UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

SPEECH BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROF. GEORGE A. MAGOHA, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE MOOT COURT SMALL WEB ON SEPTEMBER 1, 2014 AT MILLENIUEM HALL CHIROMO CAMPUS AT 2.00 P.M.
The Chairman, Commission for the Implementation of the Constitution, Mr. Charles Nyachae
Director, Centre for Human Rights – University of Pretoria, Prof. Frous Viljoen
Assistant Director, Centre for Human Rights, Mr. Norman Taku
The Principal, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Nairobi
The Dean, School of Law
The Chairman, and the Organizing Committee
Members of teaching staff
Students
Distinguished guests
Ladies and Gentlemen
On behalf of the University of Nairobi, I wish to welcome all delegates to the 23rd edition of the African Human Rights Moot Court competition. This is the first time that the Competition is being held in Kenya and we would like to appreciate the Centre for Human Rights of the University of Pretoria for partnering with us in hosting this year’s Moot Competition.

I am informed that the aim of the Moot competition is to prepare young lawyers to argue cases relating to human rights violations before local and international tribunals. I believe that this is an excellent opportunity for students of law to sharpen their oral and analytical skills and their ability to work as a team.
Ladies and gentlemen, organising and hosting a meeting of minds from all over Africa is no mean task, I wish to appreciate our partners for supporting the competition, I want to single out the University of Pretoria, Ford Foundation, IDRC, ICJ, Konrad Adenauer, Save The Children Fund, UNHCR, the Canadian embassy. I urge the students who are participating in the competition, to reciprocate the support by engaging fully and while acknowledging what it means to ensure justice for all, reflect on challenges that Africa faces today and your role in being the solution rather than the problem.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to reiterate that as your host, I welcome the Moot competition and the International law
conference following as a way of reaching thousands of human rights lawyers. If you can stretch your imagination, this competition is featuring 94 students, 47 law professors drawn from 47 universities across Africa. What then is the impact of such a gathering in exploring the justice system, and the challenges we are facing in the wake of the Ebola epidemic, social and civil strife, famine, violence etc.

Ladies and gentlemen, the future of Africa lies in its youth. It is thus refreshing to see a group of young women and men from different countries of our beloved continent come together to debate solutions to our challenges. The issues you have been dealing with in your preparations and the issues you will be debating over the next few days are real
issues that many countries in our beloved continent are dealing with.

Ladies and gentlemen, apart from the rigours of research and debate that you will be undertaking in the next few days, you will build interlinks, make friends and find common ground because the world has become one global village. Indeed, you must balance scholarly exertions with social interactions and compassion for humanity if durable solutions to our human rights challenges are to be resolved. It is your duty to argue without rancour, changing the world, and bringing back the glory of our beloved continent.
As I conclude my remarks, I want to invite you to take some time to visit some scenic attractions, that Kenya is blessed with, as you marvel at the splendour of Mother Nature, and enjoy our hospitality.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to wish all the teams’ success in the competition.

Thank you.