



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

**ADDRESS BY PROF. PETER M.F. MBITHI, VICE
CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI DURING
THE 57TH GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2017 AT THE
CHANCELLOR'S COURT AT 7.30 A.M.**

- **The Cabinet Secretary for Education, Dr. Fred Matiang'i**
- **The Chancellor, University of Nairobi, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi**
- **Your Excellencies, the Ambassadors and High Commissioners,**
- **Chancellors of Sister Universities**
- **Chairman of the University of Nairobi Council,**
- **Members of the University Council**

- **Chairpersons of other University Councils**
- **Vice-Chancellors of Sister Universities**
- **Members of the University Management Board**
- **University of Nairobi Senate**
- **Graduands**
- **Staff**
- **Students**
- **Parents and Guardians**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

We are blessed and happy to present to you 3,645 graduands who have successfully completed their degree, Post graduate Diplomas and fellowship programs. I am delighted to note that among them we shall graduate 48 PhDs, 355 Masters, 2,568 bachelors, 13 post graduate diplomas and 674 diplomas.

Graduation is a culmination of hard work and sacrifices by the graduands, parents, sponsors and staff of the University. It is a special moment for members of the university community to celebrate with pride the unleashing of new entrepreneurs, employees and talent into the market.

It is also a great social event when people of diverse backgrounds come together to celebrate the achievement of one of their won. Am sure amongst us there are people who have stepped into the gates of a university for the first time.

Let me welcome all of you and congratulate you for that social achievement. It has never been easy to enter the gates of a university!

I also take special moment to congratulate all the 57th graduands and wish them success in the next journey of life. Life is a continuous learning process.

In a short while, the Chancellor will bestow upon you the power to apply knowledge with abundant authority. The society is looking up to you with a lot of expectations to generate new ideas to deal with contemporary challenges using modern approaches.

Every generation has a unique historical moment to make a significant contribution to the human civilization and survival of mankind and this is the time for the millennial generation.

We are looking for transformative leaders amongst you. Leaders who will shape the development trajectory of this nation through continuous innovation!

Leaders who can be role models for the future generation!

Madam Chancellor,

The University of Nairobi has continued to maintain its leadership position in quality academic and research performance in the region. In the recent Times Higher Education ranking UoN was one of the two Universities in Eastern and Central Africa that

made it to the top 50 in Africa and top 1,000 global Universities. This success is founded on our solid philosophy of excellence. UoN graduates possess the right mindset and have abundant talent to empower themselves and also create opportunities for others.

The University of Nairobi Alumni has been a source of great inspiration for our students. We appreciate the strong relationship that we have built with the

Alumni Association over the years. We appreciate the role the UoN Alumni has continued to play in providing internship opportunities and scholarships for bright and needy students. More importantly the Alumni's rejuvenated effort in improving the status of infrastructure is quite commendable.

I therefore urge the graduands to join the club and be part of the rich heritage that defines UoN.

The forum shall accord you a wide network of professional groupings that will mentor and guide you in the path of your career and Professional development.

Madam Chancellor,

Higher Education sector has experienced serious challenges emanating from the rapid globalization.

The era of globalization has been marked by fierce competition and shrinking revenue opportunities. However, there are also abundant opportunities that we can harness from the extensive changes. Universities of the 21st century must embrace ingenuity and innovativeness in their business approach in order to surmount the challenges that confront them.

As a university we shall continue to look out for strategic global partners and build networks and synergies that promote our contribution to sustainable global development. On that note I applaud the University team that recently worked with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the WTO accessions division to successfully organize the recent Regional Dialogue on WTO accessions for the

Greater Horn of Africa in Nairobi on 28th -30th August 2017.

The University of Nairobi must rise up and claim its rightful place among the best universities in the world. Global research universities are identified by their distinct contribution in providing thought leadership in policy formulation, research

innovations, growth in incomes and environmental conservation.

Protecting the environment has been a key pillar of our Corporate Social responsibility. Maintaining a clean and green environment is a value that we cherish with a lot of pride.

Madam Chancellor

There is value in the industry working together with the universities in developing local and sustainable solutions to the problems facing our country.

Being cognizant of the fact that charity begins at home, I take this opportunity to challenge the County governments, local based industries and business community to forge partnerships and work

with local Universities in building the national capacity to exploit the vast natural resources that Kenya is endowed with.

Our universities have abundant capacity in the form of talent and human capital that can be tapped to rapidly transform Kenya into a flourishing middle-income country.

Madam Chancellor,

Allow me to pay tribute to our hard working staff and students who have excelled in various fields.

I commend the university choir who managed to scoop eight trophies during the 2017 national music festivals held in Kakamega.

I also applaud the University Rugby team-Mean Machine for being crowned the Kings of Rugby for the second consecutive year.

The University of Nairobi travelling theatre has also continued to excel in Performance arts and film production.

Those few examples are a pointer to our commitment to produce competent and holist graduates who are ready to work.

Students are key stakeholders of the university and that is the reason why the University has given priority to creating an enabling environment that promotes learning and talent development.

We shall continue to support you and together we shall continue building on the strong foundation of excellence that has been laid by your predecessors.

For those of you who would like to further their studies, I encourage you to enroll at the University of Nairobi. We have introduced new graduate programs that are relevant and marketable. We have also improved the status of our learning facilities.

The restructuring of Board of post -graduate studies into the Directorate of Graduate School and the Odel-campus into a virtual university are all geared towards strengthening our graduate programs to be in conformity with global standards.

Lastly, my appreciation goes to the staff who managed to secure research grants that will assist the University in fulfilling its key mandate of

producing quality research that impacts positively on society.

The University Senate has recently approved a reward system which will go a long way in motivating hardworking researchers.

With those few remarks it is my humble duty and honour to invite the Chancellor to make her remarks and Confer degrees and award diplomas to the graduands.

PETER M.F MBITHI, PhD, EBS

VICE-CHANCELLOR

AND

PROFESSOR OF VETERINARY SURGERY