SPEECH DELIVERED BY PROF. GEORGE A.O. MAGOHA, VICE-CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI DURING THE WORKSHOP TO REVIEW THE COMMUNICATION SKILLS SYLLABUS HELD ON 15TH MARCH 2006 AT 6.00 P.M. AT KCCT, MBAGATHI
The Principal

Dean, Faculty of Arts

Chairman of Departments

Members of staff

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with much pleasure that I am with you today as you embark on this noble task of reviewing the syllabus for communication skills.
As you are all aware, we have started to implement the University of Nairobi Strategic Plan for 2005-2010. The theme of the Strategic Plan is “towards world class excellence.” To achieve world class excellence, Ladies and Gentlemen, requires that we change the way we do things. It requires that we apply best practice in whatever we undertake and it also means we align ourselves with the trends taking place in the rest of the world.

Currently, the world is characterized by rapid change not only in technology and product sourcing but also
changing customer tastes and preferences. If the University is to survive and thrive in this competitive environment, we have to adopt a management style that is not only capable of reacting to change but also capable of anticipating and initiating change.

One of the best strategies of managing change is through continuous improvement in whatever we do, including the programmes we run in order to remain relevant to the ever changing demands of the marketplace.
In this connection, I wish to particularly thank the Department for thinking of reviewing the current syllabus of Communication with a view to develop a more advanced programme, a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Science. The Bachelors degree programme poses challenges in its design and implementation.

Not only does it require to be well thought, it also has to be professionally implemented.
To make this happen, there is need for commitment from all those concerned. The staff have a very heavy responsibility of improving the communication component of the University of Nairobi students. It is therefore critical that members of the unit should give maximum support to the Chair of the unit by working as a team with the Chair as the team leader.

There are concerns about the level of communication competency in the University of Nairobi graduates. Whereas we do produce some of the best
communicators, there is certainly a big room for improvement.

I wish to challenge the unit to do whatever is within its power to improve communication competency in the University and I look forward to the time when the unit will develop an appropriate degree programme whose implementation will have the desired impact on the communication competency of our graduates.
I also wish to challenge the staff, especially the teaching staff, to be more aggressive in their professional development. I note with concern that currently, there is only one PhD holder in the unit.

The University would like to see the rest of the staff work towards achieving their PhDs. This will legitimise our position as a market leader in the areas of academic pursuits.

The University is committed to equality and merit. We therefore wish to encourage the women scholars
to take advantage of the environment so that they can compete effectively with their male colleagues.

The Communication Skills unit teaches almost all faculties in the University. I therefore hope that the workshop will deliberate thoroughly and make appropriate recommendations for consideration by the University.

Finally I wish to thank all those people who have made this workshop possible and to encourage them
to ensure that the deliberations are translated into a programme of action.

I now have the pleasure to declare the workshop officially open.

Thank you.