



## **UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

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**SPEECH BY DR. JOSEPH BARRAGE WANJUI, CBS,  
CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 39<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION  
CEREMONY AT THE CHANCELLOR'S COURT ON  
FRIDAY OCTOBER 17, 2008**

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**H.E. HON. MWAI KIBAKI, C.G.H, MP,  
President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed  
Forces of the Republic of Kenya,  
Rt. Hon. Raila Amollo Odinga, EGH, MP,  
Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya,  
Hon. Kalanzo Musyoka, Vice-President  
H.E. Dr. Kofi A. Annan,  
Your Excellencies the Ambassadors and High  
Commissioners  
Hon. Dr. Sally Kosgei, MP, Minister for Higher  
Education, Science and Technology,  
Cabinet Ministers  
Mr. John Simba, Chairman, University of Nairobi  
Council,  
Council Members,**

**Prof. George Magoha, Vice-Chancellor, University of  
Nairobi**

**Chancellors of sister universities,**

**University Officials,**

**Parents and Guardians,**

**Graduands,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

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**It is my pleasure to welcome you all and especially  
our three special guests to the 39th Graduation  
Ceremony of the University of Nairobi. Today  
marks yet another milestone in the history of this  
University as we have the privilege of conferring**

**honorary degrees to three, distinguished World Class African leaders.**

**Your Excellency, today's graduation ceremony shall enter into the institution's annals of history as we are also conferring the first earned Doctor of Science degree of the University of Nairobi.**

**Today, we are graduating over 4000 graduates and I take this opportunity to congratulate all graduands for their hard work that has resulted to a successful completion of a journey that began years ago. Today, you are about to join our over 100,000 University of Nairobi alumni that have continued to uphold the institution's culture of**

**excellence both at the national and international levels.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to pay tribute to the gallant parents, our dedicated staff, the community and other stakeholders who have enabled the graduands to complete their studies. It has indeed taken a lot of sacrifice on the part of all concerned to mould and mentor these graduands into responsible citizens ready to apply the skills learned.**

**Your Excellency, the University of Nairobi has continued to discharge its mandate of teaching and learning, research, consultancy and community service.**

**YOUR Excellency, the University of Nairobi has and will continue to provide leadership towards the social, economic and political development of our nation. I am indeed proud to report that through your stewardship of the country, the University has partnered with your government to provide manpower and relevant skills to propel the realization of the county's vision 2030. Your personal undertaking in reforms in the government and the education sector has indeed given a major boost to this end.**

**Ladies and gentlemen, join me in lauding the alumni of this University who have spearheaded major reforms in the country, thus leaving a**

**positive mark as the University's contribution towards these reforms.**

**Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, as a University we have performed well but we recognize that there is room for improvement. I am therefore appealing to the University management led by our able Vice-Chancellor, Prof. George Magoha, together with all staff and students to redouble their effort in making this University indeed, a world-class institution.**

**Your Excellency, the University of Nairobi is privileged to confer the honorary degrees to yourself, the Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga, Prime Minister and H.E. Dr. Kofi Annan in recognition Of your**

**singular peace efforts early this year. The post-election violence that engulfed this beautiful country threatened to tear apart what had taken decades to build.**

**One would have thought that violence against one's own fellow citizens was not an option in solving political problems in Kenya in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**

**Anyhow, as the whole world watched and waited, Dr. Kofi Annan was able to bring the two principals at a round table resulting in the Grand coalition government.**

**The signing of the peace accord has provided a peaceful environment, a prerequisite for academic excellence and indeed for the proper management of the nation. It is therefore a befitting honour for the University to confer the three of you with degrees in the field of peace.**

**And to quote Thomas Jefferson the third President of the United States of America quote "The care of human life and happiness and not their destruction is the first and only legitimate object of good government" .end of quote.**

**On our part the University of Nairobi shall endeavor to ensure that we promote peace through our programmes.**

**Ladies and gentlemen, the importance of peace as an impetus of development cannot be gain said. Peace provides an appropriate environment for private enterprise to flourish. Democratic free enterprise system is one of the greatest tenets that generate wealth and lead to improvement of social welfare, thereby enhancing stability and peace in society. An impoverished society is inherently conflictual and a fertile ground for turmoil and it takes great men and women to set aside their personal interests for the good of society. I commend these three great African Leaders for wisdom, courage and willingness to make sacrifices to ensure that peace prevails in our country.**

**I would, therefore, wish to send on my own behalf and on behalf of entire University our warm and hearty congratulations to the three of you for accepting that the University of Nairobi be associated with you by humbly conferring upon you with Honoris Causa degrees.**

**Mr. President, I am told that President John F Kennedy is reported to have said, and I quote. "The day before my inauguration President Eisenhower told me. " You will find that no easy problem comes to the President of the United States. If they are easy to solve, somebody else has solved them "I found that hard to believe, but now I know it is true" end of the quote.**

**Your Excellency we suspect that this statement by President Kennedy sounds familiar to you.**

**Mr. President we thank you for resolving those issues that only you could have resolved on behalf of all Kenyans. We commend you for the way you have guided this nation over the past six years.**

**The future and present generations will honor you for expanding democratic space and for the introduction of universal education. These are the foundations of a modern, progressive, and Democratic Nation.**

**Ladies an gentlemen, I also take this opportunity to once again congratulate the graduands and wish you success in your careers.**

**Thank you.**