



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**ADDRESS BY PROF. PETER MBITHI, VICE  
CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI  
DURING THE 60<sup>th</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD  
ON FRIDAY DECEMBER 21, 2018 AT THE  
CHANCELLOR'S COURT AT 8:00 A.M.**

- **Your Excellency, Deputy President, Hon. William Samoei Ruto**
- **Cabinet Secretary for Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Amb. Amina Mohammed,**
- **Cabinet Secretaries, Amb. Monica Juma, Eugene Wamalwa and other Cabinet Secretaries Present,**
- **Deputy Chief Justice of Kenya, Hon. Lady Justice Philomena Mwilu**

- **Chief Administrative Secretary and Principal Secretary for University Education and Research, Prof. Collette Suda**
- **Other Principal Secretaries present**
- **Chancellor of the University of Nairobi, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi**
- **Chancellors of other Universities**
- **Excellencies High Commissioners and Ambassadors**

- **Chair of the University of Nairobi Council, Dr. Julia Ojiambo**
- **Chair of the University of Nairobi Alumni, Mr. Isaac Awuondo**
- **Partners of the University**
- **Graduands**
- **Parents and Guardians**
- **Other invited guests,**
- **Distinguished ladies and gentlemen**

**It is my pleasure this morning to welcome you all to this historic congregation of the 60<sup>th</sup> Graduation of the University of Nairobi.**

**Madam Chancellor, let me take the earliest opportunity to congratulate all the graduands including the Deputy President who has earned his Doctoral degree and the Cabinet Secretary Hon. Eugene Wamalwa and Deputy**

**Chief Justice Hon. Lady Justice Philomena Mwilu who will be graduating with Masters in Law.**

**Madam Chancellor, we shall shortly be presenting to you the 9,561 candidates including 82 PhDs for the award of various degrees. This is the highest number of candidates we have ever presented in a single congregation in the history of the University of Nairobi. Cumulatively, we have this year conferred 155 PhDs. These numbers have**

**been realised as a result of the dedication and commitment of the University faculty, supported by our devoted administrative staff, the Government of Kenya and other strategic stakeholders, who continue to work with us to ensure that we produce quality manpower to meet the acute shortage of PhD expertise in the country.**

**At this juncture, allow me to thank most sincerely the Chancellor Dr. Vijoo Rattansi for supporting the**

**improvement and expansion of the university's teaching and learning infrastructure. She has supported the furnishing of not 1 or 2 or 3 but 5 modern lecture theatres at the University of Nairobi Tower. Madam Chancellor, *asante sana.***

**The University of Nairobi takes cognisance of the need to continuously review and align our curricular to the evolving dynamics of the labour market.**

**We encourage the ongoing discourse in the review of our education system. The debate is a healthy one and all stakeholders should take advantage of the window provided by the government to tender their inputs and prepare sufficiently for implementation of the competence-based curriculum. To this end, as a University, we have constituted a team to develop a policy paper that will guide our preparedness.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**The I.T revolution is rapidly disrupting the trends in the job market. We do not want or intend to find ourselves in an unfamiliar space playing catch up to the rest of the world. We must therefore plan and adapt with speed to take advantage of presenting opportunities. Kenya stands a higher chance of reaping big if we develop the infrastructure and the frameworks that promote the use**

**of block chain technology and Artificial Intelligence. I therefore request the government to consider setting aside seed capital for research and commercialization in this knowledge area to our national advantage.**

**Madam Chancellor, I want to take this opportunity to thank our new council for settling down quickly into office and giving priority to issues that affect morale of employees across all cadres. My administration will**

**continue to support and facilitate them to discharge their mandate with distinction.**

**Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,  
scholars are like fine wine that gets better with age. The University has a sizeable contingent of eminent professors and scholars who have or will over the next five years attain mandatory retirement age. As an invaluable resource, it is my desire that we tap and**

**continue to gain from their vast knowledge and wealth of experience. I therefore propose that we consider setting up an Eminent Scholar's Academy within the University. This academy will provide a pool of highly skilled and specialized multi-disciplinary consortia where our young upcoming researchers and students can access these dons for mentorship.**

**Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,**

**allow me to appreciate the student fraternity and their leadership for adopting non-confrontational and non-destructive form of engagement with the University administration and the government. Student discipline, innovative culture, respect for the rule of law and the spirit of give and take cultivates a conducive environment for learning and partnerships in pursuit of the university's mission. To this end, the university administration will continue to provide student leaders**

**with the space to exercise good governance and hone their leadership skills to become respected, successful and well cultivated leaders in future.**

**Finally,**

**I take this opportunity to thank all our partners including the government. Your collective support has enabled us to become a leading university in sub-Saharan Africa. As we continue to scale the academic ladder to the**

**top, we shall require your encouragement, your generosity and your understanding even more.**

**With those few remarks, I take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous year 2019.**

**Thank you.**

**PROF. PETER M. F MBITHI**  
**VICE-CHANCELLOR**  
**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**