

Mount Kenya



University

SPEECH

BY

Prof. Stanley W. Waudo, Ph.D

VICE-CHANCELLOR

AT

**MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY 14TH GRADUATION
CEREMONY THEMED “*FINANCING OF HIGHER
EDUCATION IN AFRICA FOR QUALITY AND
SUSTAINABILITY*”**

ON

FRIDAY, 3RD AUGUST, 2018

AT

**MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY HAPPY VALLEY
GROUNDS, THIKA**

1.0 Salutations:

- Guest Speaker, Prof. Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, Vice-Chancellor, Makerere University,
- Prof. John Stuthers, Chancellor, Mount Kenya University,
- Prof. Simon N. Gicharu, CBS, Founder of Mount Kenya University (MKU) and Chairman, Board of Directors,
- Madam Jane Nyutu, Co-Founder of Mount Kenya University,
- Members of the University Board of Directors,
- Prof. David K. Serem, Chairman, University Council,
- Members of the University Council,
- Honorable Cabinet Secretaries present,
- Honorable Principal Secretaries present,
- Honorable Members of Parliament present,
- Your Excellences, Ambassadors and High Commissioners present,
- Honorable National and County Government leaders present,
- Vice-Chancellors of other Universities Present,
- Members of Management Board and Senate,
- Members of the Staff,
- Graduands and Students,
- Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

2.0 Welcome Remarks

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the University fraternity, I welcome you all to the Mount Kenya University 14th Graduation Ceremony. All our distinguished guests, kindly receive our heartfelt appreciation for accepting our invitation to participate in this auspicious occasion. To the graduands, congratulation for fulfilling all academic programme requirements for conferment of various degrees, and award of various diplomas and certificates.

3.0 Opening Remarks

Mr Chancellor Sir, today we celebrate the academic achievements of six thousand and ninety seven (6,097) Graduands who fulfilled all academic programme requirements for conferment of various degrees and award of diplomas and certificates as follows:

- i. Seven (7) Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Degrees,
- ii. Two Hundred and Sixty Seven (267) Masters Degrees,
- iii. Ninety Six (96) Postgraduate Diplomas,
- iv. Four Thousand, Two Hundred and Twenty Six (4,226) Bachelors' Degrees,
- v. One Thousand, Three Hundred and Two (1,302) Diplomas and
- vi. One Hundred and Ninety Nine (199) Certificates.

4.0 Mount Kenya University Academic Resources

Mr Chancellor, the Guest Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen, a University is a place where freedom of thought and inquiry is supreme. Therefore, allowing for self-determination and autonomy, perhaps the greatest individual right. It transforms people's life through education. Taking cognizance of the importance of education, access to higher education should be continuously expanded.

In this regard, Mount Kenya University has been a pacesetter in introducing innovative fee policy and mode of delivery of higher education. To this end, using information and communication technologies (ICTs), the University has allowed students who previously could not pursue higher education due to competing exigencies of work and family, and due to distance and time, to surmount those challenges. Indeed, Mr Chancellor Sir, the University Directorate of Open, Distance and Electronic Learning (ODEL) Centres complemented by the Open, Distance and Electronic Learning Centres has made higher education accessible and significantly affordable.

Mr Chancellor Sir, the University is also alive to the fact that the paramount reason of its existence is to mitigate societal challenges.

To this end, the University has endeavoured to align its curricula to the Kenya's Vision 2030; Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 (STISA-2024) and African Union Agenda 2063; and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ladies and gentlemen, the University revises its programmes regularly to ensure that the programmes serve the intended purpose. In 2018, the University Senate approved 52 reviewed programmes namely;

- One (1) Masters Degree Programme,
- One (1) Postgraduate Diploma Programme
- Eleven (11) Bachelors Degree Programmes
- Twenty nine (29) Diploma Programmes and
- Ten (10) Certificate Programmes.

Ladies and gentlemen, the University has internal quality assurance mechanisms that ensure the highest standard of implementing its programmes. The University also works closely with the Commission for University Education (CUE) and other relevant professional bodies in monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the university academic programmes implementation process. One of the outcomes of working closely with regulatory bodies is the recent approval of the Diploma in Animal Health and Production Programme by the Kenya Veterinary Board and licensing of Mount Kenya University School of Law as a legal education provider by the Council of Legal Education.

Mr Chancellor Sir, the internal quality assurance mechanisms, mentorship services and the academic advisory services ensure that MKU education and training produce graduates who have the desired knowledge, skills, creative abilities and moral qualities.

Taking cognizance of the need to guide students on matters related to career, the University is in the process of institutionalizing the Office of Career Services.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are all aware that participatory leadership allows input from stakeholders in the process of decision making, which in turn, ensures ownership of decisions leading to minimal operational disruptions. Through the participatory process, the *Mount Kenya University Students Association* (MKUSA) Constitution was amended to align it to the Universities (Amendment) Act 2016 requirements on student elections.

Mr Chancellor Sir, allow me at this juncture to thank all Mount Kenya University students and their leadership for being consultative in seeking solutions on matters affecting them.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, MKU students actively participate and excel in co-curricular activities. On behalf of the University fraternity, I recognize the efforts of the three University Journalism and Mass Communication students (Mr Ken Njenga, Ms Ruth Ondiso and Mr Samuel Gititu Wainaina) who emerged top after defeating 19 other universities in the “Top Story Season 2 Competition”, won a trip to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in London, UK and the University recognition award.

Mr Chancellor Sir, during Kenya National Drama and Film Festival, 2018 the “Unstoppable Resolve” the film by Mount Kenya University staff and students won fourteen (14) awards in the following categories including;

1. Winning Film Overall
2. Best Set Design
3. Best Costume Design, and
4. Best Cinematography

Ladies and gentlemen,

Security is core to a conducive learning environment. In recognition of this, the University has successfully implemented the Biometric Security system at the Main Campus, Thika, where all students and staff have to be biometrically verified and authenticated to access the University facilities. The Biometric system supplements other existing security measures.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The hallmark of great Universities is research and innovation. Mr Chancellor Sir, the investment in building a robust research culture continues to bear fruits. For example, there is an increase in publications in peer reviewed journals, and participation in research dissemination forums, which accord the university greater presence and visibility, leading to improved local and global ranking.

On research resource mobilization, the University continues to win local and international grants, with corresponding increase in local and international collaborative research. We also have continued to become an attractive collaborative research university due to our policy of efficient utilization of research funds, as well as timely disbursement and accounting of donor funds.

Conclusion

As I conclude,

I take this opportunity to congratulate, Prof. John Struthers on his appointment and installation to serve as the second Chancellor, Mount Kenya University. To graduands, again congratulations on qualifying for the conferment of the various degrees and award of the various diplomas and certificates. As you leave Mount Kenya University, remember that you are destined for greatness.

I leave you with the famous quote of William Shakespeare from his book the Twelfth Night:

I quote “Be not afraid of greatness. Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and others have greatness thrust upon them.” End of the quote.

Go and become great! Serve your country with integrity!

GOD BLESS YOU ALL