

Makerere, French Embassy to promote education

By Faith Amongin

Campus France, a French national agency, has opened an office at Makerere University the first of the kind, within the international affairs department.

The agency, a partnership between the French Embassy and Makerere University, aims at promoting higher education and student mobility (international) by providing them with relevant information.

Some of the main objectives of the office are to simplify French procedures for the reception of foreign students and researchers in an increasingly competitive environment.

It is also aimed at improving the conditions for the reception and stay in France of foreign students.

The office is also to manage French government scholarships and foreign government scholarships granted to foreign students staying in France on both individual and group basis for the purpose of training and gathering of information or research among other goals. This is expected to increase the number of foreign students in France in the coming years while preserving the quality of their reception.

Speaking French according to Stephanie Rivoal, the French ambassador to Uganda, is not a requirement, because over 1,400 programmes are offered in English.

During the launch of the Campus France office on Tuesday, Rivoal, however, noted that learning French is essential as this easily creates employment opportunities in and outside Uganda.

The First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Janet Museveni, who was represented by the Minister for General Duties in the Office of the Prime Minister Mary Karoro Okurut, appreciated the initiative by the French Embassy, stating that this will help open a door for the Ugandan scholars and researchers to readily access greater opportunities.

Dr Ernest Okello Ogwang, the acting vice-chancellor, hailed the French government for the initiative stating that this would help improve the relations between the people of France and Uganda through cultural exchanges in which Makerere would play the leading role.

Ogwang said a Memorandum of Understanding between the French Embassy and Makerere University was signed last year in September with the aim of promoting cultural, linguistic, higher education and research co-operation in Uganda.