

**MURANGA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

**SPEECH**

**BY**

**AG. CHANCELLOR**

**PROF. JOACHIM OSUR**

**6<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY**

**MURANG'A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

**TUESDAY, 29<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2022**

- **The Principal Secretary, Amb. Simon Nabukwesi, Representing the Chief Guest, CS Education, Hon Ezekiel Machogu**
- **The Governor of Murang'a County, His Excellency Dr. Irungu Kang'ata**
- **The County Commissioner, Mr. Ngumo Karuku**
- **The Area Member of the National Assembly, Hon. Ndindi Nyoro**
- **Other political leaders present**
- **Members of the University Council**
- **Vice Chancellor, Murang'a University of Technology, Prof. Dickson Nyariki**
- **Vice Chancellors from other Universities**
- **Members of the University Management Board**
- **Members of the University Senate**
- **University staff, students, parents and guardians present and those watching virtually**
- **Graduands present and those watching virtually**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Good Morning,**

I am pleased to welcome you to our 6<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony. Today is a momentous occasion for Murang'a University of Technology as we celebrate the culmination of several years of hard work by our graduands. I join the speakers before me in congratulating the graduands who are set to receive their various awards.

Let me take this opportunity to appreciate our Chief Guest, the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, represented by the Principal Secretary, Amb. Simon Nabukwesi, for setting aside time to be with us during this graduation event. I also recognize the presence of the Governor of Murang'a County, His Excellency Dr. Irungu Kang'ata; the County Commissioner, Mr. Ngumo Karuku; the Area MP, Hon. Ndindi Nyoro; and all our political leaders from this county who may be present. Thank you all for gracing today's function.

I wish to thank our former Chancellor, Prof. Justin Irina, for the excellent leadership and dedicated service to this University. His 5-year term ended in May, 2022, but he has not been reappointed or replaced.

I would further want to appreciate the Council members for their commitment and stewardship of the University by ensuring prudent management of the University's resources.

Lastly, I acknowledge the efforts made by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dickson Nyariki, the Management Board, the Senate, and the academic and administrative staff in ensuring that the Vision and Mission of the University are kept in focus.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As we mark six years of the existence of this institution as a full-fledged University, I take pride in its tremendous growth. The University has grown into a distinguished centre in terms of research, innovation and academic excellence through the concerted efforts of all our stakeholders.

Institutions of higher learning continue to be a catalyst in addressing societal problems through research, partnerships, linkages and collaborations that positively impact the development of the community, the nation and the world at large. Towards this end, the University has undertaken key infrastructural developments which have created a conducive environment necessary for effective training, research and innovation. There are also a number of other on-going infrastructural projects that will help propel the University to the next level.

In an effort to live up to its motto '*innovation for prosperity*', the University is geared towards imparting the

necessary skills to our young men and women to enable them play an important role in the development of this nation. While graduates are increasingly being confronted with tough choices as they enter the competitive job market, I am confident that with their outstanding achievements in skills acquisition, they stand a high chance of success.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Universities globally have changed their focus and ventured into new and innovative teaching and learning modes. This University has continued to embrace technology by conducting innovative teaching, learning and examinations virtually. At present, online learning has become the new normal due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which is yet to be completely eradicated. I therefore congratulate the University Management, Senate, staff and students for embracing these new ways of carrying out the main business of the university. The new technologies have been applied under strict quality assurance considerations, necessary to produce well-prepared graduands.

Going virtual has also resulted in the creation of new networks of people and research collaborations beyond our borders. I am aware that the University will require

huge human and financial resources to strengthen its digital component. I therefore appeal to the Government to continue supporting the University financially so as to achieve its academic and developmental goals and in turn contribute to spurring socio-economic development.

Further, I wish to express our gratitude to the National Government, Murang'a County Government and other stakeholders for their support. Indeed, through this support, the face of the University is rapidly changing and has become a more conducive environment for training, research and innovative activities.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Speaking of research, this is a critical component of a university. Experience has shown that countries that have given adequate attention to research and innovation have experienced accelerated economic growth. We therefore urge the Government to implement its policy of 2% of its budget allocation to research and development instead of the current allocation of about 0.8%, so that more meaningful research focused on our domestic challenges can be carried out to fasten national development.

Kenya has, in fact, a large network of research organizations, including universities, performing

internationally recognized research. Increased funding will improve research production through improved research training at universities and increased incentives to perform high-quality research. It will also improve the research infrastructure that remains largely deficient.

Having said that, this University has equipped its research laboratories with modern scientific equipment. This would enable the University to contribute to research that has the potential to respond to the national, regional and international needs. The University Management has been thus encouraged to enhance support to the Faculty so as to play an increasing role in research. Further to this, the Faculty have been encouraged to make a deliberate effort to attract more research grants from diverse sources. This would strengthen the ability of the University to respond to emerging societal needs.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I wish to acknowledge the support the County Government of Murang'a continues to extend to the University. The County Government allocated the University 50 acres of land at Mariira to set up a new Campus where programmes on Agricultural and Environmental Sciences will be run. In fact, the University has students pursuing agricultural courses already hosted at Mariira, after carrying out a facelift of the Kenyatta Agricultural Training

Centre (KATC), where teaching and field/farm practicals are being conducted. This collaboration is one of the actions that would enable the University to contribute to programmes addressing the problem of food insecurity and environment degradation, while additionally increasing access to education. Such partnerships and collaborative initiatives have made it possible for the University to align itself towards achieving the commitments made in its 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. This in turn will enable the University to contribute towards the agenda and programmes of the Kenya Kwanza Government. I, however, urge the current County Government to consider the collaborative process that had begun but not concluded to build a swimming pool to be used both by the students and the public, in order to discourage students from swimming in rivers, which has in the past led to some of them losing their lives through drowning.

### **Turning to the Graduands,**

I once again congratulate you on your individual academic accomplishments. Today's graduation marks the end of one journey and the beginning of another. New beginnings in life are full of promises and surprises. I urge those of you who wish to pursue further studies either in this University or elsewhere to do so. I know that whatever choice you make, you will continue to play a pivotal role both as a graduate and an alumnus of this University.



I wish to draw your attention to three areas that are critical. **Firstly**, you are the brand ambassadors of Murang'a University of Technology. I encourage you to represent the University well wherever you will be. You can easily achieve this by upholding good moral values and a high sense of integrity. **Secondly**, I challenge you to become agents of change, aiming for excellence and distinction. I implore you to practice these principles throughout your lives. **Thirdly**, the University has given you skills to use to test ideas and to challenge the status quo. As you go out there, continue to test these ideas and to pursue excellence. Go out into the world as refined graduates, equipped with new knowledge and skills, willing to share and to contribute to the improvement of your respective communities.

Above all, be grateful to God, your families, your guardians, your lecturers, and to all those who have sacrificed to get you to where you are today.

I wish you the very best in your future endeavours.

**Thank you, and May God bless you.**