UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

REMARKS BY PROF. PETER M.F. MBITHI, VICE CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI DURING THE DAAD SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS CEREMONY HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2016 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT 10.00 A.M.
The Director, DAAD Regional Office for Africa, Dr. Helmut Blumbach

The Cultural Attache´ German Embassy, Mr. Uwe Koppel

Staff

Students

Ladies and Gentlemen
Let me start by welcoming all of you to the University of Nairobi. As a university and generally a country, we want to express our sincere gratitude to the Federal Republic of Germany, here represented by the German Embassy and DAAD for our continued cooperation in diverse fields.
We are indeed grateful for the continued support that the German government has given to us in training members of the academic staff in various fields in our University and also for training other professionals working in various sectors of the Republic of Kenya.
The University of Nairobi has been hosting the DAAD funded German Masters programme in the Department of Linguistics and Languages since 1994.

Since its inception, the programme has acquired an international outlook. In the late 1990s, the training was mostly for Kenyan and Sudanese postgraduate students. In the course of time, more international students have been admitted into the programme.
For instance, a total of 11 MA German Studies students from 7 African countries, admitted in 2014, received their Masters degrees during the graduation ceremony held on December 2, 2016.

Last year, we admitted 10 students from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Togo, Benin, Sudan, Cameroon and Nigeria.
The programme has also become attractive to many young African scholars taking German studies. This is attributed to the thematic areas covered, and the competent teaching staff in the Department of Linguistics and Languages. The thematic areas include linguistics, literature, didactics and translation.
You may not be aware of this but the University of Nairobi is the only university in Sub-Saharan Africa offering such a variety of topics in its German Masters programme.

Today, the University of Nairobi is undoubtedly the hub of German Studies in the East and Central African region, and is in the process contributing significantly to the development of the subject in several African countries.
In addition, we partner with five German universities, i.e. the Universities of Bayreuth, Bielefeld, Oldenburg, Paderborn and Dresden, where we send our Masters students for a five month research programme funded by DAAD. The programme is truly a flagship of the Department of Linguistics and Languages.
Today, we are once again grateful that DAAD has entrusted us with yet another set of MA scholarship holders. This shows that you have confidence in our University and for sure we will not let you down.

With your support, we promise to continue training and mentoring young Africans so that they can in turn go back to their countries, train others and give back to the society in various ways.
I must take this opportunity therefore to also thank you for the various trainings that you offer to DAAD scholars and other members of the academic staff, as they grow in their careers.

Some of these trainings include proposal writing for grants, seminars and PhD proposal writing workshops. Many members of the academic staff have benefitted from these trainings.
I assure you that DAAD scholars at the University of Nairobi are actively involved in all the affairs of the University. Some of them hold leadership positions.

Currently, in an effort to give back to the society, members of the Kenya DAAD Scholars Association (KDSA) University of Nairobi Chapter, alongside other public universities, are engaged in mentoring the Wings - to - Fly Students (students sponsored by
Equity Bank from Grades 9 to 12) as soon as they join the university in their first year of study.

This is a mentorship programme that has just started and we are certain that it will grow in order to touch as many of our students as possible.
With those remarks, I now congratulate those who are due to receive various awards, that is, the 10 MA students receiving the awards, and wish them every success in their studies.

Once again thank you all and may God bless you.

PETER M.F MBITHI, PhD, EBS
VICE-CHANCELLOR
AND
PROFESSOR OF VETERINARY SURGERY