



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

**REMARKS BY MR. JOHN P. N. SIMBA, CHAIRMAN,
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI COUNCIL, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE 43RD GRADUATION CEREMONY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI AT THE
CHANCELLOR'S COURT ON FRIDAY SEPTEMBER
24, 2010**

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

Hon. Mr. William Ruto, MP, Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology

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

Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors from other universities

Council Members

University Staff

Parents and Guardians

Graduands

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I take this opportunity on behalf of the University of Nairobi (UoN) Council to welcome all of you to the University and to the 43rd graduation ceremony.

On this day, I wish to extend my sincere congratulations to the graduands present here today. This is a special day for the parents, graduands, friends and relatives. They have come to witness your day of success. You have justified the sacrifices made, the support and encouragement of Faculty and University community whose shoulders you have stood on to meet and surmount challenges; we are happy that you have not disappointed our hopes and illusions. Congratulations.

Mr. Chancellor sir, I wish to thank the government for its continued support, to Council, particularly in regard to payment of staff salaries. Staff morale is now quite high following implementation of the last phase of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) that had been delayed owing to lack of funds. I wish to assure staff that Council will continue to review their terms and conditions of working so that our

staff enjoy benefits commensurate to the important work that they are doing – developing the education resources of this great country. We wish to commend staff for remaining patient, while waiting for the last phase of salary adjustment.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, in late 2005, the government required that all state corporations and ministries be put on a performance contract. The University of Nairobi signed its first performance contract in 2006 and has since that time been improving its performance. Indeed, I wish to inform you that in 2009, the University of Nairobi came top in the public universities sector and was 2nd in the state corporation's category. This is indeed a reason for all of us to celebrate. I wish to assure you Mr. Chancellor, Sir that the Council will continue to ensure that the University remains among the top performing state corporations by meeting its performance targets which ultimately translate to quality service to our customers.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, our good performance has not been limited to performance contracting. The most

recent web based ranking of universities put the University of Nairobi at position 26 in Africa, 3 in East Africa after Makerere (13) and Dar-es-Salaam (22) and number one in Kenya. While this is quite commendable, I would like to challenge the Vice-Chancellor and his team to borrow a leaf from University of Makerere, which not so long ago was ranked somewhere in the 50s but has since made a huge leap and is now among the top 15 in Africa. We laud the efforts of management for ensuring high standards that has ensured the University of Nairobi remains the University of Choice in Kenya.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I wish to report that the results of the recently concluded Public Universities Ethnic audit indicate that the University of Nairobi is quite well balanced with a national outlook that reflects the face of Kenya. I wish to assure the University community that the recruitment policy will continue to be based on merit and with government guidelines on ethnic balancing without compromising professionalism.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the University of Nairobi is the oldest, biggest, and most diverse of the public universities in Kenya. Significant progress has been made by the University to generate resources given the dwindling funding available from the Exchequer. One major challenge remains the thin financial base from which the University is expected to develop capital and infrastructural projects. This is not to say that we are unappreciative of government support to the University, including availing funds on time to support capitation and acquisition of facilities, but we wish to make a special appeal to the government to consider increasing the level of funding to the University to enable us to put up new lecture halls, laboratories and to support more students. We are cognizant of government plans to increase Joint Admissions Board (JAB) students which will further strain the limited capacity. With more support from the government, internally generated funds will be released to improve other areas.

As I conclude, let me thank all those who have continued to make the academic year culminating today to be a success; I thank you Mr. Chancellor Sir for great support and even for challenges that ignite new invigorated spirits for the task ahead. We acknowledge the government through our parent Ministry and the Minister present here today for their support, hearing us as we appeal for greater funding; members of the Council who are a commendable and active group, Prof. Magoha and the management team for your vision, the entire staff and student body for remaining disciplined and committed to academic excellence. Lastly, to God Almighty for providence and Grace.

To the graduands, I wish you every success in the pursuit of their dreams, aspirations and status.

We all look forward to another day when we shall again graduate another set of deserving graduands.

Thank you and God bless you.