



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**ADDRESS BY PROF. PETER M.F. MBITHI, VICE  
CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI DURING  
THE 58<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2017 AT THE  
CHANCELLOR'S COURT AT 7.00 A.M.**

**Madam Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi**

**Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Fred Matiang'i**

**Principal Secretaries,**

**High Commissioners and Ambassadors,**

**Honorable Judges,**

**Members of Parliament,**

**Chancellors from other Universities Present,**

**Vice- Chancellors Present,**

**Members of academic Community,**

**University of Nairobi Alumni,**

**Partners of the University of Nairobi,**

**Members of the Press,**

**Parents and Guardians,**

**Graduands,**

**Invited Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Madam Chancellor,**

**Today we present to you 6,602 graduands including 61 PhDs, 14 Fellowships, 1,979 Masters, 26 Post Graduate Diplomas, 3,780 Bachelors 6 Higher Diplomas and 736 Diplomas.**

**Let me start by congratulating all the graduands in this cohort of 58<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony.**

**The education qualifications and the quality of certificates you are about to obtain today are not only a source of pride but also indicators of your readiness to go! Ready to work and ready to serve!**

**I am confident that we have empowered you with the requisite skills and mindset to deal with all the challenges that will come your way.**

**When you go out there, please be our true ambassadors! Project us positively in your work and in your character!**

**The University shall remain faithful to the values of academic quality and integrity. We shall not compromise our standards! We shall relentlessly, fearlessly and consistently protect our academic quality!**

**The Senate shall not hesitate to ruthlessly deal with all cases of academic malpractices and intellectual dishonesty! No one shall be spared irrespective of their status in society.**

**Indeed all members of the university Community including alumni have a collective responsibility to zealously protect the integrity and reputation of our great institution!**

**Madam Chancellor!**

**This year has generally been difficult for learning but I am a happy that both students and staff of the University were able to endure and overcome the hardships until we successfully completed the academic calendar. Resilience is one of our strengths!**



**Our resilience continues to be displayed in many ways including the consistent good performance in Varsity global rankings by various institutions like QS, Webometrics and The Times Higher Education.**

**We continue to adapt to the rapidly changing global environment including dwindling resource mobilization from the exchequer and key partners.**

**We support the government's funding policy using Differentiated Unit Costs (DUC) but we make our humble appeal to the government to address the inherent shortcomings in DUC- that of neglect of funding for Graduate training and Research! Graduate Training and Research are the key pillars of any good University that must never be overlooked or neglected.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**University is a mirror of the Society but University being the conscience of society and being a powerful agent of change should not be shackled in the madness of Society! It should influence the society positively.**

**This is the role that I would like to encourage our scholars and students to play. We should provide leadership and advise the society objectively! We should free our minds from the baggage of intolerance and vendetta.**

**The country is yearning for men and women of high moral values and principles! If you cannot find them at the University, then where else would you?**

**Martin Luther once said: “*The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character-that is the goal of true education*”.**

**As a leading University, I believe we are best placed to lead in creating a culture of peace, dialogue and tolerance!**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**The influence of the University continues to be felt far and wide and I am happy that we have some international students in this august congregation.**

**Among the 61 PhDs, we also have the proud first Woman PhD graduate from the Tana- River County and I want appreciate the presence of the Tana River**

**County governor and his team for being here to cheer her!**

**In a very special way, I also want to congratulate Governors and High Court Judges and members of parliament graduating from our Law School today.**

**We thank you for choosing quality. You have all displayed discipline and commitment to complete your studies.**

**I urge you to be good role models and serve with excellence wherever you are because that is what we stand for! Excellence!**



**Continue being true champions and good Ambassadors of the University of Nairobi in your communities.**

**Madam Chancellor,**

**In order to attract more international students and staff and make this University Truly World Class, I invite the private sector to partner with the**

**University in the modernization of both learning and accommodation infrastructure at the University.**

**Our grand march to the top league - world class Universities is unstoppable but it might just! just be delayed if we do not upgrade student hostels and certify our laboratories and workshops in good time.**

**We have embarked on modernization of physical infrastructure across all our colleges and Campuses.**

**We will soon have a separate library for post graduate scholars thanks to the support of the Indian government.**

**We also have modern learning facilities in Kisumu and Mombasa Campuses!**

**Madam Chancellor,**

**Our Alumni have been a source of pride! We have continued to work very closely with them and other stakeholders to support the transformation agenda of the University. I want appreciate the Alumni and other partners like Rattansi Foundation, the Embassy of the Peoples Republic of China, the Rotary Club, the German Scholarships fund (DAAD), Mitsubishi Corporation and other friends of the**

**University for their generosity in the form of scholarship awards to bright students from needy background!**

**As you always say- madam Chancellor:” *What the poor people in our midst need is compassion and the support for them to realize their dreams*”**

**I appeal to many of us with good hearts and blessed pockets to support the University's endowment fund. This is one way of making your university self sustaining and it is a good investment for the future generation.**

**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**We were recently blessed to receive Prof. Kazuhiko Tekeuchi the distinguished Chair at the Wangari Maathai Institute.**

**Prof. Tekeuchi is a renowned scholar in the field of Integrated Research for Sustainability Science. He joined us to steer the Institute to a global centre of**

**Peace and Environmental Studies through strategic partnerships and networks.**

**We welcome him and promise to support him in helping the University in crystallizing the vision of the Late Wangari Mathaai about environment, peace and democracy.**



**I call upon other schools and Institutes to emulate WMI and work within the provisions of our statutes and collaboration agreements to attract global and renowned scholars to their faculties!**

**Internationalization enriches learning experience and should be encouraged. I urge our scholars to enhance their global presence and visibility through internationalization initiatives.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**I want appreciate our staff who responded to various calls for submission of grant proposals. Madam Chancellor, during the current academic year our staff managed to secure the following awards and grants:**

**In the area of collaborative research initiatives the university secured funding for:**

- **4 projects under the Newton-Utafiti Fund,**
- **1 project under Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SHEIR).**
- **1 Project under one Health Regional Network in the Horn of Africa.**

**From the National Research Fund (NRF) category- the Department of Chemistry (School of Biological and Physical Sciences won 100million infrastructure**

**grant to establish a Kenya National Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Center(KNMRC).**

**Under the NRF collaborative research category UoN Academic Staff and researchers won funding for 19 projects in various disciplines. In addition many postgraduate students secured postgraduate funding.**

**I want to congratulate the concerned staff and students for their hard work and encourage them and many others to stamp their authority in this area of grants for their personal growth and the growth of the University.**

**Those whose proposals did not bear fruit should not dampen their spirit!**

**You should be resilient like the Chinese Billionaire  
Jack Ma!**

**Just keep trying!**

**I thank the government of Kenya through the  
Ministry of Education and our development partners  
for their continued support to the University. We  
shall continue partnering with the government in  
areas where we have strengths to accelerate**

**development. One such area is Innovation and Technology.**

**Finally,**

**My gratitude goes to our Chancellor for her steadfast leadership to the University!**

**Madam Chancellor, your humility, wisdom and generosity are rare qualities that continue to provoke many of us to reflect about our attitudes and relationships!**

**I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy new year!**



**May, God bless you.**

**PETER M.F MBITHI, PhD, EBS**

**VICE-CHANCELLOR**

**AND**

**PROFESSOR OF VETERINARY SURGERY**