VICE CHANCELLOR’S REMARKS DURING THE
PUBLIC LECTURE BY
JACK MA, FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE
CHAIRMAN, ALIBABA GROUP INC.
JULY 20, 2017
I take this opportunity to thank Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi the Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development for organizing this historic visit by the greatest man in the East, Mr. Jack Ma, the Founder and Executive Chairman of Ali Baba Group and choosing the University of Nairobi to interact with our young entrepreneurs at this critical time when Africa is Rising where innovation and creativity has become the key drivers for new start-ups that will propel Africa’s Industrialization. Sir, I thank you!

The University of Nairobi has recognized her role as the key driver of change in Africa through science, technology, research and
innovation. In 2015, the University initiated the Annual Forum dubbed “Nairobi Innovation Week” where innovators, entrepreneurs and researchers come together to showcase their inventions and innovations. It has now become a global event where more than 200 exhibitors converge here at the University of Nairobi every first week of August to showcase their innovations and inventions.

The Government of Kenya through His Excellency the President and the Cabinet Secretaries in the Ministry of Education, Ministry of ICT and Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Development has been very supportive on this venture that will help bud new entrepreneurs who will contribute to the Africa’s Rising.
It’s against this background that the University of Nairobi has embarked on a journey to create a US$ 6 million Centre of Excellence in Innovation called the “Nairobi Innovation Centre” that will help create, mentor and commercialize new ideas coming from the innovation pipeline of the Nairobi Innovation Week.

It’s through these innovation of young people from this and other sister Universities in Kenya who have created iHubs, the Nairobi City has become a hub for Innovation and during the 2017 World Economic Forum (WEF), Nairobi was named among the top 10 most dynamic cities in the World following the league of Silicon Valley (USA), Bangalore and Hyderabad (India), Ho Chinh Minh (Vietnam) and Shanghai (China).
The University of Nairobi, Kenya and Africa at large has a lot to learn from Ali Baba Group, how you have empowered millions of young people to unleash their full potential by recognizing that others are better than you and giving them a space to discover themselves. From 2003 to date is a very short period time for any human being to have achieved what you have achieved in less than two decades.

The University of Nairobi would like to visit Alibaba Xixi Headquarters, Hangzhou, China to learn the secrets of how you managed to create the largest e-commerce company in the world. I am confident that your visit to Africa marks a turning point for Africa and University of Nairobi is proud to host you today.
Welcome / Karibu Kenya. Asante, Thank you!