



DRAFT SPEECH

BY

Prof. Victoria Wulsin

Chancellor – MKU

**DURING 13TH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF
MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

ON

15TH DECEMBER, 2017

Salutation

- The representative of the Chief Guest, the Vice President of the Vincent Pol University of Poland – Dorota Stefanek – Langham,
- The 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,
- Chairman of the University Council, Prof. David Serem,
- Members of the University Council,
- The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Stanley Waudu,
- Members of the University Senate,
- Mount Kenya University staff,
- Distinguished Invited Guests,
- Graduands and students,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

Our Chief Guest, I am happy to take this opportunity to welcome you to MKU on the occasion of the 13th Graduation as you represent the President, Chancellor & Founder of the Vincent Pol University in Poland, Doctor Henryk Stefanek. I am happy to note that, the presence of all the guests from Poland at Mount Kenya University today signifies the power of partnerships as reflected by the theme of our 13th Graduation Ceremony.

I have learnt with a lot of appreciation about the strong partnership that has been established between Mount Kenya University and Vincent Pol University. I urge all the students benefiting from the program to take full advantage of the exchange program.

Ladies and Gentlemen, with a view to guiding MKU's partnerships with various organizations, MKU follows strictly the provisions within the robust MKU Partnerships and Linkages Policy which has been revised from time to time to cater for the fast changing and very dynamic world of partnerships. This policy has been instrumental in guiding MKU to forge into the following new partnerships since July this year as follows:

1) Partnership between MKU College of Health Sciences and Makerere University College of Health Sciences

The overall goals of this partnership are as follows;

- To stimulate academic collaboration between the two Colleges including exchange of students and faculty and to develop twinned curricula.

- To champion research in human health within the East African Region
- To stimulate internationalization of the programmes at both colleges.
- As a starting point, MKU donated Ksh10 million (USD 100,000) for a joint research in human health. We invite other stakeholders in the region to join this initiative by boosting this donation for sustainability and greater impact.

2) United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) Membership

MKU has joined over 1200 institutions in more than 120 countries of the world who are working with the United Nations to promote global priorities, including peace, human rights and sustainable development. This outstanding achievement comes after a successful application by MKU for membership to the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) and subsequent certification and goes a long way towards raising the global visibility of MKU's impact in the education sector. This membership enables MKU to provide an annual report to be shared on the (UNAI) data base where all the member universities indicate what they have accomplished every year towards education for public good. Some of the key areas that MKU shall show-case include our contribution towards;

- Access to Higher Educational opportunity for all
- Capacity - building in higher education systems
- Global Citizenship
- Peace and Conflict resolution
- Sustainable development, and,
- The “unlearning” of intolerance

3) Strengthened MKU – Family Bank of Kenya partnership

One of the very strong undertakings by MKU is the empowerment of graduates through mindset change from being job seekers to being job creators. The Family Bank of Kenya has journeyed with MKU at the Graduate Enterprise Academy since the inception of the GEA in 2013 through training of the beneficiaries. MKU appreciates the Family Bank’s contribution through this partnership. The Family bank has inducted the Graduate Enterprise Academy Beneficiaries into the prestigious Family Bank Business Club where they will receive free mentoring and networking from the Family Bank for one full year to take their business to the next level.

4) Implementation of the partnership between MKU – and Leuphana University of Germany

After signing the MoU between Leuphana University of Germany and MKU in 2016, MKU participated in Leuphana University’s

development of funding proposals sent to various donors. Preliminary funding has been obtained which has enabled 12 members of Staff from MKU to be trained and Certified Trainers of the globally famous Students Training on Entrepreneurial Promotion (STEP). The funding will also enable the MKU team of the 12 STEP trainers to recruit and train 200 MKU students and take them through some 12 weeks of the said entrepreneurship training between January and March 2018. During the 12 weeks of training, the 200 students will receive a total of Ksh 400,000 (USD4,000) in groups of 5 to practice the business concepts to be taught **“using real money, in real business, and in real time”**. After the training, the students will return the seed capital and keep their profits as they register their businesses.

MKU’s commitment to its mandate in community outreach

Our Chief Guest, as a commitment to the university’s community outreach mandate which is one of the three core – businesses of the university, MKU has engaged since July 2017 in the following Community Outreach activities among others;

- a) A one –week long community engagement in Malindi in collaboration with the USA-based collaborator referred to as the

Partners-for-Care whose continued engagement with various schools and Directorates of MKU is greatly appreciated.

b) The Bungoma County Collaborative New Born Support Project that commenced in November 2015 and ended in September 2017.

This project involved,

- i) setting up of neonatal special care units in 7 sub-county hospitals in Bungoma,
- ii) Training of 72 nurses and 18 clinicians.

c) The Kenya Primary Schools Heads Association outreach where different schools and directorates have provided professional input.

d) The MKU – Naivasha Maximum Prison outreach where the School of Education of MKU has for the last 2 years inducted teaching skills to the inmates who serve as teachers to other inmates. This induction is geared towards improving the standard of teaching at the prison as these are registered examination Centres by the Kenya National Examination Council. MKU celebrated the International Peace Day on 21st September 2017 at Naivasha Maximum Prison with inmates and wardens.

In conclusion, I wish to send a word of appreciation to all our partners who are mentioned above and others not mentioned here.

I also invite organizations in Kenya and beyond to join us at MKU to work together in university – industry partnerships as a proven strategy to reach out to the communities for the public good.

Before I finish, I wish to join others who spoke before me in congratulating you the graduands and wish you all the best in your career. I also thank our lecturers and MKU Management at large for a job well done.

Merry Christmas and a happy new year to you all and ...

GOD BLESS YOU!