

THE UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM



A UNIVERSITY STUDENTS CENTRE:

Brief Description

The University of Dar es Salaam is understandably hailed as the oldest and most comprehensive of universities in Tanzania. It was inaugurated on 25th October 1961. At the time of its foundation, it was the third of the three colleges that formed the University of East Africa, namely Makerere University College, the University College of Nairobi and the University College Dar es Salaam. All these were *nurtured* and *weaned off* by the University of London. At the 50th anniversary celebrations of its foundation, in November 2011, the University of Dar es Salaam seized the opportunity of jubilation to reflect on her achievements, her problems and challenges in the last fifty years as well as her prospects over the next fifty years. One undeniable point of success and pride pointed out was the fact that the University had played a proper role of an *Alma Mater* to tens of thousands who had since then played fitting roles in serving their mother-country Tanzania, her institutions and the wider community in various capacities as teachers, lawyers, physicians, administrators, diplomats, engineers, business executives, legislators and many others! And, at that, the University (UDSM)—not surprisingly—had done much to “educate and mentor” a nation in terms of a critical mass of versatile workers and professionals over the five generations of nation-building in Tanzania.

At a Convocation Symposium in November 2011, all members in attendance at the Convocation Symposium (forming a sizeable representation of the University’s alumni, alumnae, teachers and senior administrators) agreed to endorse the idea of setting up a ‘University Students Centre’ on campus. This was a novel idea meant to meet two needs. First, the students centre would be a solution to a number of problems students had encountered for a long time – of a lack of a “one-stop centre” for comprehensive social services such resting-and-reading spaces, stationery stores and quick refectory supplies during waiting hours for scheduled classes. The second and even more novel need was a ‘brooding-centre’ or ‘hatchery’ for creative concepts that needed interim intellectual and practical experimentation and/or possible transfer through wider community outreach. The philosophy and rationalisation lying behind the kind of Students Centre the basis of the kind of social engineering and good practice that was desired for change, with which some of the ‘pioneering’ universities the world over had turned their students into creative world leaders in various spheres of life. The list of examples of successful world-scale transformative ideas and the associated ex-Student-Centre-laureates who turned into world leaders was provided as evidence. For full information and details on this, please contact the University’s Directorate of Internationalisation, Convocation

and Advancement (DICA) at e-mail address dirs@admin.udsm.ac.tz or advudsm@gmail.com which will send you a copy of the comprehensive writ-up on this project.

Cost of the Centre and the State of Implementation

Financing of the project (the Students Centre) was envisaged to take two (2) phases, namely fund-raising for the first stage of physical construction/‘Framework’, followed by a next stage of ‘Roofing and finishing’ (i.e. furnishing and installation of equipment). Construction of the structure had been estimated to cost TShs. 3,612,000,000/= [3.612 billion], while the next stage of roofing and finishing the building would be 3,000,000,000/= [3.0 billion]. The grand total for the entire project would be about TShs. 6,612,000,000/= [≈ 6.62 billion].

Collections from contributions as from the time of the 2011 Convocation Symposium, up to May 2019, had amounted to a total of TShs. 3,136,819,350/= [≈ 3.137 billion], this leaving some 3,475,180,650/= shillings [≈ 3.475 billion] yet to be raised. With the TShs. 3,136,819,350/= (US\$1,369,431.00) collected by 21 October 2018, the *Contractor has been paid for the first phase* and he is on site waiting for the second phase. In brief, the first phase of construction (‘Framework’; physical construction) is completed and paid for. It is the second phase—worth 3,475,180,650/= shillings¹ (for ‘Roofing and finishing’)—that is yet to be financed.

Appeal for Support

It is for this amount, namely TSh. **3,475,180,650/=** shillings (an equivalent of US\$1,517,149.00), that the University and its entire Convocation membership is now appealing to all alumni (i.e. her esteemed men and women graduates), her past and present teachers and senior administrators, institutions and indeed all friends of the University, affiliates and well-wishers far and near to come to her assistance and support. A *Students Centre* is, among other things, a ‘*brooding and gestation centre*’ for innovative ideas that men and women acquire and apply to the transformation of their society and the world around them. While UDSM must plant the seeds of knowledge and skill through the conventional methods all universities employ, she must also take uniquely innovative ways to anticipate and indeed cultivate strategies for a competitive future towards cutting-edge competences and innovations in the advancement of Tanzania (and the East African region in general) as we march steadily towards a middle-level industrial economy.

The University of Dar es Salaam Convocation and the University of Dar es Salaam community in general do stand together in appealing to all graduates and all well-wishers to come forward and support this noble cause. It is a humble appeal for such a solidarity and patronage that will obviously leave a mark not only on the young university students today but also on the generations of creators and leaders in the years to come. Any amount in donation—

¹ This is an equivalent of US\$1,517,149.00, based on the exchange rate of US\$1.00 to Tanzania sh. 2,290.60 as at 21 October 2018.

be it TShs.10,000/-, 100,000/-, 500,000/-, a million, 10 million, just any—will be greatly appreciated. It will be acknowledged by issue of an official UDSM receipt note, along with regular debriefing on progress reports. As well, associated announcement of events will be rendered at every milestone reached.



The architect's impression of the proposed students centre at the University of Dar es Salaam



A latest picture of the on-going construction of the Students Centre at the University Main [Mwl. Julius Nyerere] Campus

For more information and the detailed project write-up, please contact →

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