

**Mount Kenya**



**University**

**SPEECH**

**BY**

*Prof. Stanley W. Waudu, Ph.D*

**VICE-CHANCELLOR**

**AT**

**MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY (MKU) 13<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADUATION CEREMONY**

**ON**

**FRIDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2017**

**AT**

**MKU HAPPY VALLEY GROUNDS, THIKA**

## **1.0 Salutations:**

- Madam Dorota Stefanek-Langham, the Representative of the Chief Speaker, Doc. Henryk Stefanek, Chancellor and Founder, Vincent Pol University in Lublin,
- Prof. Victoria Wells Wulsin, 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 National and County Government leaders present,
- Hon. Martin Moshisho, Deputy Governor, Kajiado County, Alumni Representative,

- Honorable Members of Parliament present,
- Your Excellences, Ambassadors and High Commissioners present,
- Members of Management Board and Senate,
- Members of the Staff,
- Graduands and Students,
- Our guests from Cincinnati, USA, Vincent Pol University, Poland and the University of West of Scotland,
- Distinguished Guests, Ladies and gentlemen.

## **2.0 Welcome Remarks**

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to the Mount Kenya University 13<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony. I also thank all our distinguished guests for accepting our invitation to participate in this auspicious occasion. To our graduands, receive well-deserved congratulations on qualifying for conferment of various degrees, and award of various diplomas and certificates.

## **3.0 Opening Remarks**

Madam Chancellor, today we celebrate the academic achievements of four thousand, nine hundred and seventy six (4976) graduands.

The graduands fulfilled all academic programme requirements for conferment of various degrees and award of diplomas and certificates as follows:

- i. Two hundred and fifty (250) Masters Degrees
- ii. Sixty Four (64) Postgraduate Diplomas
- iii. Three thousand, two hundred and five (3205) Bachelors' Degrees
- iv. One thousand, one hundred and eighty eight (1188) Diplomas and
- v. Two hundred and sixty nine (269) Certificates.

#### **4.0 Mount Kenya University Academic Matters**

Madam Chancellor, the Guest Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, the landscape of higher education in Kenya and indeed in the region is rapidly changing in response to changing demographic trends, as well as increasing need for accessibility and affordability to higher education. Institutions of higher learning must, therefore, be flexible and innovative in their mode of delivery and management of higher education. To this end, I am pleased that Mount Kenya University has deliberately adopted Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as media of delivery of learning to surmount the spatial-temporal challenges of traditional classrooms.

Madam Chancellor, I am glad to report that, the University established Open, Distance and Electronic Learning (ODEL) Centres in Malindi, Kericho, Nyeri and recently at Kigali Campus in Rwanda. The Centres are well complemented by the MKU Digital Varsity.

As a University, we also reckon that institutions of higher learning must exist to address societal challenges. In this regard, academic programmes should reflect the needs of the society, national and global development targets.

Towards this end, Mount Kenya University reviews its programmes regularly, and in 2017, the University Senate approved eleven (11) reviewed programmes namely:

- Bachelor of Laws
- Bachelor of Science in Health Records and Information Management
- Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and Rural Development
- Bachelor of Counselling Psychology
- Master of Science in Medical Laboratory Sciences
- Master of Science in Information Technology
- Master of Science in Information Science
- Master of Arts in Geography



- Master of Arts in History
- Master of Arts in English Literature
- Master of Education

## **5.0 Student Matters**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Mount Kenya University also recognizes that the welfare of students must be prioritized for sustainability of a conducive learning environment. The University continues to enjoy great stability that is largely attributed to incorporation of student representation in various decision-making levels of the University.

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to thank Mount Kenya University Student Association (MKUSA) leadership for being a good partner in seeking solutions on matters affecting the University. Madam Chancellor, allow me also to note that we have aligned the University student leadership with the Universities (Amendment) Act 2016.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are living at a time when security at higher institutions must also be prioritized. I am glad to announce that this year, Mount Kenya University has adopted a Biometric Security system, where all students and staff have to be biometrically verified and authenticated before accessing the University facilities.

To ensure students' safety on and off campus, the University installed floodlights, increased security awareness campaigns, and intensified night security patrols off campus and especially in areas where off-campus students reside. Madam Chancellor, I am glad to further underscore the University's commitment to security, we have established the Directorate of Security Services with the mandate of ensuring that safety and security are prioritized at the University.

## **6.0 Research**

Ladies and gentlemen, Universities are set apart from other learning institutions by their ability to generate knowledge through research.

The University research output continues to abound due to deliberate efforts of funding research through internal and external funding avenues. Due to increased publications and participation in research dissemination forums, the University continues to have greater visibility, with improved local and global ranking. For instance, it is gratifying to note that the University was ranked the best in Kenya in regard to *presence ranking* in 2017. Additionally, MKU was ranked position 106 out of the 200 best universities in Africa.

On resource mobilization for research, the University in 2017 won community-g geared research grants worth KSHS 200 million (Two Hundred Million Shillings) from national, regional and international partners including the National Research Fund, Africa Academy of Sciences, Grand Challenges Africa, and Grand Challenges Canada.

Madam Chancellor, to maintain the tempo of growth in research and innovation at the University, the University Management has restructured the Directorate of Research, Grants and Endowments to create the Directorate of Research and Innovation, with some of its mandates being transferred to the newly established Mount Kenya University Foundation.

Ladies and gentlemen, we also continue to align our research policies and guidelines to the current and emerging research trends. Recently, we have reviewed the Vice-Chancellor's Research and Innovation Grant Policy to ensure that more staff members benefit from our internal seed funding that supports knowledge generation and dissemination.

## **7.0 Quality Assurance**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Quality is the hallmark of any academic achievement. The University, therefore, continues to incorporate effective quality assurance and control mechanisms in our operations.

Madam Chancellor, ISO 9001:2008 quality standards that we are operating under since 2013 will expire in 2018. I am glad to report that the Directorate of Quality Assurance and Linkages is on course to spearhead a seamless transition of Mount Kenya University to the new ISO 9001:2015.

## **7.0 Rebranding**

Madam Chancellor, rebranding is a hallmark of a competitive business. To this end and in line with the University Quality Policy which emphasizes continuous improvement, rebranding of the University Logo has become necessary as a way of repositioning the University.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

As I conclude, I again congratulate all the graduands on qualifying for the conferment of various degrees and award of various diplomas and certificates. Graduands, as you leave Mount Kenya University, remember that you are opening a new chapter of life. It is the beginning of a new life of responsibility. Go and be role models in your communities. Aim to impact and transform lives in the society. Be agents of positive change. Serve the society with commitment.

Wishing you all peace, joy and all the best during this holiday season.

**GOD BLESS YOU ALL**