



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

**REMARKS BY MR. JOHN P. N. SIMBA, CHAIRMAN,
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI COUNCIL, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE 42ND GRADUATION
CEREMONY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI AT
THE CHANCELLOR'S COURT ON FRIDAY
DECEMBER 4, 2009**

Dr. Joseph Barrage Wanjui, Chancellor of the University of Nairobi

Formatted: Font: 12 pt

Hon. Dr. Sally Kosgei, MP, Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology

Prof. G. A. O. Magoha, Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi

Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors from other sister universities

Council Members

University Staff

Parents and Guardians

Graduands

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the University Council, I take this opportunity to welcome you all to the University of Nairobi and, in particular to to-day's the 42nd graduation ceremony. ~~of this great academic institution.~~

Formatted: Bottom: 1"

~~Further, special In-particular, I~~ congratulations ~~go-go eto all-theall~~ ~~the~~ 42nd graduands ~~without whom today may not have happened.~~ ~~This ceremony is testimony to for their~~ ~~your-hardyour hard~~ work and ~~remaining focused on the purpose which brought you here in the first place.~~ All ~~those-attendingthose attending~~ this occasion- ~~inelu ding- including~~ your parents, relatives, guardians, friends, faculty - have come to bear witness to your success and share in your joy. Sacrifices have been made by those who, in numerous ways supported, encouraged, and provided a shoulder to lean on even as you thought the challenges before you insurmountable. As you ~~savor—thesavor the moment spare a thought for them.~~ ~~endurance that ultimately culminated in this occasion. I know it was no mean task for both parents and students as both of you sacrificed a lot of resources and time to ensure that you successfully complete your academic engagements. Once—Once~~ ~~Aagain,~~ congratulations.

Mr. Chancellor sir, this is the fifth year that the University of Nairobi is successfully holding two graduation ceremonies in a year. ~~This, This was~~, after your appeal in 2005 that students who complete studies early should not spend a long time waiting for other groups to finish before graduating. Since then, Council has actually appreciated the advantages that have accrued from this system. Notably, releasing students early to pursue their dreams,dreams, exploit opportunities and save the University

management the logistical challenges ~~logistical nightmare~~ of organizing a congregation of more than 7,000 graduands at ago. Indeed it has become popular as other as many of our sister institutions ~~universities~~ universities have adopted it. On behalf of the University Council, let me I would like to thank you for this practical initiative, your wise counsel on this issue. With acquisition of university education becoming a priority for many Kenyans- both in formal and informal economic activities, the number of graduands is likely to grow in tandem which will require that further thoughts be given on how best to utilize the time available for a graduation ceremony.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the Council has embraced a growth and improvement strategy for the University. With the momentum picked five years ago, Council approved the current strategic plan which when fully implemented, will witness improved and modernized physical facilities (—in fact Mr. Chancellor you inaugurated some of these early in the year), systems, structures and effective responsiveness and service delivery to both the internal and external customers of the University. will give the University of Nairobi a cutting edge over its counterparts at both national and regional levels. Although significant progress has been made under the leadership of Prof. Magoha, a lot still remains to be done. However, Our the major biggest challengee, however, handicap in meeting our objectives as stated in the strategic plan is accessing laek of adequate funding. Mr. Chancellor, Sir allow me to address this issue at two levels, Firstly, Currently, we only receive about 40% of our budget is from the government capitation, which is not even enough to pay salaries. The shortfall has to be while met the balance is derived from our internally generated funds and other benefactors especially for research. This scenario leaves the

University ~~with a very thin financial base -from which to operate on a shoe string budget, thus slowing down our agenda.~~ ~~My~~ I therefore appeal to the government, through our parent Ministry, ~~-is~~ to raise capitation ~~so that it to the University of Nairobi to~~ at the very least, covers staff emoluments. This will in turn release more funds for development, research and other activities at the University. ~~Secondly, the Council together with the management,management~~ ~~is always searching for ways and means --of increasing internally generated funds to supplement government capitation by, among other ways, optimally utilizing university assets. In this respect, my request is -that is that the approval process -relating process relating to establishment of Public Private Partnerships -be hastened to enable faster implementation of identified projects to exploit available opportunities. Once such projects are implemented, the university will create additional income -streams income streams, eventually easing the pressure on the government purse.~~

~~Talking of staff remuneration, I would like to Mr. Chancellor, Sir recently the thank the~~ government ~~for implementeding~~ part of the collective bargaining agreement with the three unions representing different cadres of staff with a promise for full implementation by March 2010. ~~Let me thank the -This gesture indicated that the~~ government ~~for this is~~ ~~commitment committed~~ to ~~improvement the of staff welfare of our staff.~~ ~~I -aAlso, let me commend me commend~~ our unions for being patient ~~and displaying mature behaviour~~ when the government was processing the implementation schedule. I ~~trust that hope~~ this ~~positive~~ spirit from ~~all sides the government and our staff is - will be~~ upheld for the good of our institution ~~and avert any disruptions to our programmes.~~

As I conclude, let me thank all those who have made the academic year culminating to-day to be a success; to you Mr. Chancellor for your continued support and always challenging us to do better; the government through our parent Ministry for their support and urging us to be frugal but give value for any funds we get; to my colleagues on the council for your support; to Prof. Magoha and his management team and the entire staff for their commitment to making the university a world class institution; to all our financial supporters for enabling our scientists and researchers to broaden the frontiers of knowledge. In this respect allow me to specifically thank Barclays Bank of Kenya for endowing a Chair in Finance and Accounting at the School of Business; to the students and student leadership for your understanding and proving that constructive engagement always achieves more. As you leave this institution to seek other opportunities, you will encounter an inspiring and welcoming atmosphere that has been jointly cultivated by the entire University community and other stakeholders. This will give you a head start and a boost of confidence when some companies shied away from our graduates because of perceived indiscipline. I am optimistic that you will enjoy the next phase of your life the way you did at the University of Nairobi.

To the graduands, I wish you every success as you follow your dreams and passion.

Mr. Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen, today is a celebration for your achievements and also kicks off a series of festivities synonymous with this month. I once again congratulate you for this achievement and wish you a **Happy Jamhuri Day celebrations** **Happy Jamhuri Day celebrations, a, —Joyousa Joyous Merry Christmas** and **Happy Festive Season as well as a Prosperous, 2010.**

Thank you and God Bless you.

John P.N. Simba

Chairman, University of Nairobi Council