



SPEECH BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR UNIVERSITY OF ELDORET

DURING THE 6TH GRADUATION CEREMONY

AT

THE UNIVERSITY OF ELDORET GRADUATION PAVILION

ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30th 2018

THEME: *'DARE TO DREAM'*

Salutation:

- Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education H.E Amb. (Dr.)
Amina Mohamed.
- Prof. Colleta A. Suda, Principal Secretary, State
Department for University Education, Ministry of
Education,
- The Chancellor, University of Eldoret, Amb. Prof. Judith
Mbula Bahemuka
- Chairman of the University Council, Dr. David Ojaka
- Members of the University Council

- Chairpersons of other University Council present
- Vice-Chancellors of other Universities
- Members of the University Management Board
- Members of the University Senate
- University Staff
- Students
- Parents and Guardians
- Distinguished guests
- Graduands Class of 2018
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning!

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the University of Eldoret, *the Flame of Knowledge and Innovation*, as we celebrate our 6th Graduation Ceremony today, 30th November, 2018. Seeing such a huge crowd of witnesses is a demonstration of your love and undivided support to our graduands and to us as an institution. Allow me to take this earliest opportunity to welcome all of you and congratulate our graduands, who have worked tirelessly, defying all odds to achieve the dream of their lives. As I congratulate you dear graduands, it is my

appeal that even if you forget everything I say today, please remember my urge to you, to *'Dare to Dream'*

Madam Chancellor, in our pursuit of academic excellence as University of Eldoret community, we wish to recognize that we would not have achieved what we have, since the inception of this university, if it were not for your guidance and outstanding strategic leadership. We sincerely appreciate you and will forever remain proud of you as our Chancellor.

On behalf of the University Council, University Management Board and the Student's community, I also wish to extend my appreciation to the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education for their consideration in re-appointing me to serve my second term as the Vice-Chancellor of this prestigious University. Your trust in my leadership will not go in vain. We will continue to work as a team to achieve our vision of making the University of Eldoret a premier university that is globally visible in knowledge generation and technological innovations.

Madam Chancellor,

During this 6th graduation ceremony, we are extremely proud to present to you a total of **3,477** graduands, comprising of **39** Ph.D's, **69** Master's Degrees, **295** ordinary Diploma, **3** Postgraduate Diplomas, and **3,072** Bachelor's Degree for the award and conferment, and release to the job market. University education in Africa is constrained by the low level of highly qualified manpower with Ph.D. qualification. The contribution of **39** Ph.D. holders from a young university like ours is, therefore, no mean achievement. My sincere gratitude

goes to the graduands, our hard-working academic staff and Senate for the work well done.

Madam Chancellor

Provision of a conducive environment for training high-level manpower is a very challenging venture in the present generation where demands are always higher than the available requisite resources. We have however, continued to make the relevant improvement on resources required to enable us to offer wholesome education. Allow me madam

Chancellor, to list just but a few of some of the achievements we have made in the recent past towards achieving our set objectives:

1. To improve governance, the University Council competitively appointed two (2) Deputy Vice-Chancellors in charge of Administration & Finance, and Planning, Research, & Extension, and also renewed the contract of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Academic and Student Affairs. New Deans and Directors were also appointed.

2. We successfully transitioned from ISO 9001:2008 to ISO 9001:2015 Certification and we have already received our certificate.
3. To motivate and retain staff, the university promoted two (2) Associate Professors to the position of Professor and eight (8) Senior Lecturers to the position of Associate Professors bringing their total numbers to 20 and 35 respectively. We are in the process of releasing the outcome of those to be promoted to Senior Lecturer position.

4. We have managed to oversee the accreditation of our Bachelor of Engineering in Agricultural and Bio-systems Engineering (ABE) by the Engineers Board of Kenya (EBK). The accreditation of other engineering courses is at an advanced stage. As we speak, we recently acquired training equipment for mechanical engineering worth Ksh.14 million.
5. To ensure all activities are implemented according to plan, we prepared and launched a 3D Master Plan 2018-2057 to guide the physical infrastructural development of the

university. Along with that, we are conducting end of term review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2019 with a view of coming up with lessons learnt which will be useful in the development of the new Strategic Plan 2019-2024.

6. In the field of research, the faculty published **257** articles in refereed journals in the 2017/2018 Financial Year. Currently, a total of **54** research projects are going on within the university in diverse disciplines. Our staff have also been participating in several conferences with outstanding performance. For instance, in the recently

concluded RUFORUM Biennial Conference, our students/staff won the **1st, 4th and 8th positions** in the poster exhibition which attracted hundreds of participants from Africa.

7. A total of **35** extensions/outreach activities related to ongoing research was conducted by various schools in 2017/2018 demonstrating the engagement of the faculty with our stakeholders.
8. We continue to create and nurture useful collaborations. Currently, the University has **42 active collaborations**

with various institutions of higher learning, industries, and community groups both locally, nationally and internationally on projects addressing various issues in various disciplines. The latest is **UNICARSSA Project** funded by the LEAP AGRI Group of Funding bodies and the National Research Fund - Kenya which is a collaborative project between University of Eldoret, Kenya; Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal; Makerere University, Uganda; and Royal Tropical Institute, Netherlands.

9. Last but not least, we have managed to fast-track the implementation of various capital projects such as the installation of CCTV cameras in strategic areas, the Construction of Perimeter Fence, the School of Economics & Business Science, Milk Cooling Plant, Health Clinic Annex and Hotel Academia kitchens amongst others.

Now to my dear graduands

We are ushering you into a new competitive work environment, where reward is given based on merit, personal devotion, and hard work. I once more urge you to ambitiously, purposefully and strategically '*Dare to Dream*'. Put into practice all the knowledge, skills and wisdom you have acquired in the last 4 to 5 years you have been here to impact your surroundings. You may have been the best in your field here at the university, maybe the toughest and respected student, but always remember to be kind. Dr. Rick Rigsby once said, "*Ego is*

the anaesthesia that deadens the pain of stupidity; Pride is the burden of a foolish person." Therefore, do not be blind to your weaknesses because of your ego. If you want to make an Impact in your communities, families and even to our beloved country, you must '*Dare to Dream*'.

Secondly, the job market is saturated with competitive and qualified graduates. I urge that if you want to do anything, do it right. This is because, in the society we live in today according to Dr. Rick Rigsby '*average does not count, being*

second best is not recognized, and good enough is not good enough if it can be better, and better is not good enough if it can be best.' So graduands '*Dare to Dream*' be unique, be different and be exemplary in all your actions, as image and character is everything.

I will leave you with this special story of a young man who was our former student, who dared to dream. In his dream, **Brian Kiplimo Rono** the Winner of *Be Your Own Boss-Blaze Season 2*, dreamt big and through his project as a potato farmer used the

knowledge he acquired from our institution between 2012 and 2015, to win the heart of many and emerged top in that contest. This highlights that our dreams are valid, therefore, graduands, always '*Dare to Dream*'.

To parents, guardians and family, thank you for your endurance, sacrifice and urge to educate your beloved children, spouses, and relatives. Your efforts are appreciated, as these graduands are your investment for the future. May the Almighty God bless you abundantly and please continue to do good.

Once again, I welcome you all to this auspicious occasion and thank all our partners whose contribution has made this ceremony become a success.

Congratulations, I wish you a happy festive season ahead and a happy new 2019.

God bless you. God bless UoE.

It is now my great pleasure to invite the Chairman of Council, University of Eldoret to address the congregation.

Prof. Teresa A. O. Akenga

Vice-Chancellor