

Makerere University and China Communications Construction Company Limited sign a Memorandum of Understanding

Makerere University and the China Communications Construction Company Limited (CCCC) on Wednesday 2nd November 2022 at the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT), signed a memorandum of Understanding to further relations between the two institutions.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor Finance and Administration who is also Principal for the College, Prof. Henry Alinaitwe signed on behalf of the University, at a ceremony witnessed by staff of the College and CCCC.

In his remarks, Prof. Alinaitwe welcomed the move by CCCC to partners with Makerere University. He said the University was interested in partnering with companies like CCCC in order to learn from their wide experience and expertise. 'china is a big force, contributing 20% of actual construction and works globally', he noted, adding that by working together, staff and students from the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology were destined to gain a lot in terms of experiences and exposure from a company that has been running for over two decades and whose work is up to international standards citing the Entebbe Express Highway as one of the projects undertaken by CCCC.

He said the memorandum of understanding was to realize a number of mutually beneficial activities that include guest lectures, staff and student exchanges as well as internship opportunities for engineering students.

Prof. Alinaitwe who informed the guests about the One-hundred-year celebration by Makerere University observed that the new relationship came in at an opportune time when the University was more than ever before geared towards increased knowledge transfer through training, research and community engagements.

Mr. Zhao Wei, Deputy General Manager of Overseas Department at the China Communications Construction Company Limited (CCCC) introduced their company to the members present. He described it as a leading global service provider of ultra large infrastructure, mainly engaged in investment, construction and operation of transportation infrastructure, equipped manufacturing, real estate and urban comprehensive design and construction. He said CCCC also provides its clientele with investment financing, consulting, planning, design and construction among other services.

He said Makerere University was acknowledged among other Institutions as the main producer of a large number of young workforce and that by signing a memorandum of understanding, they were exploring the various ways of helping engineering students gain skills and knowledge to build their career and make more contribution to the nation.

He said Makerere University is a cradle of talent and that the School of Engineering produces the finest students in civil engineering, road and bridge construction as well as Architecture and Environmental and social management, that are needed in the industry. He said they were happy to engage with the School of Engineering and that the MOU signed signified commitment by both parties to work together towards realizing the common goals, purposely the pursuit of talented training through provision of expert personnel to impart skills to the students, hire of interns as well as offering Scholarships for the best engineering students.

Jiang Ji Qing the Chinese economic chancellor at the Chinese embassy in Kampala said the collaboration with Makerere University was not only about construction but also for capacity building and sharing knowledge. 'we have quite a lot of construction companies in Uganda. CCCC has a lot of experience in East Africa and the world and therefore with over twenty years of experience would like to grow up with young talent who need to see in real life what construction is all about', she said.

She said with the vast work undertaken in Uganda to date, CCCC had fulfilled its corporate social responsibility function with a number of communities supported in various ways citing the example of scholarships for the students from the fishing communities in Entebbe.

While talking in the capacity of the Dean, School of Engineering, Dr. Abubaker Wasswa expressed optimism that the entire college would benefit from the newly acquired friendship between CEDAT and CCCC through the advancement of the impact of knowledge to both staff and students.

The visiting entourage was taken on a guided tour of the various laboratories in the College of Engineering that included the Public Health and Environmental Engineering Lab, the water resources Lab, the structural lab, the soil lab and the Highways lab.

Significant concerns raised included limited space available in most of the labs, inadequate equipment, a number of which was old, amidst the limited financial resources available for proper maintenance of the equipment that is vital for teaching engineering students.