

COMMEMORATION OF THE 10TH INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NON-VIOLENCE

The University of Nairobi joined other Stakeholders in celebrating the 10th International day of Non-Violence. The event was held at Taifa Hall on Monday 3rd October 2016. This day also coincides with the 147th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi

The Guest Speaker, Prof. PLO Lumumba, Director, School of Law, gave a special address on the Relevance of Mahatma Gandhi in Today's World. Prof. Lumumba noted that the message of Mahatma Gandhi is as green as it was ever spoken. He noted further that there is no shortage of violence. He cited examples of countries like South Sudan and Congo; violence is creating the world that Mahatma talked about; an eye for an eye will make the whole world blind. P.L.O urged the audience to follow in the footsteps of the Great Mahatma by preaching truth, integrity, peace and non-violence.

The Chancellor Dr. Vijoo Rattansi noted that the story of Mahatma Gandhi is about love and humanity and as the University of Nairobi 'we are privileged to be associated with the spirit of Mahatma'. She challenged the audience to reflect on the philosophy of Mahatma by being responsible citizens who can ensure that our voices are heard without violence or shouting. 'We can live in harmony irrespective of our political views or affiliations'.

India High Commission to Kenya H.E Suchitra Durai highlighted 3 important aspects of Mahatma Gandhi: i) His life was his message; he was extraordinary and he practiced what he preached. His message was peace and non-violence. (ii) He preached the power of truth and (iii) philosophy of fulfillment of all; strength comes from right; means and ends are inseparable in that the means shape the end.

The United Nations Director General Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde implored the audience to protect the environment. She noted that Mahatma had predicted that things were moving in the wrong direction and people were polluting water and water bodies and the factories were polluting the air. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi the Director General concluded by saying, 'land, air and water are not an inheritance from our forefathers but a loan from our children we have to take care and conserve it well.

The Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi on his part said it was a warm day to deepen the historical relationship with the Indian people and Government and our commitment to peace. The VC noted that Mahatma Gandhi believed in achieving social justice through peaceful means and these are the same values associated with the University of Nairobi. He said 'we teach and thrive respect of human dignity. We preach non-violence'.

The University of Nairobi is the only place with Gandhi Statue in Kenya which was erected 60 years ago. The Government of India also presented a cheque of 1 million US dollars to the University for the renovation of Mahatma Gandhi Library.

The high profile event was attended by many dignitaries including Dr. Manu Chandaria, prominent business man in Kenya, Hindu Community, Dr. Kenneth Ombongi, Chairman, Kenya India Friendship Association (KIFA), University of Nairobi Senate, DVC's, Deans, Directors and Students.