

Foreword by the Dean

Religion tells us that words hold untold power. That the simple words 'let there be ...' brought the entire universe into existence, that mere words rendered the sun motionless, and that words themselves became flesh, and once transmuted, gave hope to the poor, healed the sick, and resurrected the dead, among other miracles.

Our own African history is replete with stories of prophets who foretold imperialism, elders who administered oral oaths to inspire liberators, and luminaries who declared Africa's independence.

The world is about words. Clearly. Therefore, who speaks is important, what they say, and from which vantage point. In academic circles where written words are the currency, we lost nearly all battles before we were invited to join the war. The northerners dominate critical academic institutions and the entire knowledge industry. They are the authors of knowledge, including knowledge about us. It is the northerners who narrated our history, defined our present, and are now busy shaping our future. They write and say their words for African intellectuals to repeat after them like the late Prof Micere Mugo's *kasuku*. It is worse for the female youth of Africa as the knowledge industry continues to be the domain of a few male northerners.

In one fell swoop, *Kabarak Law Review* (KLR) dethrones nearly all these hegemonies. Just two issues down the line, KLR has proven to be the forum for youthful African scholars, both male and female. And they are seizing the platform to ventilate matters close to their hearts. In this issue, two youthful Africans write memorable odes to two pioneer African scholars of international law, Taslim Olawale Elias and Bonaya Adhi Godana, who northern scholarship would rather ignore. Our

youthful scholars also give an African touch to international trade law, international humanitarian law, and matrimonial property law, which continues to suffocate under the challenge of the duality of laws caused by colonialism. This issue carries a rare gem – our student’s experience of reverse learning under our most eminent member of faculty, Prof Willy Mutunga, Chief Justice Emeritus of the Republic of Kenya.

May KLR continue to be a ‘liberated zone’. May it amplify the voices of African youth. Male, female and others. May it say our stories. And may it say them from our standpoints. KLR will speak words that strengthen our systems of law; words that build. As long as I am Dean of Kabarak Law School, where KLR is hosted, I shall guard this revolutionary platform. Jealously.

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