours sincerely,



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88<sup>TH</sup> GRC NSIBIRWA HALL

Cc : The Vice Chancellor

Cc : DVC (Academic Affairs)

Cc : DVC (Finance and Administration)