

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

Speech by

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VICE-CHANCELLOR, KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

On the Occasion of

THE 44TH GRADUATION CEREMONY

Held on

FRIDAY 3RD AUGUST 2018

- ✚ The Chief Administrative Secretary and Principal Secretary, State Department for University Education and Research, Ministry of Education - Prof. Collette A. Suda;
- ✚ Chairman of Kenyatta University Council – Prof. Shem Migot-Adholla;
- ✚ Members of Kenyatta University Council present;
- ✚ Our Guest Speaker, Dr. Florence M. Wambugu, Founding Director and Chief Executive Officer of Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International;
- ✚ Your Excellences the Ambassadors and High Commissioners present;
- ✚ Chancellors of other Universities;
- ✚ Vice-Chancellors present;
- ✚ Members of University Senate;

- ✚ Staff and Students of Kenyatta University;
- ✚ Parents and Guardians;
- ✚ Esteemed Graduands;
- ✚ Distinguished Guests;
- ✚ Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good Morning!

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to Kenyatta University during this joyous occasion of the 44th Graduation ceremony. Today marks yet another milestone in the University calendar when we meet to celebrate the culmination of years of hard work. This day is particularly significant for me because it is my first graduation ceremony since I was appointed as **a substantive Vice-Chancellor of this great University**. I will, therefore, start by thanking all of you present and those not here for the prayers and support, which have enabled me come this far.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me take this opportunity to most sincerely congratulate all our graduands who are assembled here today. We are aware that this crowning moment is no mean achievement; it is the outcome of many years of hard work, determination, and perseverance. I am sure you will all look back with satisfaction, knowing that you did not toil in vain, and that the Almighty God was always present to see you through. **Congratulations once more!**

Mr. Chairman Sir, a Graduation Ceremony marks a cardinal peak in our academic calendar. It is the ultimate in the delivery of our core mandate as an Institution of higher learning in the provision of quality education through teaching, training, research and innovation, and our mission of serving mankind. On this occasion of our 44th Graduation Ceremony, I acknowledge

the Government, the Chancellor, the University Council, the University Management, the University Senate, Faculty and Non-Faculty members, our unions, the entire student's fraternity, and our partners for their continuous contributions in pushing the Kenyatta University Agenda to help us realize our mission.

On this note, **Mr. Chairman, Sir**, I am delighted to note that these concerted efforts have resulted in the continual improvement of the University's Webometric ranking among the best in the world in the areas of teaching, research and outreach. In this year's July 2018 ranking, Kenyatta University was ranked 2nd in Kenya, 19th in Africa and position 1450 in the world, up from 3rd, 22nd and 1705, respectively, in January 2018.

Mr. Chairman Sir, the theme of today's Graduation is ***Education for the Attainment of Kenya's Big Four Agenda.*** The theme was chosen to underscore the University's commitment in pursuing projects and programmes that will supplement the Government's efforts in realizing the Big Four Agenda of ensuring food security, affordable housing, manufacturing and affordable healthcare. The graduation theme was extensively covered during the postgraduate research dissemination seminars that preceded this graduation. Our efforts in this regard include, but are not limited, to the following:

- ❖ Research focusing on food security, especially in the School of Agriculture and Enterprise Development.

- ❖ Operationalization of the 600 bed Kenyatta University Hospital, which will have a Molecular Imaging Centre with state-of-the-art facilities for cancer management and research.
- ❖ Establishment of the Phyto-Therapeutics, Upscaling and Quality Assurance Research Centre through an infrastructure grant of Ksh. 69,257,624 grant from the National Research Fund. This will be the Country's first National Reference Research Centre for herbal medicine, and will spearhead promotion of affordable universal health coverage through manufacturing of herbal/complementary medicine.

- ❖ Protection of the Country's water towers - the University has entered into an MOU with the Water Towers Authority, who have provided the funds for the ongoing first phase of research.
- ❖ Various research projects focusing on the prevention and management of Non-Communicable Diseases including cancers, hypotension, heart disease and type 2 diabetes.
- ❖ Construction of a pilot solar power plant, which will eventually be expanded to serve the University's power needs as well as become a centre of excellence and a valuable teaching-learning resource in the area of alternative energy generation using ultra-modern technology.

These and other related endeavours will ensure that KU continues to play its role in contributing to national development and the improvement of the quality of the lives of our people through teaching, research and community service, as stated in our Mission and Vision.

Mr. Chairman Sir, we have had our fair share of challenges in the past year owing to the drawn-out industrial action by unions, the prolonged electioneering period and the declining number in admission of self-sponsored students. We are in close consultation with the University Council and other organs of the University to implement strategies to offset the effects of these factors, both in the short and long terms.

Mr. Chairman Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen, as we celebrate the 44th Graduation Ceremony of Kenyatta University, I am very pleased to report

that we have a total of Five Thousand and Thirty Nine graduands who have satisfied both internal and external examiners and the University Senate for the conferment of the various degrees and award of diplomas and certificates. These include:

- ❖ 52 Doctorates
- ❖ 380 Masters
- ❖ 33 Postgraduate Diplomas
- ❖ 1769 Bachelors
- ❖ 1635 Diplomas
- ❖ 1170 Certificates

Mr. Chairman Sir, these graduands have been equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to meet the requirements of the local, regional and international labour market, in line with Kenyatta University's tradition of producing competent and marketable graduates that have a

strong presence in all sectors of our economy. I assure you that we shall continue strengthening and improving both our regular and value-adding programmes to ensure that we not only maintain this fine tradition, but also build on it.

As I conclude, my advice goes to the graduands gathered here today. Kenyatta University has set you on the path to self-realization and service to humanity. That is a life-long journey that you have embarked on. Embrace the journey with the courage and determination needed to last the course. Develop a moral compass to help you navigate your way, and do not be easily distracted into shortcuts that will curtail your progress. Above all, remain true to yourself, the ideals of our Country, and the dictates of the Almighty God in all that you do.

Thank you and God bless!