



SPEECH

BY

GUEST SPEAKER

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VICE-CHANCELLOR, MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

**DURING 14TH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF
MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

ON

3RD AUGUST, 2018

1.0 Salutation

- MKU Founder and Chairman of the Board of Directors, Professor Simon Nyutu Gicharu,
- Madam Jane Nyutu, Co-Founder of Mount Kenya University,
- Members of the MKU Board of Directors,
- The Chancellor, Mount Kenya University, Prof. John J. Struthers,
- Chairman of the University Council, Prof. David T. Serem,
- Members of the University Council,
- The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Stanley Waudu,
- Members of the University Senate,
- Mount Kenya University staff,
- Distinguished Guests,
- Graduands and students,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

2.0 Opening Remarks

First and foremost, allow me to salute the founders of Mount Kenya University for the vision they have of contributing to Africa's emancipation from marginalization and poverty. I likewise thank the Mount Kenya University Management for the invitation as a Guest Speaker at this auspicious 14th Graduation Ceremony. Secondly, my gratitude goes to all the graduands. I commend you for the great triumph as well as achievements in your academics. Indeed, I am delighted to celebrate this occasion with you and I bring you warm salutations from Makerere University.

Ladies and gentlemen, today as we witness the graduation of these students, we both congratulate them and urge them to go and conquer the challenges in the world.

I wish to acknowledge the contributions made by many other stakeholders in Africa by ensuring that students complete their studies on time to go out there and help solve Africa's immense problems.

As I congratulate the Founders, Chancellor, Council and Senate of MKU upon this great achievement, I also compliment MKU Management for the noble decision about today's theme, namely, **"Financing of Higher Education in Africa for Quality and Sustainability."** The theme is very relevant and futuristic for any university in Africa today.

3.0 Sustainable Financing of Higher Education

Ladies and gentlemen, you will agree with me that the rapid growth in University student population is a challenge to the sustainable financing of higher education in Africa in spite of the public investment in the higher education sector in the last 15 years.

At the same time, our economies are struggling with many priorities to bring our countries out of poverty. Therefore, Universities are under pressure to increase financial base and control costs.

It is against this backdrop that I would like to address the following crucial areas that have enhanced higher education in Africa during the last two decades:

- Government Sponsorship of both public and private university students.
- The Governments' commitment to offer Free Primary Education and Free Secondary Education in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa,
- Scholarships and Grants for enhancing education in Africa,
- Indirect External Aid ,
- Diversification of Financing Sources,

- Scaling Faculty Research Revenue,
- Consultancy Services,
- Third stream revenue generation,
- University-Industry Partnerships, and
- Prudent financial management.

1) Government Sponsored Students for Degree Courses in both Public and Private Universities

Ladies and gentlemen, I am aware that the Universities Act, 2012, mandated the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS) to coordinate the placement of government sponsored students to all Kenyan Universities and Colleges. This legal framework is commendable. It has made it possible for students in private universities to receive government sponsorship and private universities to fill admission capacity that would have otherwise been idle. This is a step in the right direction for the good of the society.

2) The Governments' Commitment to offer Free Primary and Secondary Education (FPSE)

Ladies and gentlemen, in Africa most countries especially those in the Sub-Sahara region have embraced the commitment to offer free primary and secondary education. This has resulted in increased enrolment in public primary and secondary schools, a trend that will facilitate the attainment of one of the sustainable development goals, that of Universal Education. There has therefore to be a commensurate expansion of higher education all over the continent to enhance access to all. Indeed, we are relieved that the World Bank dropped its claim that higher education in Africa is a private good.

3) Scholarships and Grants for Enhancing Education in Africa

Ladies and gentlemen, in the course of a parent's / guardian's commitment in meeting financial obligations, the economic status of a parent may sometimes be a limiting factor and especially in financing university education. Scholarships are a viable option to students whose parents / guardians are disadvantaged. It is, however, important to note that a lot of considerations go into awarding scholarships; in other words, scholarships are awarded competitively. Some of the organizations and institutions around the globe that award scholarships competitively include:

a) The Mastercard Foundation

Through its Scholars Programme, the Mastercard Foundation has dedicated all her resources to supporting young people in Africa attain a meaningful education.

The scholarship scheme supports students wholly, including tuition fees, accommodation and upkeep. This is a rare philanthropic intervention by a foundation dedicated to Africa's advancement. The Foundation has supported thousands of young economically disadvantaged young Africans to get a life changing education.

b) The David L. Boren Awards for International Study

This program aims at supporting students studying in nations that are critical to the interests of United States of America, USA. Their definition of critical to their interest, simply means, areas where scholars can study the challenges of a global society including sustainable development, disease and hunger, population growth, and economic competitiveness.

c) The **Rotary Foundation**

The Rotary Foundation is dedicated to improving health and education and alleviating poverty all over the world. As such, it offers global grants to students to facilitate acquisition of competencies, skills and attitudes that support international activities that have sustainable and measurable outcomes. Target sponsorship areas include peace and conflict resolution, disease prevention and treatment, maternal and child health, education and literacy, and economic and community development among others.

d) The **School for International Training (SIT)**

The School for International Training is dedicated to advancing leadership and has locations in over 60 countries. To achieve this goal, the School aims at empowering local people and strengthen institutions through education, exchange and development programs. **10**

Target training areas are; urbanization, health and human rights among others.

4. Indirect External Aid

Ladies and gentlemen, it is important to recognize the fact that many bilateral donors provide support to African students studying abroad. This support, occasionally takes the form of scholarships. Many African students have benefitted from this funding. Many students in East Africa have benefitted from donors through DAAD, Rockefeller Foundation, Sida and KAAD scholarships to mention but a few.

5. Diversification of Financing Sources

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to appreciate the efforts made by parents and students in financing higher education following the enactment of policies and cost sharing in Africa.

The cost sharing concept has the advantage of broadening source of funding to Universities which in turn increases the financial base. There are many universities in our region, whose financing is predominantly by parents and guardians. We must recognize the sacrifices made by these patriotic Africans towards Africa's total emancipation.

6. Third Stream Income as a Means of Funding Higher Education

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the Third Stream income derived from sources other than public funding (first stream income) and fees (second stream income) is critical in mitigating some of the funding challenges facing universities in Africa. There is no doubt, that if African universities are to remain competitive on the international arena, they cannot depend on government funding and fees alone.

I would like to commend African universities for formulating and implementing policies that promote third stream income generating activities. The income generating activities in African universities are a good example of an entrepreneurial approach to funding universities. To this end, I would commend Mount Kenya University for establishing the Research Enterprise, Innovation and Development Centre, Mount Kenya University Foundation, Graduate Enterprise Academy, Equip Africa Institute and Centre for Professional Development whose mandate is to coordinate third stream income generating activities.

7. Scaling Faculty Research Revenue

Mr. Chancellor Sir, Ladies and gentlemen, the faculty do research and publish primarily because of personal motivation.

In addition, promotion, salary, teaching load, tenure status and reward and sanction schemes influence faculty research productivity. Research grants are a critical source of income for universities. Therefore, promotion of research through clear policies will scale up income generation related to research activities.

8. Consultancy Services

Consultancy services offered by faculty at an agreed cost besides providing opportunity for faculty to maintain professional skills, they are also a critical source of income to a University. However, such consultancy works must be undertaken within an accountability policy framework. To this end, I commend universities that have administrative and policy support for consultancies by the faculty.

9. University-Industry Partnerships

Ladies and gentlemen, University-Industry Partnerships promote academic growth and economic development as a result of pooling and sharing resources such as finance that result in synergy creation. Therefore, there is need for universities to forge relationships with industries to promote collaborative income generating activities.

10. Prudent Financial Management

Ladies and gentlemen, prudent financial management is the best practice for a university. Internal transparency and accountability guided by a policy framework on financial matters promote cost-cutting and attract external funding. Remember that a donor is only willing to invest in an organization that has best financial management and reporting. To this end, for universities to be able to sustain their financial base, there has to be a clear policy framework on financial management and reporting.

4.0 Conclusion

Finally, in conclusion, I want to encourage you the graduands to take the idea of freedom that you have found here at this Great University and make it ideal wherever you find yourselves. Living freely creates more freedom. I want you to continue your interest in education. We are living in a global knowledge economy and Africa's hope is in you young people who have acquired a good education from MKU. You may not all become professors, engineers, accountants or any of the other white collar destinations, but you have been empowered to think and live responsibly and create jobs for yourselves and others. Remember that sacrifices have been made so that you can be psychologically emancipated. It is now your responsibility to prove to the world that all these investments were not in vain. Put passion in whatever you do and you will surely succeed.

I encourage you to engage people who are different from you and to live and speak with integrity. We all wish you God's blessing in your lives. Thank you!

Congratulations, again! And GO CONQUER THE
WORLD!!!