



MURANG'A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

SPEECH

BY

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VICE CHANCELLOR

5th GRADUATION CEREMONY

MURANG'A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

WEDNESDAY, 15TH DECEMBER, 2021

- The Chancellor, Murang'a University of Technology, Prof. Justin Irina,
- Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, represented by the Chief Administrative Secretary, Hassan Noor Hassan
- Chairman of Council, Prof. Joachim Osur,
- Members of University Council,
- Vice-Chancellors present,
- Members of the University Management Board
- Members of the Senate,
- University Staff,
- Members of the Student Council,
- Graduands,
- Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the University Management, Senate, staff and students, I extend to you a cordial welcome to our fifth graduation ceremony. This ceremony, like last year's, is being streamed live via our University YouTube, Facebook and Instagram accounts. It is also being broadcast live on KTN.

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate all our graduands on successfully completing their various programmes, and are ready to be awarded and conferred their various diplomas and degrees respectively. It is a significant achievement in their lives.

Mr Chancellor Sir,

The number of students we are presenting for graduation today is 1,048, which is higher than the 902 that graduated last year.

Among those graduating today are three PhDs, who are the first since we were chartered five years ago. We consider this a significant growth.

The increased number of graduands is a reflection of the University's expansion in terms of access to university education based on our strategic plan. I wish to assure you that these graduands have been subjected to stringent quality assurance mechanisms, and are therefore well prepared.

Mr Chancellor Sir,

As we are aware, the education sector has encountered a number of challenges due to the effects of Covid-19. With the support of Council, however, we were able to continue with teaching and

learning through blended means. For this to succeed, we embarked on enhancing the ICT infrastructure and capacity. The University also established the Directorate of Open, Distance and e-Learning (also known as ODeL) to ensure that quality teaching for online classes is offered under blended learning.

Enhancement of quality in academic programmes has remained a central focus of our University. In order to enhance the quality of instruction, the University has ensured that teaching staff regularly receive training in their areas of specialisation. We have also continued to support our academic staff to train up to Ph.D. level. Furthermore, the University has continued to engage well-qualified and competent academic and administrative staff to implement our academic programmes.

Mr Chancellor Sir,

As a young institution, we are happy with the growth we have achieved so far, since we were elevated to a full-fledged University five years ago. Student numbers now stand at around 8,500 and are expected to grow to 10,000 or more by September, 2022. As a technology-oriented University, we are working towards increasing enrolments in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programmes. The number of accredited degree programmes being offered currently are 39, compared to 33 in 2020. The University Senate continues to focus on market- and community-sensitive academic programmes with the aim of ensuring that we remain responsive to the needs of society. With increased demand for science and technology based programmes, our University Senate, during the 2020/2021 academic year, approved a number of programmes aimed at

achieving our vision of being a leading University in Technological Innovation, Research and Training. These programmes include:

- i) Master of Technology in Mechanical Engineering;
- ii) Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering;
- iii) Bachelor of Science in Mechatronics Engineering;
- iv) Bachelor of Science in Agriculture;
- v) Bachelor of Science in Food Science and Technology; and
- vi) Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Midwifery.

In support of the Government strategy to train hands-on technicians, the University Senate has also re-introduced TVET programmes under a semi-autonomous Directorate.

Mr Chancellor Sir,

In pursuit of its commitment to research, our University has actively developed proposals to participate in the Knowledge Sharing Programme initiative which is a funding collaboration between the Republic of Korea and Kenya. Our lecturers have also continued to write grant-winning proposals, and currently we are hosting a number of research and development projects which are making a tremendous contribution to the improvement of livelihoods in the local community and elsewhere in the country.

As an effort to support the process of research and dissemination of research findings, the University held her International Conference on Technology and Innovation for Sustainable

Development from 3rd – 5th November, 2021. I wish to report that the conference attracted many renowned participants from within the country and abroad, who addressed the overriding need to re-engineer training in Science and Technology.

The University has also established an Analytical and Imaging Laboratory in our new science complex. This has been made possible through funds from the National Research Fund (NRF). The lab is being used by our researchers for food, soil and water analysis. We plan to open the lab to researchers from other institutions and the community. Furthermore, given that this University recognizes the critical role research findings play once they are disseminated to the people, the University has established a journal focusing on Innovation, Technology and Sustainability. The initial issue of the Journal will contain the

proceedings of the International Conference; otherwise it will be made freely available online for the local and international authors.

In order to facilitate our research and training activities, during the 2020/2021 Academic Year, the University has entered into collaboration and partnership with various entities. Among these are: Murang'a County Government, International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE), Huawei Technologies Company and Konza Technopolis. These collaborations and partnerships are meant to enhance our research capacity, facilitate commercialisation of our innovations, support joint conferences and workshops, and expand our capacity to offer training.

Mr Chancellor Sir,

In trying to find ways to support the most needy among us, the University Management has established an endowment fund. The Management has raised over 1 million shillings from staff and students. We hope to organise a fundraising in 2022 to boost the kitty, in order to improve its capacity to support a significant number of those that may require support. We shall therefore call upon all our partners to assist in this endeavour.

Finally, for the graduands, I once again congratulate you on your achievements. I am confident that the training you have received in our University is of the highest quality possible and will be useful both to yourselves and the country. Best of luck on your new beginnings!

I conclude by expressing my gratitude to the various players who have contributed to your success. In particular, I thank our Government, the University Council, parents, guardians, staff, and all our partners for their support.

Thank you, and God bless.

[It is now my pleasure to invite our Council Chairman, Professor Joachim Osur, to make his remarks.]

PROF. DICKSON M. NYARIKI, Ph.D.
VICE CHANCELLOR