



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

**SPEECH BY PROFESSOR ISAAC M. MBECHE, AG. VICE
CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, DURING THE
62ND GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON FRIDAY,
DECEMBER 20, 2019 AT THE CHANCELLOR'S COURT
FROM 7.30A.M.**

- **Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Prof. George Magoha**
- **Cabinet Secretaries present**
- **Chancellor of the University of Nairobi, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi**
- **Chancellors of Sister Universities**
- **Your Excellencies, the Ambassadors and High Commissioners Present**
- **Chair of the University of Nairobi Council, Prof. Julia Ojiambo ,**
- **Members of the Council of the University of Nairobi.**

- **Chairpersons of Sister University Councils**
- **Vice-Chancellors of sister Universities**
- **Deputy Vice-Chancellors**
- **College Principals and Senate**
- **Graduands, Parents and Guardians**
- **Staff, Students**
- **Partners of the University**
- **Invited guests**
- **Distinguished ladies and gentlemen**

Madam Chancellor, this is our 62nd graduation and I am pleased to present to you 8,428 graduands, one (1) of them will be graduating with a higher Doctorate degree, 56 with Doctor of Philosophy degree, 27 Fellowships awards, 2,130 Masters degree, 5,413 Bachelors degree, 54 Postgraduate Diplomas.

To the class 2019 graduands! Congratulations for a job well done. We are proud of you. We extend our

appreciation to the people who made it possible for you to complete your studies. Your lecturers and the stakeholders whose contribution through provision of scholarships, mentorships and internships opportunities has enabled the University to continue producing market ready graduates.

The latest research on graduate employ-ability index indicate that graduates from the University of

Nairobi are the most preferred. So count yourself lucky by default of being a graduate of this University.

Madam Chancellor, let me from the onset appreciate the University Community (staff and students) for staying calm and adopting a productive culture of engagement inspite of the challenges that we have experienced.

Recently some prophets of doom peddled lies on social media that University of Nairobi had discontinued parallel programs. That cannot be true! We shall continue to offer Module II/Parallel degree programs with a lot of vigour and passion.

And to affirm what I have just pronounced, I want to start by encouraging, the graduands who will be graduating in a short while to take advantage of the

conducive learning environment and immediately enroll for further studies at the University of Nairobi.

My admission team will dispatch invitations for further studies to all of you from next week. We shall give you priority in our admissions. So, expect my letter as you celebrate Christmas and the New Year.

To those students who received their KSCE exams two days ago, visit our portal and secure your admission immediately.

Madam Chancellor, the higher education sector has experienced tremendous growth in the last decade. We at the University of Nairobi have resolved to take a new approach that focuses more on quality rather than quantity; we are upgrading our infrastructure to

create more space and opportunities that will allow us to work with the industry and carry research with leading global partners.

One of such partnerships is like the one we recently signed with UNESCO-ICHEI, HUAWEI and Guanzhou Creative Technology and SUTECH University in China to enhance the use of e-learning and application of Artificial Intelligence in the Country.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you are aware that the government is currently implementing competence based curriculum(CBC) at the primary level. Those pupils will soon be joining the University in a couple of years.

**Jesus Christ the greatest teacher in history once said, “You cannot put new wine in the old wine skin”
– As we transition from 8-4-4 to CBC – we have to**

make serious changes by upgrading our infrastructure, reviewing of our curriculum and re-train lecturers, tutors and teachers.

In order to produce competent and marketable graduates, entrepreneurs and innovators, the University through the support of Kenya Government and French government have approved initial finance of Kshs. 3.5 billion to construct a modern Science

and Engineering complex with state of the art laboratories and equipment.

I have a firm belief that the facility is not only going to revolutionize the teaching standards of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) but also the production of competent scientists that will immensely contribute to the Industrialization of our Country.

Once completed, the facility will strengthen our position as the University of choice in Science and Engineering training.

Madam Chancellor, you are also aware of our commitment to contribute immensely to the success of the Big Four Agenda!

In the area of Health Care, the University of Nairobi in partnership with the Ministry of Health and the

East Africa community have established the East Africa Kidney Institute (EAKI) as a Centre of excellence for research and training on Urology and Nephrology.

So far, we have trained over 300 experts for dialysis units in all the 47 counties and 30 medics for KNH and the Private health care providers.

And today, 5 candidates will graduate with fellowships in clinical nephrology. They are the

pioneer specialists in nephrology in the region falling between North of River Limpopo and South of the Sahara.

Other important strides that we have made in enhancing diversity, richness and relevance of our programs include:

- **Establishment of the Africa Leadership Centre at our School of Business to address serious**

capacity gaps in the management of resources in the counties and public organizations.

- **Establishment of the Center for STEAM and TVET teacher Education to support Science, vocational and entrepreneurial training in Kenya.**
- **Establishment of Early Grade Reading Institute (EGRI) to conduct research and impart**

innovative teaching and learning methodologies in Early grade reading education.

- **Establishment of Department of Sports Science to promote the development of Sports as professional and academic discipline with high economic and social value to the society.**

Madam Chancellor, you recall that the government appointed the University of Nairobi to mentor Koitaleel Arap Samoei University College.

I wish to report that we have executed this role with great success. As we speak today, the first cohort of students that were admitted in Business and Education studies are currently taking their first semester exams.

I thank the Council and the Principal of Koitaleel University College (Prof. Joseph Misoi) for their focused leadership. The College will be launching its first strategic plan in January 2020.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A recent research carried by our College of Health Sciences found that the current methods of disposing

biomedical wastes in the country are not only outdated but have also been outlawed by WHO.

We have therefore partnered with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to establish a modern facility on Biomedical Wastes Management in Kenya.

This proposed facility will be of great economic and environmental benefits.

As a University we have a higher responsibility to protect our people and the environment from exposure to such toxic wastes through research and knowledge generation.

On the same breath I want to direct our Department of Geo-Sciences to investigate the frequent gas like emissions in parts of the Rift valley-in Solai, in Kisaju and Eldoret. Kenyans are waiting to know

whether they are natural gas or toxic gas and how do we deal them?

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me now to express our appreciation to the University Alumni Association and many other partners who have continued to support us with scholarships and offering of mentorships and

Internship opportunities for our students. You are the pillars that continue to carry this University high in its quest to be a reputable world class university.

Finally, I wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy new year. May God protect you during your celebrations and guide you safely to your next destinations.

Thank you.

ISAAC M. MBECHE, PhD, FKIM

AG. VICE CHANCELLOR

AND

PROFESSOR OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE