



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

Speech by

PROF. PAUL K. WAINAINA

VICE-CHANCELLOR

On the Occasion of

THE 46TH GRADUATION CEREMONY

Held on

FRIDAY 26TH JULY 2019

- ✚ The Chancellor, Kenyatta University - Dr. Benson I. Wairegi

- ✚ The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry for Education – Prof. George Magoha;

- ✚ The Chief Administrative Secretary and Principal Secretary, State Department for University Education and Research - Prof. Collette A. Suda;

- ✚ Chairman of Kenyatta University
Council – Prof. Shem Migot-
Adholla;
- ✚ Members of Kenyatta University
Council;
- ✚ Your Excellences the
Ambassadors and High
Commissioners;
- ✚ Chancellors of other Universities;

- ✚ The Guest Speaker, Homa Bay
County Women Representative in
the National Assembly – Hon.
Gladys Wanga;
- ✚ Vice-Chancellors present;
- ✚ Members of Kenyatta University
Senate;
- ✚ Staff and Students of Kenyatta
University;
- ✚ Parents and Guardians;
- ✚ Esteemed Graduands;

✚ Distinguished Guests;

✚ Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good Morning!

Mr. Chancellor Sir, allow me to take this opportunity to warmly welcome everybody to the 46th Graduation Ceremony of Kenyatta University.

This graduation ceremony marks a major milestone for the graduands in their pursuit of self-fulfillment. It is the culmination of a long academic journey marked by challenges, but due to their resilience, focus, hard work and determination, they have made it. The graduands sitting here today are very different from the freshers who sat here four, five or six years ago during the Matriculation Ceremony. The two persons,

however, share the same resolve – to ***succeed in their academic pursuit.*** I take this opportunity to most heartily congratulate you on your success. **Congratulations!!**

Mr. Chancellor Sir, ladies and gentlemen, as we celebrate the 46th Graduation Ceremony of Kenyatta University, I am very pleased to report that we have a total of **7,038** graduands who have satisfied the University Senate and both internal

and external examiners for the conferment of the various degrees, diplomas and certificates. The graduands are distributed as follows:

- ❖ **93** Doctorates
- ❖ **539** Masters
- ❖ **5,682** Bachelors
- ❖ **25** Postgraduate Diplomas
- ❖ **547** Diplomas
- ❖ **152** Certificates

These include pioneer graduands in the following Academic Programmes:

1. Doctor of Philosophy (*Seed Science and Trade*)
2. Doctor of Philosophy (*Material Science*)
3. Doctor of Philosophy (*Agricultural Geography*)
4. Master of Education (*Speech and Language Pathology*)

5. Master of Education (*Educational Research Evaluation and Assessment*)
6. Master of Science (*Public Health Systems Management and Application*)
7. Bachelor of Music Technology

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I wish to assure you and all our stakeholders that those graduating today have been equipped with the requisite

knowledge and skills to make a difference in their own lives and those of their families, communities, the nation and the world at large. I also assure you Sir, that we have not relented in our tradition of continually reviewing and improving our academic programmes to keep up with novel knowledge and the dynamic needs of the society we serve.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the University is keenly following the ongoing national debate in the Education Sector, particularly the shift to the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC). As the premier institution and key player in the field of Education, we will continue taking the lead in giving effect to the new Competency Based Curriculum. In this regard, Sir, we have formed a high level University Committee of professionals Chaired by the Deputy

Vice-Chancellor (Academic) to guide the re-tooling of our teaching staff to adopt the CBC model; steer the revision of our pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes to CBC standards; and to work with and give leadership to other institutions and agencies in interpreting and implementing the CBC nationally.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I want to thank the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education for appointing Professor Fatuma Chege, our Deputy Vice Chancellor (Administration), as the Chairperson of the taskforce charged with driving the transition from the 8-4-4 to the 2-6-3-3 system of education. We feel honoured as a University that this momentous task has been given to one of our own.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, Kenyatta University as the mother of all Teacher Education Institutions in Kenya is committed to ensure that all students admitted in the School of Education in September this year and are expected to graduate in 2022 will be trained with a focus on the ongoing CBC reforms in the country. This will ensure that they have relevant skills in tandem with the requirements of the new curriculum and thus place them in

the lead to exploit opportunities created by the new educational dispensation.

Ladies and gentlemen, Kenyatta University has also continued to be a center of excellence in the performing arts including drama, sports and games. The University has continued to witness exemplary performances and is currently the leading University in Kenya and the region.

Mr. Chancellor Sir! I have the pleasure to announce that Kenyatta University has once again been selected to be the Official Athletes Village for the 2020 IAAF U20 Athletics Championships to be held between 7th and 12th July in Kenya. In addition, the University has also been selected to host the All Africa University Games slated for August 2020. This is largely as a result of KU delivering the **best ever**

athletes village during the ultimate edition of the IAAF U18 Championships two years ago.

Apart from enhancing the visibility and international standing of the University, hosting of these and other high profile events helps in improving infrastructure that is available for use by our own students, local and international stakeholders. I sincerely thank the Government, the IAAF, FASU and

the AK for the confidence and honor bestowed on Kenyatta University. We **promise to once again deliver a gold medal performance during the 2020 Championships.**

Mr. Chancellor Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen, Kenyatta University also remains committed to supporting research and innovation as one of its core mandates. Many of our members of faculty and students continue engaging in a

number of creative, collaborative and innovative research activities in line with our global commitments Kenya Vision 2030 as well as the Big Four Agenda.

In this regard, I am pleased to inform you that Kenyatta University is one of only 9 universities in Africa that recently won a highly competitive bid to host a Ph.D. Scholarships Program under the Partnership for Skills in Applied

Sciences, Engineering and
Technology - Regional Scholarship
Innovation Fund.

The fundamental goal of the
program is to train high quality
Ph.D. and Post-Doctoral candidates
to address the human resource gap
in highly qualified specialists in the
fields of Natural and Applied
Sciences as well as Engineering and
Technology. The goal of the
program is to continue improving

research and innovation capacities in the area of material sciences in Sub-Saharan Africa. The students admitted to study in KU under the above program will undertake their studies in Material Sciences, which is one of our niches.

In addition, the University has also been selected by the Inter-University Council for East Africa to host several postgraduate students on full scholarship starting this coming

academic year. We also have several research and innovative programs funded by the Governments of Kenya, UK, Finland, Canada, the Africa Development Bank, among many other organizations.

Further, Kenyatta University has received funding to the tune of KES 120 million through the Ministry of Education, State Department of University Education and Research

for Incubator Equipment Support to enhance the University's Chandaria Business and Incubation Centre. This is a national facility and Centre of Excellence for use by the Kenyatta University community as well as other higher education institutions and innovators in the East African region. I assure the government that we remain good stewards of the resources entrusted to us and will ensure their

maximum utilization in training, research and innovation.

In addition, Kenyatta University has also received KShs. 69 million from the Kenyan Government through the National Research Fund to establish a National Phytotherapeutics Research Up-Scaling and Quality Assurance Centre. This will be another center of excellence to support research and production of alternative medicines.

All these efforts have seen a tremendous improvement in the University's research ecosystem and infrastructure which has propelled KU to be among the top 6 Kenyan universities in the best 100 universities in Africa, according to the latest Webometrics Ranking.

Ladies and gentlemen, In line with our identity, Kenyatta University is organizing an international

Research and Innovation Conference slated for October 22nd – 25th 2019. The theme of the conference is: ***Research and Innovation for the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals and Kenya's Big Four Agenda.*** I invite you all to the conference and call all our stakeholders to support the university as we prepare to host the conference.

Mr. Chancellor Sir! Our vision of having a University Teaching, Research and Referral Hospital is close to being realized. With the opening and operationalization of the Kenyatta University Teaching, Research and Referral Hospital in a month's time, we see a great opportunity for improved quality medical education, research and training for both our staff and students in the health sciences. The operationalization of the

hospital will contribute to the provision of universal health coverage as envisaged in Kenya's Big Four Agenda.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, as a Center of Excellence in Teacher Education, KU has continued to record major milestones in Teaching Practicum. Between January and April, 2019, we had 1,836 Student-Teachers on Teaching Practice. Between May and August we have 6,075 Student-

Teachers. This comes to a total of 7,911 Student-Teachers on Teaching Practicum in 2019. This is the highest number ever to have undertaken Teaching Practicum within one year in the history of this University and by implication, this country. Out of these, 7 student-teachers have undertaken their Teaching Practicum in the diaspora in Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, China and France – another first for KU. This will help in advancing our

internationalization agenda as a world class university, and comes at a time when the British High Commission here in Nairobi is reviewing immigration rules to allow Kenyan students' longer duration and easier access to the UK for internships and industrial attachments.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen, the higher education sector in Kenya is facing financial constraints and challenges, and Kenyatta University is no exception. To address the challenges we are experiencing as a University, we have instituted a wide range of cost cutting measures as well as acted to improve efficiency in our operations. These include outsourcing of essential services, rationalization of Schools, Campuses, Departments,

Directorates and income generating units in an exercise that has seen some mergers, consolidations and de-establishments.

We are also paying particular attention to existing and new post-graduate programmes and examination processes to attract more students and improve completion rates, as well as focusing on research so that we use our faculty and postgraduate student

human capital to attract funding as is expected of a World Class University.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, we are optimistic that with these measures, complemented by continued support from our Government, partners and stakeholders, we shall weather the current storm and continue being a strong and competitive international brand able to fulfil its vision and mission. We will ensure that our

quest for cost effectiveness, efficiency and relevance does not compromise on quality and our mandate to serve society equitably.

And now a word of advice to the graduands; Dear graduands, a graduation is a watershed. It marks the beginning of a lifelong service to the society that has invested so much in you. KU has given you the skills and competencies you require to become a useful member of the

global society and to adapt to the dynamic realities of the modern labour market not only as a worker, but more importantly, as an **innovator** and **job creator**. I am convinced that although challenges will surely be there, and may sometimes look insurmountable, you are equal to the task. Maintain the calm and intellect that has propelled you this far and you will make your mark. Keep focused and desist from influences and activities

that may lower your worth and standing in society.

The timing may look a little off in the current economic situation where competition for limited jobs is stiff, but I believe you have the dynamism required to cope in a testing environment that requires you to identify and create opportunities for yourselves and others.

Finally, **Mr. Chancellor Sir**, allow me to thank you and those who found time to be with us today as we celebrate the Graduating Class of July 2019 and commission them to serve humanity.

Thank you and God bless