

**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

**Speech by**

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**CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY**

**On the Occasion of**

**THE 41<sup>ST</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY**

**Held on**

**FRIDAY 16<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER, 2016**

- ✚ The Chancellor, Kenyatta University;
- ✚ Principal Secretary, State Department for University Education, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology – Prof. Collette A. Suda;
- ✚ Chairman of Kenyatta University Council – Prof. Ratemo Michieka ;
- ✚ Members of Kenyatta University Council;
- ✚ Your Excellences, the Ambassadors and High Commissioners present;
- ✚ Acting Vice Chancellor of Kenyatta University – Prof. Paul Wainaina;
- ✚ Other Vice-Chancellors present;
- ✚ Deputy Vice Chancellors;
- ✚ Members of the University Senate;
- ✚ Members of Parliament;
- ✚ Distinguished guests;
- ✚ Staff and students;
- ✚ Esteemed Graduands;

🇰🇪 Ladies and Gentlemen;

### **Good Morning!**

I am delighted to be part of this auspicious occasion of Kenyatta University's 41<sup>st</sup> graduation ceremony. May I take this opportunity to congratulate Kenyatta University and the graduands for all the commitment, determination and hard work culminating in this momentous occasion. It is gratifying to note that the university is releasing a cohort of almost six thousand graduands in different disciplines that are vital human capital for our country's development agenda; Kenya Vision 2030.

Graduation is the epitome of every student's academic pursuit. Therefore, the fact that we are holding a graduation ceremony today is a clear testimony that these graduands have successfully gone through the academic rigours of their courses to qualify for conferment of degrees and award of diplomas and certificates. Congratulations to you graduands, your parents and guardians, and your lecturers for the sacrifices and effort that have enabled you to attain this honor.

Allow me ladies and gentlemen, to most sincerely thank the Kenyatta University management for their effort to continually be at the fore-front in the provision of quality and relevant higher education in Kenya. I note with satisfaction, for example, that in September 2016 the university admitted 11,000 new students, thus giving opportunity to more Kenyans to acquire higher education.

**Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,** it is also gratifying to note that Kenyatta University offers diverse academic programmes which give students a wide choice. The programmes are market driven and therefore very relevant to our national aspirations.

I also commend the University Council and the Management Team of Kenyatta University for pursuing a path of academic excellence. The ranking of this University in Africa and the world has been improving year after year. Today Kenyatta University stands at position 29 in Africa and two in Kenya. This is no mean achievement.

We also note with appreciation that Kenyatta University has continued to make great investments in research and innovation infrastructure. Most notable are the almost complete Kenyatta University Research and Referral Hospital and the already thriving Chandaria Business Incubation and Innovation Centre. These facilities will go a long way in enhancing research and innovation for the benefit university and the country at large.

**Ladies and gentlemen,** Research and innovation are critical to the future of Kenya and to the achievement of the sustainable development goals and Kenya Vision 2030. We therefore laud the university management for every effort made towards building the requisite human capital and knowledge base to drive the country's development. Evidently, the university boasts of distinguished alumni serving in top positions in both public and private sectors in Kenya and beyond. I am one such proud alumnus. Keep up the good work.

The government and my ministry are committed to increase access to university education through provision of loans to students and support to universities for both infrastructural and staff development. However, the challenge of providing quality university education to all deserving Kenyans continues. I therefore challenge universities to continue to explore public-private partnerships in order to harness the much needed resources to better the provision of higher education. I also urge universities to work at converting research into effective innovations that can impact on poverty reduction and improve quality of life for all Kenyans.

**Ladies and gentlemen,** we are all aware of the recent challenges our national examinations have faced. You will agree with me, I hope, that quality education is the greatest inheritance we can bequeath our children. For this reason, I urge all to support our national campaign to fight against examination cheating which threatens to soil the credibility of our examination system. The quality of our education and the sanctity of our examination certificates should never be put in jeopardy.

**And now to you Dear Graduands,** Welcome to a new phase of your lives. On the other side of the KU gates there is a world waiting for new leadership and strong values. I therefore urge you to work hard and make your values your backbone. Your values are your compass to help you distinguish right from wrong. Always choose the right and usually the harder way. In addition, whatever your job demands in future, continue to feed your imagination, your sensitivity, your knowledge, your language skills and your ability to both persuade and understand others. This way you are guaranteed to perform better. I challenge you to take what you have learnt from the university and to go out with passion and determination to use your skills and knowledge to make a difference in our world. As Nelson Mandela said ***“education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”*** Use what you have learned at this great University to change the world, and leave it a better place than you found it.

Once again congratulations and good luck in all your future undertakings.

**Thank you.**