



Paris trip is shaping my dream of space exploration

BY MARY MUSIMIRE
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

On 15th May, 2012 the Ariane 5 rocket was launched in the first ever dual satellite launch, sending two satellites, one for Japan and another for Vietnam into space. I was present at this rocket launch and I can say it was an experience to behold.

However, it all goes back to 1st August, 2011 the day I submitted an essay on the possible uses of satellite technology and how it can be leveraged for development in Africa. This was the first ever DSTV Eutelsat Star Awards, a continental writing and art competition that was started with the aim of encouraging African students to be innovative about the possible uses of satellite technology in Africa. As the best entry award winner, I won a trip for myself and guardian to witness the live rocket launch. This was a dream come true for me as I have always taken keen interest in the space industry and now hope to work there someday.

I left for France still undecided as to what career I would like to pursue. All that changed after a visit to the Guiana Space centre and Eutelsat offices and facilities. Being in the same room with a half built Russian Soyuz rocket, satellite and interacting with engineers of all sorts was all it took to convince me that my heart was for space.

This trip has already played a big role in impacting my future; it has given me a new dream and a focus, as I hope to work in the space industry someday.

However, it was also an eye opener as I realized the extent to which Africa is lagging behind in utilizing space technology for her development. Many problems have plagued and

continue to plague the continent; from unemployment, inherent poverty to natural disasters, to cyclical civil conflicts and famine.

Satellite applications have proved to be of great value to humanity, both as a means of resource utilization and as a catalyst for the growth and development of other industries. In many space-advanced countries, development in the space industry has resulted in innovation and has stimulated research to use various spinoffs from the space industry. These countries have continued to expand upon their application of space technology far beyond the initial aims of reaching above Earth for communication, environmental monitoring, management, and, more recently, navigation.

For a long time, African countries continued to use space resources without venturing as major space players due mostly to the lack of funding and basic infrastructure.

However, a few African countries have taken the initiative to develop Space programs and Agencies for themselves.

Uganda is not part. Until the government realizes the need to move on and catch up with the rest of the world in the space industry, we as Ugandans are going to continue missing out on the benefits of applying satellite technology for development.

Some of these benefits include better environment and resource management, better urban planning, better communication even to remote areas etc using satellite remote sensing and imagery applications. In addition, the job opportunities available in the space industry are enough to help us stop worrying about unemployment for the young generation.

There is need for the government to start investing in space through education if we are

to take even one step forward. The initiative to set-up education institutions specially for modeling the various electrical, mechanical, computer and many other engineers to work in the space industry needs to be taken.

I strongly believe the government needs to focus on educating and preparing the youth for this industry as the continent is moving to create a continental space agency to serve Africa's needs and Uganda will need to be represented should this be a success.

The development of an African space agency has been proposed to coordinate and link the various isolated scientists around the continent. The idea is still in its infancy but if modeled after the ESA (European Space Agency), it could go a long way to championing space activities in Africa.

Space is a costly venture to take on alone. Uganda does not have the kind of income and expertise to set up her own space agency or even build and launch her own satellites just yet.

Uganda therefore needs to join arms with the rest of the continent to work on a continental space agency because although African countries are joining the space race 50 years after the Sputnik launch, for African countries it is not so much about space exploration as it about a race against poverty, food insecurity, natural disasters, and environmental degradation.

"Someday in the future, may an African look at the sky and see beyond the stars, may he see cities growing, industries developing and the environment being reborn, the children being fed. May he see satellites further developing Africa!"



The writer, Ms Mary Musimire in Paris at the Guiana space center last month. COURTESY PHOTO.

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

Cables: "MAKUNIKA"



Tel: Gen. 256-41-532631/4 Direct: 542096

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Academic Registrar of Makerere University invites applications for admission to Graduate Programmes (Postgraduate Diplomas, Masters and Doctoral degree Programmes) for the 2012/2013 Academic Year. Applicants should have obtained at least a first degree or its equivalent from a recognized and chartered university/institution.

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All Graduate Programmes are **PRIVATELY-SPONSORED**. Therefore applicants seeking sponsorship should have their applications endorsed by their respective sponsors where applicable. Applicants should note that the various fees payable to the University indicated for the various programmes **EXCLUDE** functional fees, accommodation, books, research and other expenses.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES	TUITION FEES PER ANNUM (SHILLINGS/USD)	
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2 Master of Business Administration (Evening)	Shs.3,000,000/=	USD2,206
3 MSc. in Accounting and Finance	Shs.2,800,000/=	USD1,780
4 MSc. in Marketing	Shs.2,590,000/=	USD1,780
5 Master of Human Resource Management	Shs.2,520,000/=	USD1,780
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7 MSc. in Leadership and Governance	Shs.2,800,000/=	USD1,780
8 MSc. in Entrepreneurship	Shs.2,800,000/=	USD1,780
9 M.A. in Economic Policy Management	Shs.2,875,000/=	USD2,014
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11 Master of Hospitality and Tourism Management	Shs.2,875,000/=	USD2,014
12 Master of Business Administration (Modular)	Shs.4,200,000/=	USD2,626
13 MSc. in Banking & Investment Management	Shs.2,875,000/=	USD2,014

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- Hard copies of application forms are obtainable from the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training, 3rd Floor, Senate Building, Room 307 after payment of an application fee of **Ug.shs 50,000/=** (Ugandan applicants) or **Ug. Shs. 151,500** (International Applicants) to any Stanbic Bank Branch and DFCU Bank in favour of the Makerere University Council. International applicants should pay by bank draft as cheques will not be honoured. Bank pay-in-slips are obtainable from the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training, Room 307.
- The Account Name is Makerere University Fees Collection Account numbers: **0140018690001** for Stanbic Bank and **01013500181512** for DFCU Bank.
- Application forms can also be down loaded from our Website: <http://www.makerere.ac.ug/graduateschool>.
- Completed application forms should be returned to the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training, Room 307 and must be accompanied by **relevant supporting certified copies** of certificates, and academic transcripts, and the letters of referees. Please strictly observe the **closing date of 20th June, 2012**.

Alfred Masikye Namoh
ACADEMIC REGISTRAR