



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS

REMARKS BY THE HON. MINISTER OF STATE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.

HON DR. JOHN CHRYSYDOM MUYINGO

AT THE RELEASE OF THE APPROVED SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS' LOAN  
SCHEME BENEFICIARIES FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/2024

5<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2024

- **THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' FINANCING BOARD**
  - **MEMBERS OF THE BOARD**
  - **THE PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS**
  - **STAFF FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS**
  - **STAFF FROM THE BOARD**
  - **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS**
  - **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**
- 

On behalf of the Ministry of Education and Sports, I would like to welcome you all and thank you most sincerely for joining us as we release the long-awaited list of Student Loan Beneficiaries for the Academic Year 2023/24.

On behalf of the Ministry of Education, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Higher Education Students' Financing Board for their unwavering commitment and diligence in managing the student loan process for the Academic Year 2023/24. Despite the unique challenges faced this year, the Board persevered with dedication and professionalism to ensure that students received the financial support they needed to pursue their higher education goals.

This year's release brings on board the 10<sup>th</sup> Cohort of Students Loan Scheme Beneficiaries since the Scheme was inaugurated by His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni in 2014. You may recall that the Students' Loan Scheme was born out of the 2011 Presidential Manifesto following the success of our initial universal education initiatives which brought thousands of learners to the education cycle.

The Government of Uganda is committed to increasing equitable access to Higher Education. The Board was recently given a total of UShs. 13.958 Billion to pay off the outstanding domestic arrears owed to the Tertiary Institutions and also support a new cohort of Learners in the academic year 2023/2024. I would like to inform the Universities that all the outstanding arrears are going to be paid off before the close of the financial year 2023/2024.

I am happy to note that, the 1,196 Beneficiaries being added to the Scheme today increases the number to 14,601 student loan beneficiaries. These learners were selected from 1,921 applicants who applied this academic year and were finding difficulties in raising costs for their education. There is a very high chance that many of these students would have missed

out on Higher Education if it were not for this strategic government intervention.

I would therefore like us to applaud the NRM Government for continuing to innovate and introduce programs that uplift our people and position them to compete and succeed in the academic arena.

We recognize that there is need for more funding to capitalize the Higher Education Students' Financing Board. The demand for student loans has certainly surpassed the available resources. While initially, applicants averaged at 2000, the demand now outpaces the available resources with an average of more than 4,000 every year. This is a sign that the lower education interventions are working tremendously well.

My Ministry will seek audience with our counterparts at the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and colleagues in Parliament to lobby for increased funding for the Board so that a target of 3,000 learners' are supported each year in line with the current Board's approved Strategic plan.

It is also important to note that since the Board started operations, apart from the increasing number of qualified candidates, the number of Chartered Higher Education Institutions have increased from 12 initially to 23 currently; the number of accredited programs have also increased and this trajectory challenges the Board to support even more students who now have improved access to further education.

Despite the many challenges, the Board is registering up to at least 40% of former beneficiaries paying back part of their loan obligations including those who are clearing their loans before the end of the grace period. While the Scheme provides for rescheduling of the Loan repayments in cases of no income, I call upon all our beneficiaries to make every effort and deposit their monthly installments so that those coming after them can also receive similar support.

I would also like to commend the Secretariat for the great job done in extending awareness about the Students' Loan Scheme and automating the processes for loan applications. This has facilitated country wide knowledge of the Scheme and is encouraging the study of Sciences in our secondary schools.

The Ministry would like to encourage more female students to apply for support under the Scheme. Despite the low number of applicants from this gender, the affirmative action which offers female applicants 7-extra points ensured all the eligible female candidates that applied for the students' loan scheme were successful. The successful female applicants as already stated by the Chairperson of the Board were 317(26.5%). I would like to encourage the girl child to always take up this offer as they stand high chances of getting the government support.

I am glad to note that a total of 74 Districts had all their applicants successful that saw most applicants from Northern Region leading in the total awards while all the 11 Persons with Disabilities were successful this year. I applaud the Board on the special affirmative action intervention which I would like to encourage you to continue with.

I congratulate all those who have been selected for study loans in this academic year. I call upon them to work hard in their studies, remain disciplined and focused. All successful candidates should remember that in today's competitive world, it's not enough to pass. You must excel in whatever

you do in order to access opportunities that will ease repayment of the loans that government is awarding.

Lastly, allow me, once again, to thank and applaud the Members of the Higher Education Students' Financing Board and Staff at the Secretariat for the tireless effort and good work done. I want to equally thank all the stakeholders including Members of Parliament, Ministry of Education Staff, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and Universities among others, for the continued support to the Board.

I want to also recognize the good work that is being done by the press to promote government programs especially in the Education Sector. Without your timely and relentless reporting, many people would miss out on the various opportunities presented by important government programs like the students loan scheme. Please keep up the good work.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is now my honor to release the Students Loan award list of the 10<sup>th</sup> cohort of successful loan beneficiaries for the Academic Year 2023/2024 under the Students' Loan Scheme. I congratulate the successful student loan beneficiaries and wish them success in their studies.

Thank you for listening to me.

**For God and My Country**

Hon Dr. J.C Muyingo

Minister of State for Higher Education