

By Nelson Kiya

# YOUTH URGED TO TAKE UP CHINA OPPORTUNITIES

Ugandan youth elite have been told to position themselves to tap into the benefits being occasioned by the deepening China-Uganda relations.

The chargé d'affaires at the Chinese embassy, Fan Xuecheng, said young people were critical for the meaningful, warmer strategic co-operation between Kampala and Beijing.

He was speaking during the China-Uganda youth people-to-people and cultural exchange reception hosted at the Chinese embassy at Kololo in Kampala on Thursday.

Fan stressed that the China-Uganda relations, since upgraded to a comprehensive strategic co-operative partnership, have availed a lot of opportunities to the

young people of the two brotherly nations. He said these prospects are not limited to trade and investment, but expand to education and cultural exchanges, among others.

Fan encouraged the young people to embrace the "dragon-horse spirit" while leveraging the warm bilateral relations between Kampala and Beijing.

The metaphor "dragon horse spirit" in Chinese refers to a

state of vigour and vitality or it symbolises power, good fortune and resilience, combining the strength of the dragon, which represents power and good fortune and the speed and perseverance of the horse.

"We have a very wide spectrum of co-operation with Uganda and we have already seen the results. Investors are coming and investing in the industrial parks. For instance, in Mbale Industrial Park, more than 10,000 jobs have already been created for young employees," Fan said.

He added: "Of course, they need well-educated young Ugandans for management. For example, we have launched the year for people-to-people exchange, and in this year, there will be many activities we will organise, such as cultural movies, language weeks, and the Confucius Institute will go to schools. But also, in China we will organise some seminars and many others."

Fan reiterated that China-Uganda trade has hit record levels, with Uganda's exports

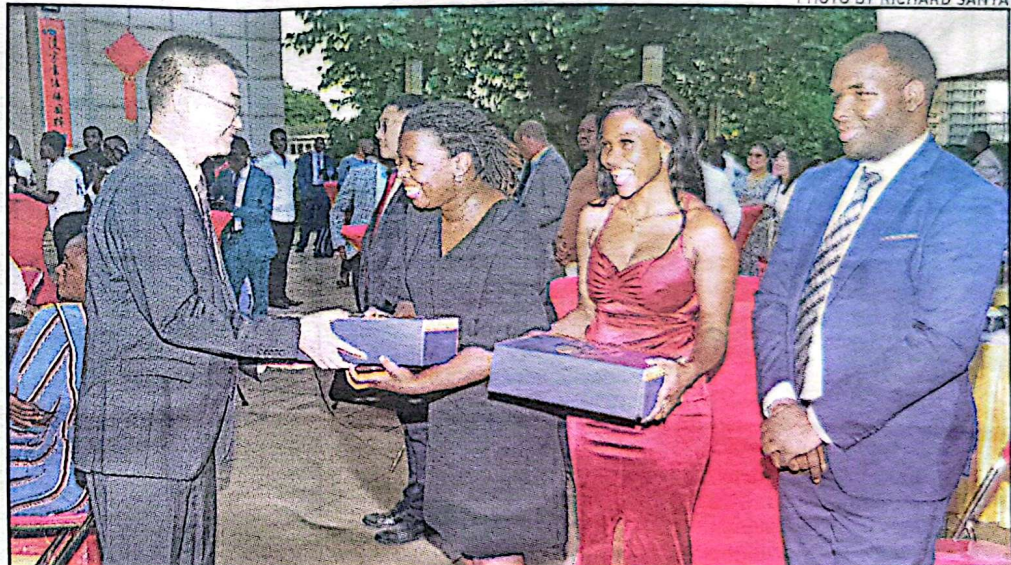


PHOTO BY RICHARD SANJA

Fan (left) gifting Dr Julia Linda Ainemukama. Second-right is Gloria Nakiwogga, a student and Africanano Omongole, a lawyer (right). This was during the China-Uganda youth people-to-people and cultural exchange reception hosted at the Chinese embassy in Kololo, Kampala on Thursday

to China reaching \$84m (sh296.9b) in the first half of 2025 alone, marking a 97.8% year-on-year increase. The total trade volume between the two countries, Fan said,

exceeded \$1.5b (sh5.3 trillion). Fan said China has also granted Uganda 100% zero-tariff treatment on its exports, boosting sectors like agriculture. He said Uganda's

coffee exports to China surged by 190% year-on-year as of March 2025 and China has become Uganda's second-largest coffee export market in Asia.

## CHINA, UGANDA RELATIONS LAUDED

Dr Allawi Ssemanda, the executive director at Development Watch Centre, while addressing the over 80 participants at the China-Uganda youth people-to-people and cultural exchange reception, said the youth exchange is timely and the way to go.

He said the Chinese government's commitment to increasing scholarships for African students is not charity, but an investment in a shared destiny.

"When a Ugandan student befriends a Chinese classmate in Beijing, they are not just networking. They are building immunity against future misunderstanding."