



## **UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**SPEECH BY DR. JOSEPH BARRAGE WANJUI, CBS  
CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI,  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 33<sup>RD</sup> GRADUATION  
CEREMONY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI  
HELD ON FRIDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2005.**

---

**The Minister for Education, Science and  
Technology**

**Chairman of the University Council**

**Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi**

**Members of the University Council**

**Hon. Ministers**

**Hon. Members of Parliament**

**Your Excellencies the High Commissioners &  
Ambassadors**

**Your Worship the Mayor**

**Distinguished Guests**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Graduands**

---

**It is my pleasure to welcome all of you to this gathering; this is a special and momentous occasion, when we celebrate the 33<sup>rd</sup> graduation ceremony of the University of Nairobi.**

**I must take this opportunity to congratulate the graduands seated here. You have worked hard and the results can be seen. Today we are gathered to recognise and celebrate this achievement. This is an important day in your life, and we are proud of you.**

**Ladies and gentlemen, the University will not relent in its pursuit of excellence and its resolve to be a world class institution. The reforms that we started in the University have become a model for Public University Management in Kenya.**

**Recently, we reconstituted a new Council for the university composed of a mix of professionals, scholars and top level managers that is intended to enhance the University's quest for excellence.**

**At this point then, Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to formally introduce Mr. John P.N. Simba, Chairman of Council University of Nairobi. John brings to the University a wealth of experience and visionary leadership.**

**I also wish to take this opportunity to thank the immediate past chairman Prof. David P.S. Wasawo, for the able manner in which he steered the Council affairs through very challenging times. We wish him well in his retirement.**

**Since Independence, most African countries have made slow if not negative economic, social and political development. Many of our scholars moan our failure in comparison with some Asiatic countries that have made big leaps in development. One key feature of all nations that have developed rapidly is focus and discipline. In our society the privileged few who have attained higher Education have a unique opportunity to provide that focused and disciplined leadership. I am happy to report to the parents and guests here today that in the past year University of Nairobi students, staff and management have demonstrated remarkable and positive leadership approach.**

**We must commend the student community and their leaders for the improved and strong discipline. Ultimately, with discipline, you will enjoy better prospects in life including a greater appeal to prospective employers and investors. Also to those of you who will be self employed nothing will serve you better than strong discipline.**

**The benefits of orderliness are that the University will be able to continue monting and running programs on time. We trust**

**that the parents who send their children to this institution will support us fully in our quest for Excellence and Discipline.**

**Great universities all over the world are respected by their communities. Their voice is often listened to and reflected upon. In a University survey published this week, American universities produced the top 19 universities in the world. Indeed, of the top 50 universities only five were not American. This is no mean achievement considering that 50 years ago American universities were generally rated below European universities.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, the University of Nairobi had set its sight before the publication of this survey, to become a world class University. This goal remains unchanged. It is achievable with a lot of hard work and commitment by all concerned. According to this recent survey, University of Nairobi is rated number 24 in Africa and number 4,385 in the world. The task ahead of us is tough but it is doable.**

**You will also have seen figures from University Joint Admissions Board that out of the 50,000 qualified high school leavers, the Kenya six public universities only absorb 10,000 students. The private universities are small and absorb only a small number out of the qualified students. Majority of qualified students either go overseas at great cost if they can**

afford to pay, or join the ranks of the employed Kenyans, or find other training opportunities. With a population in excess of 30 million, we must be more innovative and creative in absorbing our high school graduates into university. One way of doing this is to move away from the practice of pegging admission to space. If this is done without undermining standards, we will be able to address the issue of limited capacity and the function of education for rapid development.

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 best practice in Management. In this connection we have the challenge and duty to create teams of highly motivated professionals with a commitment to achieve the mission and vision of the University.

To evaluate our achievements, we have instituted a performance management system. We are also using Alumni, industry and friends to act as our mirror for results. I urge all of you to join us in our endeavour to develop this august institution into a truly world class university.

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

**Thank You.**