Speech

By

Prof. Olive Mugenda, PhD, MBA, EBS, CBS

Vice Chancellor

Official Opening of the Student Health Centre & Engineering Workshops and Laboratories

26th January 2016
Our Chief Guest – The Chancellor – Dr. Benson Wairegi
Chairman of the Council – Prof. Ratemo Michieka
Deputy Vice-Chancellors;
Deans of Schools;
Directors;
Chairmen of Departments;
Other University Members of Staff;
Students;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good Afternoon.
I am delighted to join you all during this auspicious occasion of the official opening of the Student Health Centre and Engineering Workshops and Laboratories. We are quite happy to have our Chancellor, Dr. Benson Wairegi in our University to preside over this important event. Mr. Chancellor Sir, thank you for finding time in your busy schedule to officiate the launch of these two important buildings.
I also would like to recognize the presence of other distinguished guests who have found time to join us in this commemorative event. As a University, we feel really honored to host all our esteemed guests.

**Our Chief Guest** today marks yet another significant achievement in our University—the opening of the Student Health Centre and Engineering Workshops and Laboratories. The idea to expand our Health Unit to a Health Centre was necessitated by the tremendous increase in the number of students. Among them, 70% are in the regular mode of learning and they require health services from the Directorate of Health Services. The Directorate equally promotes health by offering both curative and preventive health services to members of staff and a significant number of their dependants.

As we all appreciate, health is wealth. Without sound health, our students and staff cannot perform optimally. Indeed, the level of productivity for any human being is significantly depended on their health. As a University, we do not take the health of our students and staff for granted – we value and invest in it. On average, over **5,500** patients visit the Directorate of Health Services to seek treatment. In the year, 2015, the Directorate served a total of **66,373** patients. Besides, serving the University community, the Directorate especially
due to its proximity and situation also handles a substantial proportion of emergencies mainly from accidents on Thika Super Highway and the neighboring communities.

**Mr. Chancellor Sir**, It is from this backdrop that the University Management with the support from the University Council, embarked on this bold move to expand our health facilities in the University. I am happy to note that beside the conventional sections including clinical, physiotherapy and pharmacy among others; the University has further been able to establish specialized clinics based on campus. These clinics include: the Dental clinic, ENT, Gynecology, Diabetics, Nutrition, Youth friendly reproductive health services and a Comprehensive Care Centre.

**Our Chief Guest**, I am glad to report that the new Directorate of Health Services Building offers various facilities including:

- A spacious reception to cater for the needs of our students, a triage and observation and emergency rooms to better manage acute illnesses among students. This will be in the ground floor which also houses the drug store and store and pharmacy heads.
- The First (1st) floor houses a modern laboratory for both students and staff. The laboratory is envisaged to offer a wide
range of pathological investigations that will enable doctors and clinicians manage patient ailments more efficiently and effectively.

The Second (2\textsuperscript{nd}) floor will accommodate the administrative arm of the Directorate. Among the offices in this floor include that of the Director, the secretariat, heads of clinical and nursing services, administrators and other support staff. This arrangement is envisioned to enhance quality of services delivery to the patients. This will also free more spaces in the old building enabling the reorganization of service delivery points leading to improved provision of clinical services.

On the other hand, Mr. Chancellor Sir, the completion, equipping and actual opening of the Engineering Workshops is something the University has been looking forward to. With the ever increasing need for qualified engineers to support our growing economy in the Country and the region, there is need to successfully train and graduate engineers with the right knowledge that goes beyond mere theories. The University highly appreciates that Engineering is a practicing profession hence the need for training facilities that fully prepares our engineering students to the actual work of harnessing and modifying the available resources for the creation of beneficial technologies.
It is gratifying to note that our Engineering programmes including Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering, and Electrical and Electronic Engineering are accredited by the Engineering Board of Kenya (EBK). Also, the accreditation process of the other programmes is at an advanced stage. And now, with the completion and operationalization of the workshops and laboratories that we are witnessing here today, we are more armed to ensure the accreditation process is even faster.

Our Chief Guest, the new engineering workshops will highly facilitate practicals for both Civil Engineering and Agricultural and Bio-systems Engineering. The provision of the modern training equipment in these workshops will go a long way to provide opportunities for our students to relate theory to practice in concrete, hydraulics and soil engineering fields.

As I conclude, I would like to thank the University Council for approving the funds to put up these facilities. Also, I would like to thank the entire Kenyatta University team that was involved in the day to day building and management of this project, and my management team for ensuring timely completion of these projects.
With those few remarks, it is now my pleasure to invite, Chairman of Council, Prof. Ratemo Michieka to make his remarks and invite our Chief Guest.

Thank you.