



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY DR. JOE BARRAGE WANJUI
CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI ON
THE OCCASION OF THE 32ND GRADUATION
CEREMONY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI HELD
ON FRIDAY 11TH MARCH, 2005**

The Minister for Education

The Chairman of the University Council

Our Chief Guest-

Distinguished Guests

Members of Academic Staff

Graduands

Parents and Guardians

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my singular pleasure to welcome all of you to this gathering; indeed this is a special and momentous occasion, when we celebrate the 32nd graduation ceremony of the University of Nairobi.

I must take this opportunity to congratulate the graduands seated here. You made the right choice when you joined this institution; it is the oldest, largest, most diverse, complex dynamic and advanced. You found your level and worked hard to be the best you could be. This is an important day in your life therefore, and we are proud of you. Let me remind you that your parents and your community have sacrificed in order to see you

through the University. You must justify the hopes and sacrifices of various people.

The world that you are about to join certainly values hard work. But the world places a higher premium on success. To be successful, you should focus on working smart not harder and to get it right first time.

Ladies and gentlemen, the University will not relent in its pursuit of excellence and its resolve to maintain high academic standards. We are part of the global village where the only constant is change. There is need to change the way in which we do things. The reforms that

have started in the Universities emphasise the option for best practices and management. This indicates the need for dynamic, motivated and highly dynamic managers. At the University of Nairobi, we have embraced change by recruiting the Chief Executive through a transparent, competitive process.

Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to formally introduce to you, Prof George Albert Omore Magoha, The Vice Chancellor of the University of Nairobi. This no doubt is a highly demanding appointment, but with teamwork and a passion for excellence, the way forward is easy. Other

appointments will follow, so that performance, and standards are firmly anchored within the University.

Our Chief Guest, Universities have been challenged by the Government to generate their own funds to supplement what is available from the exchequer. To generate or degenerate is the dilemma facing all of us. How have we responded to this challenge;

1. Through mounting programs which are relevant to the job market and industry,
2. We have been responsive to utilising resources efficiently and without wastage,

3. By responding to the global revolution through re-examining the structures of management in an innovative manner, and
4. By being responsive to the social needs through community service.

In the past negative behaviour among the students has given this institution a bad image. In the new dispensation, indiscipline will not be tolerated. We will emphasise the need for strong discipline among staff and students, law and order will be maintained.

The benefits of orderliness are that the University will be able to mount and run programs on time, better self management and better self image. Ultimately, a disciplined individual has better prospects in life, and they appeal to employers.

Honoured guests, for the University to maintain its position as the premier institution of higher learning in the region, and in the face of various challenges, the University is consolidating the concept of meritocracy among its staff. Granted then, there will be other changes in our vision of a new University based on contractual performance, standards and excellence. The

challenge facing the University is to create teams of highly motivated professionals with a passion for results. With the right individual at the helm of management, enhancing competent and dedicated professionals who are passionate about sustained effective performance and high standards is relatively easy.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we as a University will be inundated with questions like whether this only affect the big offices and how far down we are moving. The reality is that the changes at the University of Nairobi are in tandem with reforms taking place in the higher education sub sector.

To evaluate our achievements, we are determined to use Alumni, industry and friends to act as our mirror for results. We have launched the Alumni Association emboldened by the fact that it is they, the past student, the friend and industry that can partner with us in the quest for excellence. I urge all of you to join us to ensure that our institution remains a centre of excellence in the region.

Once again, I congratulate the graduands today for their achievement. I also thank all our guests for finding time to join us in this auspicious occasion.