

Mount Kenya



University

SPEECH

BY

Prof. Grace N. Njoroge, Ph.D

CHAIRMAN, UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

AT

MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY 9TH GRADUATION
CEREMONY

ON

FRIDAY, 11TH DECEMBER, 2015

AT

MKU HAPPY VALLEY GROUNDS, THIKA

Salutation

- The Chief Guest, Hon. Eugene Wamalwa, Cabinet Secretary for Water and Irrigation,
- Chancellor, Prof. Victoria Wulsin,
- The Guest Speaker, Prof. David Anthony Maughan Brown, Emeritus Professor, York St. John University, England,
- Dr. Simon Gicharu, The Founder of Mount Kenya University (MKU) and Chairman, Board of Trustees,
- Members of the University Board of Trustees,
- Dr. Mohamed Farah Duale, State Minister, Ministry of Finance, Somaliland,
- Mr. Abdillahi Ibrahim Habane, State Minister, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Somaliland,
- Mr. Suleiman Jama, Director General, Ministry of Health, Representative of Somaliland,

- Prof. Hussain Hassan Gulaid, Executive Director, National Commission for Higher Education,
- Mr. Abdullahi Ali Jama, Ministry of Education, Puntland,
- Your Excellences, Ambassadors and High Commissioners present,
- Honorable National and County Government leaders present,
- Prof. Stanley W. Waudu, Vice-Chancellor,
- Members of Management Board and Senate,
- Members of the Staff,
- Graduands and Students,
- Distinguished Guests, Ladies and gentlemen.

Welcome Remarks

It gives me great pleasure to address you today, on behalf of the Mount Kenya University Council. This is a very special day for all our graduands. Please accept my sincere congratulations for your hard work, which is being recognized today through award of various Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees. This would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of colleagues, family, spouses, friends, sponsors and well-wishers, who sit proudly in the audience. I congratulate you all for this collective achievement.

A graduation ceremony is a time for both celebration and reflection; I hope that all the graduands will consider this day as just a step towards greater success in the future. This is not the end. It is the beginning. It is the beginning of a new life of responsibility, independence and personal initiative.

1. Human Capital

Our Chief Guest, Madam Chancellor, Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, universities are operating in a very dynamic environment.

As we strive to ensure that Mount Kenya University remains first among equals, we are continuously investing in human capital to ensure our operations - both academic and non-academic - have no equal. Thus, the management of the University fully supports her staff wishing to further their knowledge, both locally and internationally.

Our Chief Guest, Madam Chancellor, Ladies and gentlemen,

In recognition of the importance of continuously motivating and improving the human capital, the management has established a Vice-Chancellor's grant, which is used to support successful staff members complete their research in pursuit of their chosen areas of expertise.

2. Approval of policies related to welfare of students and their guardians

We recognize the need for a strong students association. Recently the University Council approved the amendments to the Mount Kenya University Students Association Constitution to reflect the views of all students at all campuses. This will not only strengthen the student leadership but also provide clear guidelines for management and development of the association in furtherance of the students' agenda regardless of their mode of study in the University.

The University Council has in the recent past also approved policies that promote the welfare and wellbeing of staff. We have put in place modalities to develop a policy on Alcohol and Substance Abuse, with an aim of guiding the students on issues regarding substance abuse, counseling and support.

3. Student performance on Co-curricular Activities

Our Chief Guest, Madam Chancellor, Ladies and gentlemen,

We at Mount Kenya University recognize the importance of participation by our students in co-curricular activities, as an important part of their learning.

We also recognize the importance of giving them a platform to hone and nurture their talents. In this regard, the University Council approved the establishment of the Institute of Film, Creative and Performing Arts, which is committed to producing the best talent among other students.

Early this year, our efforts bore fruit when we won the National Drama Festival title. The Chairman, Board of Trustees Dr. Simon Gicharu informs me that a major project, which will captivate TV audiences throughout East Africa is also in the works. Our students were also in the team that represented Kenya in the World University Games held in South Korea.

4. Preparedness for students exit strategy

Our Chief Guest, Madam Chancellor, Ladies and gentlemen,

In addition to the knowledge imparted to our graduates through teaching, research and academic trips, we have taken a bold step in ensuring that our graduates have the necessary soft skills in various areas, which include leadership, communication, and financial literacy. This is achieved through mentoring at club level, career talks and exit training, which imparts employability skills to every outgoing class.

Therefore, we at Mount Kenya University recognize the need to ensure our graduates are well prepared to face the world after graduation. That is why those that are not able to immediately secure employment become successful entrepreneurs, thereby becoming employers themselves. At this university, the principals of personal initiative, practical action and striving for individual success are embedded in the DNA.

With the new 2015 -2019 Strategic Plan, which we are launching today, we are even more prepared for a bold new future; a future that will be defined by rightly claiming our position as pace setters in academic and scientific research, molding highly competitive graduates and an academic infrastructure that is unparalleled this part of the world.

Thank you very much and May God Bless You all!

I wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy 2016.