



SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE CABINET SECRETARY FOR MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROF. JACOB T. KAIMENYI, PHD, FICD, EBS, DURING THE 49TH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 23RD, 2013 AT THE CHANCELLOR'S COURT

The Chancellor, Dr. Joseph B. Wanjui, CBS, Hon. DSc, MSc, BA, FKIM,
Chancellor's from Other Universities

Principal Secretary (Education), Dr. Belio Kipsang

Principal Secretary (Science and Technology), Prof. Colleta Suda, CBS

Chairman of Council of the University of Nairobi, Dr. Idle Farah

Council members present,

Vice-Chancellor, Prof. George Magoha, CBS

Vice Chancellors of other Universities present,

Deputy Vice Chancellors,

Teaching and non-teaching staff,

Parents, guardians and sponsors,

Graduands and Students,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to preside over this 49th graduation ceremony. May I, take this opportunity to congratulate the University and graduands for their determination and hard work that has culminated to this momentous occasion. I note with gratification that the University is releasing a cohort of 5341 graduands in various disciplines that are an essential human capital to drive Kenya's development agenda Vision 2030. Key among these include: Engineering, Architecture, Land Development, Mining and Meteorology, Veterinary Medicine, and Agriculture.

I note with appreciation the steady increase in number of PhD graduands in this University in the recent past. The University of Nairobi on the other hand is the dominant institution in the region blessed with the largest population of PhD holders in teaching and research fraternity. To cater for the great demand of staff cadre in the region with PhD qualifications, we challenge this University to adopt a training policy where each PhD staff holder successfully supervise per academic year at least one gradunad at that level.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Graduation epitomizes every student's academic pursuit. It is also a moment to look back at what one has achieved in the many programmes and courses undertaken as he/she charts the way forward to enter professional careers of choice. The fact that you are graduating today is a clear testimony that you have successfully gone through the academic rigours that have culminated in you being conferred with degrees or awarded Diplomas and Certificates. I once again congratulate you, your parents and guardians for your sacrifice and effort that has enabled you to attain this honour.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am indeed happy to note that the University has remained in the fore-front in providing Quality and Relevant University Education in Kenya. There is concrete evidence of an elaborate Alumni composed of Champions and Patriots serving at the apex of various private and public institutions in Kenya and beyond. The University was also ranked number fourteen in Africa, and Number one in Kenya in July 2013 Webo metrics ranking. There is no doubt that the achievement is due to good governance and management by the University Council and management.

In order to provide quality and relevant education the university should establish elaborate and efficient internal quality assurance mechanism, comply with Commission for University Education requirements when reviewing training programs and mounting of new courses that equip students with entrepreneurial skills so that they can set up their own business and also create employment opportunities for others.

While training manpower in our Universities to meet demand in the labour market, we should not lose sight of quality which can be enhanced by observing the following key aspects among others;

- i) Consultation of Industry on Curriculum Development. Curriculum that do not meet aspirations of the employer fall short of the main theme of the training programme.
- ii) In corporation of Practical Component in all Curricula. This would ensure the knowledge, skills and experiences learnt are put into practice achieve the objectives of training.

Ladies and Gentlemen

My Ministry is determined to ensure the Government's commitment to increase access to University education is realized. Deliberate effort has been taken to provide loans to students, support Universities with modern equipment for Science and Engineering workshops, support infrastructure development and securing/offering scholarships for Graduate and PhDs to enhance supply of teaching staff in Universities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Given the scarce resources the University should explore the Private-Public Partnerships opportunities to attract investors to construct the following but not limited to learning facilities: workshops and laboratories, lecture theatres, Hostels, sports facilities.

E-Learning

The Universities should expand use of Modern Information Technology by establishing e-platform, more centres and sub-centres for distance, virtual and open learning

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Government is committed towards transforming the country into a knowledge-based economy, where creation, adaptation and use of knowledge are envisaged to be critical factors for economic growth and development. Universities play a critical role in the generation of knowledge. Concerted effort has been put in place to enhance research and innovation in the country. These include: development of a National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy, increased provision for research fund to be managed by the National Research Fund, and establishment of the National

Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). I call upon the Universities to encourage their students and staff to fully utilize the fund.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

I am informed that the University of Nairobi research kitty has surpassed the Kshs. 3 billion, and there is indication that more support, linkage and contribution is on the increase. I would like to insist that even as the University undertakes research, it should be charting out a bigger direction for innovation and knowledge transfer through incubation centers. The University's Science Park should be at the forefront as a critical link for end users, providing opportunity for application to solve societal problems through extension and other outreach activities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I take this opportunity to challenge our graduands to uphold the ethical values acquired from this University as they endeavor to serve our fellow Kenyans with a lot of diligence. You should also make use of the entrepreneurial skills to establish enterprises and may you be good ambassadors of this reputable University. May I wish you good luck in all your future endeavors.

Thank You.