SPEECH

BY

Prof. Ratemo Michieka, PhD, EBS, FKNAS
Chairman of Council

39TH Graduation Ceremony,
Friday 18th December, 2015
Good Morning.

I wish to join the Vice-Chancellor in recognizing the presence of the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology – Dr. Fred Matiangi. We are delighted to host you during the Kenyatta University’s 39th Graduation ceremony. This is one of the biggest graduation ceremonies that the University has ever celebrated with over 7,800 students. On my own behalf, and on behalf of the entire Court, I wish you a successful and enjoyable day.

Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science & Technology – Dr. Fred Matiangi;
The Chancellor – Dr. Benson Wairegi;
Council Members;
The Vice – Chancellor, Kenyatta University, Prof. Olive Mugenda;
Your Excellencies the Ambassadors and High Commissioners;
Chancellors of Sister Universities;
Members of the University Senate;
Staff and Students of Kenyatta University;
Parents and Guardians;
Graduands;
Distinguished guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen.
University Council, I wish to take this early opportunity to congratulate all the graduands who are graduating today.

As we celebrate the 39th Graduation Ceremony, I note with appreciation that Kenyatta University has achieved unrivalled growth especially in the last ten years. KU stands as a world class university in terms of the physical infrastructure and human resources development. I commend Prof. Olive Mugenda, the Vice-Chancellor for her exemplary and visionary leadership. I also commend the management, Senate, the academic and non-academic staff, the students and other key stakeholders for the part they have played in getting Kenyatta University where it is today. Thank you all.

We have had a successful year, 2015 due to the commitment of all concerned. We celebrated 30 years of KU’s existence, the launch of the KUTV, the opening of the alumni building and the opening of a bookshop centre at the City Campus. These are but a few accomplishments that have boosted our visibility.

I want to reiterate the support of the University Council which remains focused in the development and realization of KU’s targets. The University Council members have been trained on good governance through SCAC and Mwongozo and I believe that this will
add value to the management and transition of the CEO in Kenyatta University. The process is already underway.

The University Council is also cognizant of the Government’s efforts towards addressing issues affecting university education such as insecurity, funding and quality of education and we are confident that the higher education sector in the country will continue to impact on the country's development.

Allow me Mr. CS to offer some advice to the graduands. “Today marks an important point in your lengthy journey in the pursuit of a degree, diploma or a certificate. University education is the means to attaining a good career and better quality of life. Throughout the world, education has become the key driver of economic growth. You, the class of 2015, have spent years studying. You have pushed yourselves to the limits. You have had to deal with challenges you had never imagined when you first came to Kenyatta University. It is now your responsibility to lead the way and find solutions. But take note that there are no readily available jobs. My advice to you is simple, be open minded and ready to stretch your skills. Only the most patient, resilient, tough and smart will succeed. Prepare yourself to remain on job hunting for a while. Thomas Friedman in his book “The Lexus and Olive Tree” (page 223) said “The winners and losers in the information age will be differentiated by brainpower.” Be tolerant, creative, diverse and not closed, rigid, uptight, self-absorbed and traditional. Seek the untapped riches,
exploit them. Kenya is a young nation with many unsolved problems.

As I conclude therefore, I urge you all to invest your time, energy and resources to things that make a difference. Always keep the Kenyatta University brand shining wherever you go.

Once again, on behalf of the University Council, congratulations. I wish you all a very bright future, merry Christmas and happy New Year.

**Thank you.**