
UoN hosts ACU Centenary Celebrations



(Left) Cabinet Secretary for Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Prof. Jacob Kaimenyi and Prof. George Magoha, Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi during the Conference.

The University of Nairobi made history by hosting the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) Conference to be held in Africa.

The Conference which has been organized by the University of Nairobi (UoN) in conjunction with the ACU is part of the Associations' centenary celebrations 2013 and a follow up from last year's gender conference. The opening ceremony was held in Taifa Hall.

While officially opening conference themed 'Enhancing Gender Equity in the Leadership and Management of Higher Education' on behalf of the Deputy President of Kenya, Hon. William Ruto, Cabinet Secretary for Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Prof. Jacob Kaimenyi, commended the Association for choosing Kenya as the ideal venue for their 100 years celebrations. He said the Conference was timely and relevant to Kenya as the country seeks to address issues of gender balance. He called on the delegates to share information and experiences, brainstorm and deliver appropriate strategies in dealing with the issue.



In his remarks, Prof. George Magoha, Vice-Chancellor, UoN, welcomed the delegates saying that the Conference was relevant as higher education institutions in Kenya and the neighbouring countries, are grappling with transformational changes, key among such changes is mainstreaming gender and diversity in access to education. Prof. Magoha said that ACU's mission is a clarion call to universities and other higher education institutions to ensure that programmes offered are relevant and in line with international standards. The University of Nairobi is among the 540 members of ACU, which is a strong professional network of universities.

Prof. Olive Mugenda, Vice-Chancellor, Kenyatta University and ACU council member, gave the key note address challenging institutions of higher learning to embrace gender equity by empowering women and giving them an opportunity to grow academically and in their careers. In her presentation, Prof. Mugenda took the participants through the challenges faced in enhancing gender equity in the leadership and management of higher education.

Speaking on behalf of ACU, Dorothy Garland said that through the ACU's centenary theme *future forward: design, develop, deliver* the Association will address the important debates on the future of international higher education. This allows the ACU to examine what lies ahead in the sector and engage in meaningful debates with members to tackle some of the challenges they face. She said that the initiative is member-led and that it seeks to engage stakeholders in the key challenges facing higher education today.

Following the official opening of the conference, a four day Training-of-Trainers workshop on Women, Gender and Leadership in Higher Education will be held at Lillian Towers. The workshop aims at developing a network of highly trained and confident professional key trainers who will be equipped to collaborate extensively across the region, draw on each other's strengths, strengthen each other's weaknesses. Together, they will not only establish and deliver sustainable management development programmes for women in higher education in the region but also introduce such other initiatives to embed equitable gender practices.