



**SPEECH DELIVERED BY PROF. GEORGE A.O.  
MAGOHA, VICE-CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF  
NAIROBI DURING THE 42<sup>ND</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY  
AT THE CHANCELLOR'S COURT ON FRIDAY  
DECEMBER 4, 2009**

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

**Dr. Sally Kosgei, MP, Ministry for Higher Education Science & Technology**

**Your Excellencies the Ambassadors and High Commissioners**

**Prof. Crispus Kiamba, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology**

**Mr. John Simba, Chairman of University of Nairobi Council**

**Chancellors of other Universities present**

**Council members**

**University Officials**

**Parents and Guardians**

**Graduands**

**Prospective Students**

**Distinguished guests**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**I have great pleasure in welcoming you all to our 42<sup>nd</sup> Graduation ceremony. Your presence here today in such large numbers, is a source of joy and pride for us. May I therefore take this opportunity to congratulate all the graduands for completing their studies successfully. I would also like to congratulate all the parents, guardians, teachers and everyone else who in one way or the other contributed to your success.**

**As you are aware, Mr. Chancellor Sir, today's graduation ceremony is the second this year. The first ceremony involved graduands drawn from the Colleges of Agriculture**

**and Veterinary Sciences, Architecture and Engineering, Biological and Physical Sciences and Education and External Studies was held on September 18, 2009. This graduation ceremony today mainly draws graduands from the College of Health Sciences; and College of Humanities and Social Sciences. We are also mopping up graduands from the other colleges including the College of Education and External Studies.**

**The University of Nairobi is totally committed to the development of this nation and the realization of Vision 2030. We have not only increased the number of students admitted to the University but we also continue to offer relevant quality education to these young men and women**

**comparable to the best institutions of higher learning anywhere else in the world. Our alumni, who stand at over 110,000 comprise a key component of the highly skilled manpower that drives the national economy.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, the University of Nairobi has a well developed infrastructure which is constantly being improved. We, for example, recently completed Phase I of the 8-4-4 Halls of Residence at Lower Kabete Campus at the cost of KShs.39 million. These new halls of residence will accommodate an additional 110 students. We also completed the vertical extension of the School of Computing and Informatics at the cost of KShs.26 million, the expansion will provide additional office space for staff and urgently**

**needed ICT equipment. Other projects under construction include the Human Anatomy Annex at a cost of 43 million and the proposed lecture theatres and laboratories at the Kenya Science Campus at a cost of KShs.293 million. All these projects have been funded through internally generated resources.**

**Mr. Chancellor Sir, when you were appointed Chancellor six (6) years ago, you expressed your great concern about the very low level of discipline among students, which was eroding the good name and image of the University. The University management took immediate measures which included reorganizing the governance structures of the**

**University to allow student representation, and continuous dialogue with the student leadership.**

**Because of the above reforms, strikes are now a thing of the past at the University of Nairobi. Our academic programmes run smoothly without unnecessary disruption. The image of the University has improved tremendously as evidenced by the number of international dignitaries who continue to visit the University by choice. The local private sector in particular has come out strongly in support of the University through employing our graduates and sponsoring our academic programmes. In this regard therefore I wish to thank the Rattansi Educational Trust through Mrs. Vijoo Rattansi for their continued support, the Daisy Eye Cancer**

**Fund and the Starkey Foundation for donating equipment to the University. We thank our partners for their generosity and call upon other well wishers to come forward to support the University.**

**Mr. Chancellor Sir, the University of Nairobi has the largest number of students (46,000) in the region. We have campuses in Mombasa and Kisumu as well as a strong presence through the Extra Mural Centres in all the provinces. We have been able to open campuses in the two cities Mombasa and Kisumu in order to reach more learners, our mode of instruction has made it possible for adult learning. Our expansion programme is part of a well structured and thought out development strategy meant to**

**ensure the improvement of service delivery to our customers. All the campuses now have permanent staff based wherever they are located and our programmes remain of the highest standard.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, the University of Nairobi, as the premier institution of higher learning, has an important role to play in national development and attainment of Vision 2030. We have without doubt continued to play our part but we can do better. We shall in particular require more support from the government which at present stands at a mere 40 per cent of our budget. We do appreciate the challenges facing the government at the moment but the present level of funding is however too limited and imposes a huge burden**

**on the University management which has to raise 60 per cent of the recurrent budget and expenditure on its own. We wish to appeal to our partners, both local and international to come forward and support the development of our University. The above challenges notwithstanding, we shall not relent in our endeavour to transform the University into a world class institution of higher learning.**

**Mr. Chancellor Sir, the men and women before you have earned the honor that you are about to bestow upon them. They comprise 27 PhDs, 968 Masters, 25 Postgraduate Diplomas, 2,411 Bachelors and 268 Diplomas. We are proud of them because they have worked hard and excelled. We**

**have no doubt that they have been prepared well to fit into the world out there and to locate their place.**

**Mr. Chancellor Sir, the University of Nairobi has been a pace-setter in every regard. As you are aware, I am the first Vice-Chancellor of a public university in Kenya to attend the Stanford Executive Program which you personally nominated me for. I wish to report to you Sir, that the training was extremely useful and as a consequence we shall endeavour to raise funds to construct a University of Nairobi School of Business based on the Stanford model.**

**Mr. Chancellor Sir, one author once stated “If I have made it, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of others”. We as**

**the University Management have benefited immensely from standing on your shoulders. We have been able to set pace because of your firm but wise guidance and your deep support. You have been influential and effective in the positive changes that have occurred at the University in the past six years. Indeed Mr. Chancellor Sir, you remind me a little of my earlier mentor during my formative years as a student at Starehe Boys Centre, the Late Dr. Geoffrey Griffin who was equally firm but fair. We thank you. We wish to acknowledge the Council of the University under the leadership of Mr. John Simba which on its part has given management the direction required for the smooth running of the University. Chairman Simba, thank you very much.**

**I wish also to thank our students for their discipline, commitment and loyalty to this wonderful institution. It is because of you, that we are here today.**

**I would be remiss in my duty, Ladies and Gentlemen, if I did not sincerely thank the academic staff for taking the extra load which has helped us to generate income. I am equally grateful to all the other staff for their patience and for not resorting to industrial action over implementation of the new terms and conditions of service.**

**To my colleagues in the medical and dental fraternity, let me take this opportunity to most sincerely thank you for electing me overwhelmingly into the Medical Practitioners**

**and Dentists Board which lead to my appointment by government as the Chairman of the Board. I shall not let you down.**

**In concluding, I would like to once again congratulate all the graduands on their success and wish everyone a happy Christmas and prosperous new year.**