REMARKS BY VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROF. GEORGE A.O. MAGOHA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL HANDING OVER OF ICIPE BUILDING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI ON 17TH JULY 2006 AT THE COLLEGE OF BIOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES, CHIROMO CAMPUS
Honourable Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Dr. Noah Wekesa

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Prof. Karega Mutahi

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Science & Technology, Prof. Crispus M. Kiamba

Deputy Director General, ICIPE, Prof. Onesmo Ole Moiyoi

Head of Delegation of EU to Kenya, H.E. Eric Van Der Lindem

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Administration & Finance
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs, Prof. Jacob Kaimenyi

Principal, College of Biological and Physical Sciences, Prof. Lucy Irungu

Principals of Colleges

Managing Director, UNES

Deans and Directors

Heads of Departments

Students

Members of Staff

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen
It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to the University of Nairobi to witness the official handing over of the ICIPE building to the University.

Hon. Minister, today is a truly remarkable occasion because it is the first time for you to visit the University since you were appointed Minister for Education, science and Technology. It is also remarkable because we are celebrating the fruits of collaboration between two institutions which have
a lot in common; a desire for excellence and service to humanity.

Ladies and Gentlemen the relationship between ICIPE and the University of Nairobi spans over 38 years, from the time when the idea of starting a center of excellence on insect physiology and endocrinology was mooted by the late Professor Thomas Risely Odhiambo, then a senior lecturer at the University of Nairobi.
The centre was established in 1970 through the efforts of Prof. Odhiambo whose dream was to create a multi-disciplinary science centre with students from the region. The centre would concentrate resources on a few particular problems over a period of time thus ensuring immediate return on funds invested.

ICIPE can thus trace its origin from University of Nairobi through Prof. Odhiambo who conceptualized the idea through his article “East Africa Science for Development” published in the
1969 issue of Science and proposed to the donor community for the establishment of the centre.

By April 1970, ICIPE was a working model incorporated under the Companies Act of Kenya as an international institution of advanced research activities. The ICIPE building was constructed on University land at the Chiromo grounds in 1974 following a Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions.
As, ICIPE grew over the years it became apparent that it would require more space for expansion hence the construction of its new headquarters at Duduville, Kasarani.

The Memorandum of Understanding between ICIPE and University of Nairobi which enabled ICIPE to put up its original headquarters on University land started among other things that the buildings would be sold to the University when ICIPE eventually moved to its own land.
Following the relocation of its operations to Duduville in 1999, ICIPE however decided to donate the building at Chiromo Campus estimated at over Kshs 40 million to the University of Nairobi free of charge.

The ICIPE building shall now officially be designated as the Centre for Biotechnology and Bionformatics, (CEBIB) of the University of Nairobi. The Centre for Biotechnology & Bioinformatics is a University wide Postgraduate training program
with a multidisciplinary institutional participation approach.

On behalf of the University Council and Senate, I wish to take this opportunity to thank ICIPE for this most generous donation to the University. This building will not only help to reduce the pressure on available space but also strengthen our academic programmes by providing excellent facilities for research.
In all activities of ICIPE, capacity and institution building activities are integrated into every project. Currently it has a working relationship with over 30 institutions of higher learning including the University of Nairobi.

The Memorandum of Understanding with the University allows ICIPE to establish working relationships with specific departments.

By the very nature of its business, ICIPE collaborates mainly with our Colleges of Biological
and Physical Sciences, Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences and Health Sciences which deal with areas that are directly linked to ICIPE’s core business.

There are various programmes that are going on between ICIPE and University of Nairobi. They include successful sweet potato and Malaria projects involving researchers of the two institutions.
Many members of staff and students at postgraduate level have benefited greatly through ICIPE’s training programme – African Regional Postgraduate Programme in Insect Science (ARPPIS). This programme is highly successful and has assisted us to build a well-trained human resource base, able to respond to training needs of the country.

ICIPE’s contribution to human health is enormous. Through its researchers, it has greatly contributed
to the reduction of malaria and other vector borne diseases in many ways by breaking their lifecycles.

ICIPE’s good work has enabled it international funding. Currently it is funded by a consortium of donors, the Sponsoring Group for ICIPE (SGI), private charitable organizations, United Nations and government organizations. Most of these funds have been able to filter to member universities, of which our University has greatly benefited.
ICIPE close relationship with farmers and with over 200 collaborators in national systems and research institutes and universities around the world, means that it has benefited from the global fund of knowledge and expertise. I am happy to say that University of Nairobi has greatly benefited from the repertoire of experience and knowledge available at ICIPE.

The University of Nairobi, Ladies and Gentlemen, has partnered with ICIPE to assist in fight food insecurity in our region, improve health and
sustainable use of natural resources for our people. Our two institutions share a common bond, that has lasted for more than three decades. I hope that this partnership shall continue to flourish for the benefit of our country and the entire world.

Honorable minister, the University still faces numerous challenges, the key of which is inadequate funding. While we appreciate the support the university continues to receive from the Government, a lot more is required if we are to realize our dream of becoming a world class
university. My plea is to the Government to expedite the approval of our proposal on Unit costs. This will not only address the problem of inadequate funding but also improve the university’s capacity to train the high level manpower required for the country’s development.

May I once again take this opportunity to thank the Hon. Minister for finding time from his busy schedule to preside over today’s event, ICIPE, for their donation, the European Union, for supporting our academic programmes and all our friends and
well wishers. I wish to assure you that the University of Nairobi will not tire in quest for excellence in all its endeavours for it is only by so doing that it can justify the sacrifices made by the people of this country and other stakeholders.

With those few remarks, I now take this opportunity to welcome our guest of honour, the Minister for Education, Science and Technology Honourable Dr. Noah Wekesa to address this gathering.

THANK YOU