



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

**SPEECH BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
NAIROBI COUNCIL, DR. IDLE FARAH, DURING THE 54TH
GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON FRIDAY DECEMBER 4,
2015 AT THE CHANCELLOR'S COURT AT 8.00 A.M.**

- **The Chancellor, University of Nairobi, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi. Chancellors of Sister Universities**
- **The Representative of the Cabinet Secretary,**
- **Your Excellencies, the Ambassadors and High Commissioners,**
- **Chairpersons and Members of the University Councils**
- **Vice-Chancellors of Sister Universities**
- **Members of the University Management Board**
- **University of Nairobi Senate**
- **Staff, Students, Parents and Guardians, Graduands, Ladies and Gentlemen**

Good Morning

It is great delight to be part of this distinguished gathering and colorful ceremony to mark the 54th Graduation Ceremony of the University of Nairobi. Today the graduands who are mainly drawn from the Colleges of Health Sciences and Humanities and Social Sciences, numbering over Students is the largest single graduating class in Kenya. Moreover the number of Doctorate degrees awarded in 2015 at this University is the highest ever in Kenya.

Graduation marks the end of a chapter and the beginning of another. As you embark on an exciting new chapter of your lives you will be wise to embrace the mantra of the late Nelson Mandela that Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the World. Go out there and change

world to make it better place than you will find it. To the parents and the guardians I am sure you stand tall today, proud of this major milestone your son or daughter has achieved today. Congratulations to the class of 2015.

Ladies and gentlemen, 2015 ushered a new era in leadership at our University. The year began with the installation of 7th Vice-Chancellor and with him began a new joy journey guided by a renewed vision and energy. Shortly after this historic installation, a quick succession of Council, University Management Board and Senate retreats provided shape and form to this vision. However transitions are always problematic for all institutions. I must admit that the University has suffered its fair share of transition induced

challenges. Despite these challenges, I wish to assure the University of Nairobi Community and stakeholders that the University is still on course to achieve the vision set out under the new management. As Council, we believe firmly that there is enough room for all of us to participate in the management of the institution as we strive to achieve academic excellence and outstanding research output.

Madam Chancellor, the University continued to discharge its mandate of teaching, experiential learning, research, consultancy and community service. To this end, the University hosted a number distinguished leaders among, them is Pope Francis. I wish to sincerely appreciate all those from the University and outside the University for

their constructive participation, which ensured that the Papal visit succeeded. I wish to assure all of you that this opening up of the University to interaction, debate and public engagement will continue.

Madam Chancellor, the University continues to be ranked at the Excellent level, especially in the public service performance contracting process. For this year, I wish to inform you that the performance contracting has been specifically cascaded to the Vice-Chancellor, who has signed a contract with the Council. Further, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors and College Principals have in turn signed a contract with the Vice-Chancellor. The University Council is strictly monitoring the performance of the management and

it is envisaged that the management will surpass their targets. As I conclude this part of the Management may I congratulate the University Management Board led by the Vice Chancellor, The Senate and staff of the University for the Sterling Performance in 2015.

Madam Chancellor, Despite the rampant instability of public Universities, our University has remained calm and not experienced interruptions this year. May I heartily congratulate the Student fraternity, student leadership and the Unions leadership for the various cadres of staff for the calmness of the University.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to thank the Government for its continued support to the University. This year, the Exchequer reinstated the budgetary levels that we are receiving from Treasury. Indeed, we are grateful because this move has gone a long way in helping the University meet its financial and human resource obligations and managed to reduce the budgetary deficits carried over from previous years.

Ladies and gentlemen, lastly I wish to pay glowing tribute to our Chancellor. Her inspirational leadership and symbol of unity for our University is exemplary. In September this year, our Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi established the University of Nairobi Endowment Fund. The initiative

dubbed “Stars for Africa” aims at raising funds towards a scholarship endowment fund for the University. I wish to congratulate you, Madam Chancellor on this initiative. Thank you for being a strong pillar of support for the University and for projecting a positive image of this great institution.

I wish to thank the entire staff and student body for remaining disciplined and committed to academic excellence. I appeal to all to redouble their efforts in 2016 as we strive to make 2016 a year of take-off, rather than, transition.

As I conclude, to the 2015 class, I wish you joy, good health, happiness and success. Go out into your country and beyond and fly while espouse change for humanity. As Martin Luther King Junior said, if for any reason you are unable to fly please run, if you can't run, walk, if you can't walk crawl. But whatever you do keep moving forward and stay blessed. Share your sparkle and your God given bragging rights to be an alumnus of the University of Nairobi.

**Finally, as the festive season draws near, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Blessed 2016. God bless the Graduands, God bless the University of Nairobi
Thank you.**