



SPEECH BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR UNIVERSITY OF ELDORET

DURING THE 7TH GRADUATION CEREMONY

AT

THE UNIVERSITY OF ELDORET GRADUATION PAVILION

ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29th 2019

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THEME: ‘SCALE BEYOND YOUR LIMITS’

Salutation:

-  The Chancellor, University of Eldoret, Amb. Prof. Judith Mbula Bahemuka,
-  The Chancellors from Other Universities present,
-  Chairman of the University Council Dr. David Ojaka,
-  Chairpersons of other University Council presents
-  Members of the University Council,
-  Vice-Chancellors of other Universities present,
-  Members of the University Management Board,

- ✚ Members of the University Senate,
- ✚ University Staff,
- ✚ Parents and Guardians,
- ✚ Distinguished guests,
- ✚ Graduands Class of 2019,
- ✚ Students,
- ✚ Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning!

The University of Eldoret, as a centre of Agriculture, Blue-Economy, and Innovation welcomes you all to its 7th Graduation ceremony. I am filled with joy and humility to once again witness the University

marking another milestone and a great leap of achievement. This being our 7th Graduation Ceremony, and Seven (7) being the number of completeness and perfection (both physically and spiritually), this celebration thus portrays a significant growth and coming of age of this University.

To the parents, guardians, relatives, stakeholders, partners, our neighbouring communities, students and the graduation class of 2019, ASANTE SANA for your support, prayers, and dedication, which has made us stand out within our sphere of operations.

Lon Watters once said that ‘*School is a building which has four walls with tomorrow inside,*’ an aspect we have strived to foster within our students. Just as Watters stated, our role as an institution is aimed at ensuring that our students view their surroundings from a different perspective. Therefore, today I urge you graduands to *scale beyond their limits* and reach for your goals.

Indeed, having worked hard to bring this University to its premier status, I cannot hide the joy I have in being part of this great Journey of our institution.

On behalf of the University Council, University Management Board, University Senate, Staff, our key Stakeholders, and the Student's community, I wish to extend my appreciation to the government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education for their continued support. Their trust in our leadership will not go in vain.

I do not want to forget my management team, senate and all our support staff for having done overwhelmingly well. May God bless your efforts abundantly.

Madam Chancellor,

During this 7th graduation ceremony, we are exceedingly proud to present to you a total of **3,800 graduands**, comprising of **27 Ph.D.'s**, **66 Master's Degrees**, **11 Postgraduate Diplomas**, **3,371 Bachelor's Degree** and **325 ordinary Diploma** for the award and conferment, and release to the job market.

The contribution of these **27 Ph.D.** holders from a young and upcoming university like ours is no mean achievement. My sincere gratitude goes to the graduands, their supervisors, and mentors.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The University has endeavoured to ensure that it meets its mandate as an institution of higher learning. Allow me to list just a few of our achievements in the recent past;

1. Student Enrolment

Currently, the University has a total student population of 14,174 students inclusive of the 1,800 first-year students placed by the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service.

2. Capacity Building

To improve on our Service Delivery and Governance, the University has constantly enhanced capacity building through inductions and training for our deans, directors and heads of quality units.

3. Student Enrichment/Work-Study

To improve on our students' training skills and community service, the University took students to the **Presidential Award Programme** in March this year, whereby they were imparted with

skills to make a difference in their various communities. On the other hand, through our collaboration with **Safaricom PLC**, we also managed to place our students on a work-study programme to improve and nurture their skills and expertise. Currently, we are in the process of implementing a work-study policy to complement our work-study programs.

4. Research and Innovation

To enhance research and innovation to meet the expectation of the Big Four Agenda, the University in the Academic Year 2019/2019 budget allocated 2% of its operation funds for researching and

innovation totalling to Kshs. 10 million. These are considered as seed money to researchers focusing on various research projects.

- a) In the Academic Year 2018/2019 the University attracted research funds worth **Kshs. 83,955,548/=** with Prof. Wilson Ng'etich bringing on board the highest research funds worth **Kshs. 9,274,491.85/=** through the McKnight Foundation.
- b) The National Research Fund (NRF) also awarded **Kshs. 2,017,400/=** research grants to **8** Ph.D. and **18** Masters Students to conduct research in various disciplines.

- c) Through support from the National Research Fund-Infrastructure Grant, the university received **Kshs. 50,000,000/=** for the newly-established Fish Genetics and Genomics Research and Training Laboratory under the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences.
- d) Other collaborative projects that are ongoing include; Collaborative Training in Fisheries and Aquaculture in East, Central and Southern Africa (COTRA), Barley Project, and Scientist in Crop Improvement and Food Security in Africa (SCIFSA).

e) On the Same strength, madam Chancellor, the University successfully held the 6th International Interdisciplinary Conference (IIC6) which brought together participants from Universities in Kenya, Uganda, and Nigeria. More Publications are expected to be produced as a result of this conference.

5. Outreach and Extension

On our Outreach and Extension activities, the University has entered into various MoUs with institutions both locally and

internationally. Through the MoU with Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, the University was identified as a Youth Agribusiness Incubation Center (YABICs). The most recent MoU being collaboration with the Natural Resource Institute-University of Greenwich, UK which will facilitate Student-Staff Exchange and funding of research activities in various fields. Other notable Outreach and Extension Programme the University engages in include Agribusiness Trade Fair, and Environmental Impact Assessment Trainings

6. Capital Project Development

Last but not least, we have managed to fast-track the implementation of various capital projects such as the Construction of Perimeter Fence (Phase I, II, III, & IV), the School of Economics & Business Science, Milk Cooling Plant, Health Clinic Annex, renovation of hotel Academia kitchen, School of Education Amphitheatre, and UoE Secondary School Laboratory. The University intends to finalize these projects under the emerging policies and guidelines.

Dear graduands

I vividly remember when I first addressed the undergraduate students during the Vice-Chancellors orientation address on Friday **4th September 2015**. Back then you looked fragile and unaware of your potential. However, my address to you was so particular on what you would expect at University of Eldoret, the programmes that we have to offer and the strategic plan (2014-2019) that we envisioned to achieve throughout your four-year stay at the University.

True to my address, you have witnessed a lot of transformation, which has shaped you into being the person that you are today. Use these lessons as a stepping stone into your future careers.

As we usher you into the new competitive work environment, I urge you to '*scale beyond your limits*' reach for your goals and practice all the knowledge, skills and wisdom that we imparted in you during your stay at the University. Michael Korda once said '*One way to keep momentum going is to have constantly greater goals.*' This is because, anyone can have a goal, but only successful people set greater goals and re-evaluate their goals to meet their desired objectives.

Just as our Vision states, we have moulded you to become future global leaders, ambassadors and innovators, who will transform this country into a better place to live in. Therefore, be determined to *'Scale above your Limits'* and move out of your comfort zones.

Congratulations to the graduating class of 2019, parents, family, relatives and university staff for making this day become a success.

God bless you. God bless UoE. God Bless Kenya

Prof. Teresa A. O. Akenga

Vice-Chancellor