

# Ford Foundation to fund renovation of Taifa Hall

The University of Nairobi (UoN) has been awarded a grant of \$ 500,000 to renovate and modernize the Taifa Hall.

This was revealed during a public lecture by Ford Foundation President Luis A. Ubiñas held at UoN last month. The well attended public lecture was part of the Foundation's 50th anniversary in Eastern Africa celebrations and it is befitting that it was held in Taifa Hall, famous as a place of rich history with intellectual debates dating back to close to 40 years ago. In introductory remarks, Prof. George Magoha officially welcomed the guests and audience to the University and challenged the guest speaker to speak freely to the attentive audience.

While reflecting on the five decades of progress, opportunities and challenges in Eastern Africa, President Ubiñas commended Kenya for the great strides the country has made since independence. He said that every Kenyan, young or old has a special responsibility to make this country better and called upon the youth to take



Ford Foundation President Luis Ubiñas with Vice-Chancellor, Prof. George Magoha.

their rightful role as leaders rather than being used as pawns by politicians. He urged Kenyans to embrace the "I can make it" spirit which calls for people to be active in choosing all their leaders. This echoes a call being made in all gatherings asking the educated to take charge of how they will be governed.

The partnership between the Foundation and the UoN dates back to 1962 when the first grant

was given. In total, Ford Foundation has supported the University in various activities to the tune of USD 5 million. Among such activities include supporting the School of Journalism and Mass Communication to hold conferences, and build capacity as a centre of excellence in communication, media training and practices. It has also supported the Institute for Development Studies to conduct research

on rethinking social movements, and student voices in governance of higher education institutions.

The interaction which was aired live on Citizen TV was moderated by Julie Gichuru of Royal Media Services. Also present was Chief Justice Dr. Willy Mutunga, Ford Foundation Representative for Eastern Africa, Maurice Makoloo and top University of Nairobi Management.

**The partnership between the foundation and the UoN dates back to 1962 when the first grant was given.**