UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

REMARKS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI- PROF. PETER M.F.MBITHI – DURING CARTA’S 2ND VICE CHANCELLORS’ MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, JULY 10, 2017 AT THE MANU CHANDARIA AUDITORIUM AT 9.30 A.M
Chief guest Prof. Chacha Nyaigoti Chacha,

Executive Director, African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC) and Co-Director Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa (CARTA) Prof. Alex Ezeh,

Vice Chancellors of CARTA Partner Universities,

Heads of Research Institutes,

Northern Partner Representatives,

Co-Directors of CARTA,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,
On behalf of the entire University of Nairobi fraternity, I am extremely privileged to welcome you to the University of Nairobi, the home of higher education in Kenya. I am aware that many of you have traversed the length and breadth of the globe to be here with us and I wish to confirm that we do not take that for granted. I also know that many of you have forgone competing opportunities and engagements to be here and we appreciate you. Let me therefore, most sincerely, thank you all.
At independence, only 54 years ago, Kenya was at the same level as the Republic of Korea, a nation referred to as South Korea by most of the world’s citizenry. Today South Korea, a country almost a fifth the size of Kenya’s land mass, has developed into one of Asia’s most affluent countries and a leading exporter of both consumer electronics and motor vehicles.

The world continues to be refreshed by some of well renowned brands that call South Korea home: Samsung continues to push the envelope with beautiful and functional phone designs, LG continues to push the
horizons of entertainment with mind bending television panels, Hyundai continues to locomote the world. South Korea is the most extensively connected nation on earth with nearly every household connected to the internet. One can only imagine the world of opportunity and information open to her citizenry! I then begin to wonder where the rain began to pelt this country and by extension, Africa.
Africa’s aspirations as articulated in its collective vision and roadmap, Agenda 2063, is yet to get a good breath of life. Africa wants to sit at the table of the best performers in global quality of life measures by 2063.

I am convinced that Africa is in no danger of realizing her aspirations, such as eradicating poverty in a generation by 2025, if she does not invest in quality research. As a matter of fact, I have it on good authority that the next 8 years is a time too short to have realized this goal.
Without research, and I dare state without fear of contradiction, the great African dream of prosperity by all for all will never be realized. To make Africa’s aspirations attainable, it is incumbent upon us who are gathered here today, and indeed over the next 48 hours, to solidly deliberate and render tangible resolutions to engender quality research for both knowledge advancement and development in our respective economies.
It is a well-known fact that Africa’s contribution to the global knowledge base is dismal at best. It is therefore my humble submission that there is no better day than today for us leaders of both academic and research institutions to roll up our sleeves and with the support of respective country governments start the painstaking journey of elevating Africa to the global stage in research, technology development and transfer, innovation and knowledge production. If your presence here counts for nothing else, let it never be said that you labored not for a better Africa for your children and children’s children.
With those few remarks, ladies and gentlemen, I invite you all to make this meeting count for something! I wish you a most fruitful two-day deliberation.

Thank you very much.

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