



A SPEECH BY

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VICE-CHANCELLOR,

DURING

**MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY 7TH GRADUATION
CEREMONY**

DECEMBER 11TH, 2014

SALUTATIONS

- The Chief Guest, Prof. PLO Lumumba, Advocate of High Courts of Kenya and Tanzania and Director, Kenya School of Law
- Minister of Interior, Somaliland
- Assistant Minister, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- Assistant Minister, Planning and National Development, Somaliland
- Your Excellences, Ambassadors and High Commissioners present
- Honorable National and County Government leaders
- The Founder of MKU and Chairman, Board of Trustees, Dr. Simon Gicharu
- The Co-Founder of MKU, Madam Jane Nyutu
- Members of the Board of Trustees
- Chairman and Members of the University Council
- Chancellor, Prof. Victoria Wulsin
- Pro-Chancellor, Prof. Chacha Nyaigotti-Chacha
- Members of the Staff and Students

- Distinguished Guests
- Ladies and gentlemen

Welcome Remarks

On behalf of Mount Kenya University fraternity, I extend my warm welcome to all of you esteemed guests. I am humbled and grateful that you could find time from your busy schedule to come and celebrate with us the achievements of Six Thousand, Three Hundred and Three (6303) graduands. Our Chief Guest Prof. P.L.O Lumumba, thank you very much for accepting our invitation and honoring us with your presence.

Graduands

Madam Chancellor, Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, we celebrate the graduation of:

- Three (3) PhD graduands
- Three Hundred and Seventy Four (374) Masters Degree graduands

- Three Thousand, Three Hundred and Ninety Five (3395)
Bachelors Degree graduands
- Forty Eight (48) Postgraduate Diploma graduands
- One Thousand, Nine Hundred and Sixty Four (1964)
Diploma graduands and
- Five Hundred and Nineteen (599) Certificate graduands

Introducing the Theme of the Graduation Address

Madam Chancellor, allow me, to first highlight our theme for the 7th Graduation Ceremony: *The role of the University in Steering Freedom of Thought for Socio-economic Development*. The theme has the import of the role of universities in using truth with recourse to knowledge and reason to keep the society focused in the desired directions towards socio-economic development.

Congratulation to the Chairman, Board of Trustees, B.O.T

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Mount Kenya University fraternity, I would like to share the wonderful news that our Chairman, Board of Trustees and the founder of Mount Kenya University, Dr. Simon Gicharu was awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa) by Gulu University, in recognition of his contribution in the field of science education in the East African region. Dr. Simon Gicharu, congratulations! I am also happy to appreciate the presence of my counterpart, the Vice-Chancellor, Gulu University, Prof. Nyeko Pen-Mogi.

Mount Kenya University Quality Assurance

Madam Chancellor, our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Mount Kenya University has a quality assurance system that ensures that the services we offer are of international standards. To this end, the university embraces the following:

1. Effective implementation of the ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management System and
2. Compliance with internal and external quality assurance standards.

Recognition

Madam Chancellor, our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

As a result of effective implementation of our quality assurance system, Mount Kenya University won four prizes in the annual ICT Value Awards held in Nairobi this year. And for the second year running, the institution received the overall best award. Besides the overall ICT award, the university also won the Digital and Virtual Learning Excellence award, Best Use of ICT in Education, and ICT Manager of the Year award which was given to Mr. Joseph Mworira, the Director, Internal Information Systems.

Employment

Madam Chancellor, our Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

In a globalized world where jobs disappear in an eye blink and professionals must be attuned to the slightest changes in the global marketplace, students hope that upon completion of training, they deserve lifetime guarantees of employment. However, this desire remains a mirage. Driven by this conviction, at Mount Kenya University we place great responsibility on students to manage their own learning with emphasis to develop good transferable skills and attitudes.

New academic Programmes

Madam Chancellor,

As Huxley, an English biologist, said “The medieval university looked backwards; it professed to be a storehouse of old knowledge..... The modern university looks forward, and is a factory of new knowledge”. In embracing Freedom of Thought for Socio-economic Development, at Mount Kenya University

we look forward. This way, we continue to invest in the search for new knowledge through initiating new academic programmes and oversight systems. For instance, our new programmes are:

1. Bachelor of Science in Food Science and Processing Technology
2. Bachelor of Science in Animal Health and Production
3. Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Pediatrics
4. Master of Science in Statistics and
5. Master of Science in Nursing Education

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our new oversight bodies are, the Training Advisory Council for School of Law, the Training Advisory Council for Health Sciences (which include Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing and

Clinical Medicine), the Training Advisory Council School of Business and Economics and the Training Advisory Council for School of Education.

The councils will from time to time, identify gaps, opportunities, synergies and give advice on overall academic and strategic directions of the respective schools.

Postgraduate Fellowships

Madam Chancellor,

Besides initiating new academic programmes and establishment of Training Advisory Councils as I have already mentioned, the university has introduced Postgraduate Fellowships at Masters and PhD levels to facilitate enhancing of human resource development at postgraduate level. The fellowships will initially support 3 masters and 2 PhD students.

Research, Publications and Grants

Madam Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen

Through the promotion of research and free enquiry, the open contestation of ideas, Mount Kenya University generates and disseminates knowledge and understanding, through support of conferences, publications and grants. Between August and November 2014 the University supported 8 international conferences and 6 local conferences as well as 25 refereed publications.

Madam Chancellor;

I would like to further mention that Mount Kenya University co-sponsored and co-hosted the National Water Summit 2014 together with the Ministry of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, UNESCO, County Government of Turkana, Nation Media Group and Equip Africa Institute at Kristine Camp, Lake Turkana, Kenya, from 9th to 10th October 2014 under the theme: ***Water for Socio-Economic Development***. The Summit underscored the fact that provision of safe water as a public good is paramount for human health and increased productivity.

The fruits of this Summit will soon be harvested by various state and non-state actors.

Application of Knowledge

Madam Chancellor, Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen

Two fundamental and coherent lines of development prevail the economic and social changes in the world today. First, is the increase of a world-wide integration and interdependency of markets, societies and cultures. Second is the obvious trend to an information and knowledge society. Companies have to stand their grounds in rapidly expanding more and more dynamic and translucent markets. They are not only in a world-wide competition for customers, but also in a stiffening world-wide competition for limited resources. In this scenario, at Mount Kenya University we take cognition of the fact that knowledge application is the decisive parameter.

Whilst a university degree is a valuable asset, the rapidly changing world that we live in requires us to constantly apply

our knowledge, retrain ourselves to satisfy our life and work ambitions. In this regard, at Mount Kenya University we equip our students with ability to craft new career directions as opportunities emerge, and develop new knowledge and skills as their career evolves. It is likely that the jobs our graduates will one day have, do not currently exist.

To the Graduands

Madam Chancellor, Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

In the light of the views on knowledge application, allow me now to talk to our esteemed graduands. Graduands, the opportunity to train you is a great investment by families and organizations that supported you. The long-term development and well-being of our organizations and nation at large depend on how effectively you apply the acquired knowledge. It is incumbent on you, graduands, to ensure that such knowledge as you possess, is shared and passed on to others for effective utilization and, therefore, survival of our nation.

Conclusion

Madam Chancellor, Chief Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen, in concluding my speech, I wish our graduands all the best in their lives and wish all of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New year.

Thank you

GOD BLESS US ALL