UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

REMARKS BY PROF. GEORGE A.O. MAGOHA, VICE-CHANCELLOR DURING THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP TO STRATEGIZE ON IMPROVEMENT OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES AND RESEARCH, MAANZONI LODGE MAY 17TH - 19TH, 2013
The Principal, CEES
The Dean, School of Education
Invited Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen
It is with pleasure that I participate and officiate the opening ceremony of this workshop, where the staff of the School of Education are strategizing on improvement of academic programmes and research.

The School of Education has made major contributions in teacher education in the country. In the University of Nairobi, the School is a leader in pedagogical methodologies and has a number of programmes at diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate levels. These programmes prepare human resources for various levels in the Kenyan economy and international arena.
The undergraduate programmes were started in 1988 while the graduate programmes were started in 1996. Over the years, the School has acquired new staff, at management level, who need to be inducted and fully incorporated in the school to effectively manage its operations. Additionally, the school has experienced competition from the upcoming universities that offer similar programmes and have chosen to locate their premises around the university way and town centre of the City of Nairobi. By so doing, these universities take strategic positions to offer stiff competition with UON programmes. As a result, the number of students who are admitted to our
programmes has gone down and hence the need to re-strategize to enhance our presence locally, in the counties and internationally.

I am aware that participants in this workshop will:

1. Strategize to assess the extent to which the current programmes are aligned to the new market demands in Kenya. You need to review them and develop new programmes that are market and industry driven. In this regard, there is need for the School of Education to partner with other departments in the University to start discipline
specific training programmes such as Engineering Education, Medical Education and Performing Arts Education among others. There is also a need to expand programmes to include teacher training in performing arts, Creative Art and Arts and Craft, among others.

2. Design a marketing strategy that would enhance our local presence in Nairobi and also market the schools programmes in the counties and internationally.
3. Examine School of Education’s compliance with Performance Contracting (PC) guidelines and prepare to cascade the PC to the departments in the year 2013. Diversify delivery to include Open Distance and e-Learning (ODeL) as the dominant mode of delivery as opposed to the current situation of face to face delivery mode. I expect you to propose realistic strategies to ensure that all School of Education programmes include ODeL mode of delivery within the next two years.

4. Take stock of the research activities of the school and develop strategies for improving them. I am
happy that the school boasts of some fundable research projects such as the Early Grade Reading Instruction Curriculum (EGRIC)), however, I wish to see more of fundable research projects and consultancies after this workshop. The need to activate the operations of the Institute of Educational Research and Evaluation is long overdue. I also expect that the EGRIC Project will develop and expand into a fully fledged Pedagogy Centre in the School of Education.

It is my hope and belief that the participants will manage to score on the workshop objectives.
I note with interest that the School has further picked on issues raised by the ISO audits, and the need to address them. In particular, the need to continue strategizing on improvement of academic programmes and research.

As you are aware, ISO certification and conformity with ISO standards entail being on your toes all the time, to ensure that standards are of the right quality and meet the customer requirements.
As you will note, the key words are “World Class Standards” which not only form the core of ISO, but are encapsulated in the University’s Vision.

Ladies and gentlemen, the success of this workshop cannot be gauged today or tomorrow, but its impact will be felt in many months and years to come. It is my earnest hope that each one of you, singularly or severally, manage to do what they set out to achieve within the days you will be here. Let us always ensure that our academic programmes and research are demand-driven. They should be designed to tackle the needs of the market and problems in
society. This is core to our operations if we are to remain relevant.

With those remarks, it is my duty to declare this workshop officially open.

Thank you very much.