

**PROF.AMUKOWA ANANGWE'S SPEECH DURING THE 70TH
GRADUATION CEREMONY ON FRIDAY ,15TH DECEMBER 2023 AT
7.30 AT THE CHANCELLOR'S COURT**

Cabinet Secretary for Education, Hon. Ezekiel Machogu

Hon.Members of Parliament present

Amb. Prof. Peter Ngunjiri, Kenya's Ambassador Designate to UNESCO

Excellences Ambassadors and High commissioners,

Council chairs from sister Universities,

Vice Chancellors: Mt. Kenya University, Daystar University, USUI, Meru University, Chuka University, Koitalel University, Zetech University, Technical University of Kenya.

CEO (KUCCPS)

Representatives of ABSA,

Partners: Dr. Sam Thenya-of Nairobi Hospital, Mr. Nelson Havi- Retirement Benefits.

Distinguished faculty and staff,

Graduating class of 2023 and the parents,

Ladies and gentlemen.

Let me start by congratulating the graduating class 2023!

Today, as we celebrate your graduation, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to each and every one of you and your parents. You have achieved a significant milestone in your educational journey and you are an inspiration to the community.

However, with this accomplishment comes a challenge. I urge you to go out into the world and become problem solvers, addressing the socio-economic issues that plague our nation. It is only through your effort and dedication that we can truly grow as individuals and as a community.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, I wear two hats! That of Ag. Chancellor and that of Chair of Council. It is with great honor and humility that I stand before you today as the Acting Chancellor of the University of Nairobi.

I would like to acknowledge the immense responsibility bestowed upon me by the Universities Act.

For the next six months, I will serve in this capacity until the new Chancellor is appointed by the President.

First and foremost, allow me to pay tribute to our immediate former Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi. Her steadfast leadership and selfless dedication have been instrumental in steering the University through numerous challenges over the last decade.

Under her guidance, we have witnessed significant governance and administrative reforms that have put the University on a sustainable path.

On behalf of the Council and the entire University community, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Rattansi for her diligent and selfless service.

We are pleased that she has accepted the role of Chairperson of the University of Nairobi Foundation, a special purpose vehicle she initiated to help drive the University towards financial sustainability.

As we move forward, it is our responsibility as a new team to carry forward the legacy of Dr. Rattansi and ensure that the University of Nairobi becomes the premier institution of higher learning in Africa.

Our long-term vision, as a Council, is to transform the University of Nairobi into a truly world-class institution.

To achieve this, the Council is committed to developing a comprehensive framework that aligns with global standards of excellence in higher education.

This framework will involve upgrading teaching infrastructure, allocating sufficient budgets, and providing necessary resources to create an environment conducive to world-class education and research.

Looking ahead, it is crucial that we align our university programs with the government's development agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.

By doing so, we can attract research and consultancy revenues from the government while also helping them achieve important milestones for the citizens of our nation.

We recognize the government's vision for introducing the new Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). As a Council, we will fully support the preparations to receive the first CBC cohort into the university by 2029.

The University must embark on upgrading the teaching infrastructure and allocating budgets to ensure a seamless transition to the CBC. The council

is committed to providing the necessary resources and support to make this transition successful.

Ladies and gentlemen,

When the current council settled in for work, we took a diagnosis of what is ailing the University. We identified and reflected on important issues that are crucial for the progress and growth of the University of Nairobi.

We found out that the University's growth is immensely constrained by a huge debt burden owed to government institutions. This coupled with declining government capitation, impacts negatively in our operations and financial sustainability.

As a Council, our top priority therefore is to liquidate the debt burden that the University is currently carrying.

To ensure the financial sustainability of the University, we need to explore various avenues for generating additional revenue. One important strategy is to harness opportunities in research, consultancies, and strategic partnerships.

These avenues can not only provide financial support but also contribute to the development and growth of the University as a whole.

I would like to take a moment to praise the current council for their swift action in addressing staff motivation issues. They are committed to

rectifying administrative bottlenecks that have hampered staff progression and morale.

To the students!

I implore you to embrace a culture of discipline during your time on campus. Rioting and wanton destruction of property are no longer acceptable in our modern world, where effective communication channels abound. Let your ideas be heard more than displays of savagery.

In closing, I would like to leave you with a quote from the great Malcolm X, who said, "*Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.*"

As we celebrate your graduation, I urge you to continue to embrace a culture of discipline, innovation, and problem-solving. Together, we can overcome challenges, address socio-economic issues, and contribute to the growth and development of our nation.

Let us all work towards making the University of Nairobi a beacon of excellence, a center of innovation, and a pride of Africa.

Once again, congratulations to the graduating class.

I wish you a joyous Christmas and a prosperous new year in 2024.

PROF. AMUKOWA ANANGWE, PHD

AG. CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI.