



**MURANG'A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

**SPEECH**

**BY**

**PROF. DICKSON M. NYARIKI**

**VICE CHANCELLOR**

**8<sup>th</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY**

**MURANG'A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

**FRIDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> AUGUST, 2024**

- **The Chancellor, Prof Justin Irina,**
- **The Chief Guest, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Julius Migos Ogamba,**
- ~~**The Principal Secretary, State Department for Higher Education and Research,**~~
- ~~**The Governor, Murang'a County Government, His Excellency Hon. Irungu Kang'ata,**~~
- **County Commissioner, Mr. Joshua Nkanatha,**
- **Council Members, Murang'a University of Technology,**
- **Vice Chancellors of sister universities present,**
- **Members of the University Management Board,**
- **Members of the Senate,**
- **University Staff,**
- **Members of the Student Council,**
- **Graduands,**

- **Distinguished Guests,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen.**

**Good Morning,**

First and foremost, I would like to offer my warmest congratulations to the graduands who are receiving degrees and diplomas from Murang'a University of Technology today. I hope that you enjoy celebrating your success and sharing the celebrations with your families and guardians. This is a very big day for you; one that you have earned through hard work. But it is also a very big day for your families and guardians.

Let me take this opportunity to express our gratitude to our Cabinet Secretary, Julius Migos Ogamba, for honouring our invitation to grace this Graduation Ceremony, as the Chief Guest. Thank you very much, *Bwana Waziri*. I also thank the Governor of

~~Murang'a County, His Excellency, Hon. Irungu Kang'ata~~, the County Commissioner, Mr. Joshua Nkanatha, and all other leaders from this County present here today. We further express our gratitude to the University Council Members led by the Chairman, Dr. Abel Atiti; the Vice Chancellors from sister Universities, the CEO of the Commission of University Education (CUE) ... and all other distinguished guests for finding time to come and celebrate with us today.

As a university community, we also congratulate our Chancellor, Prof. Justin Irina, on being appointed to serve in his second term. We always cherish your wise counsel that inculcates values such as duty of care, togetherness and teamwork. Thank you very much, Sir.

In today's graduation, we are privileged to present a total of over 1,300 graduands, who will be receiving their PhD, master's, and

bachelor's degrees, and also diplomas. This is an indication that our University has made major strides in academic development. The number of students has so far increased to more than ten thousand (10,000), made possible through the support of the Government and effective oversight by the University Council.

As a University, we have identified our niche to be Engineering, Computing and Technology, which we intend to continue supporting and nurturing. To support these areas of discipline, we have made the School of Engineering and Technology fully operational by ensuring accreditation of all major engineering and technology programmes. We have also continued to deliberately enhance support towards programmes focusing on computing, engineering and technology; without forgetting the rest of the programmes run by the University, since they are also important.

**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**

Our University has demonstrated significant progress in various aspects. In addition to enhancing its performance metrics, we have made substantial strides in implementing robust management systems. Specifically, we have successfully implemented both a Quality Management System (QMS) and an Information Security Management System (ISMS). These systems are crucial for maintaining high standards of operational excellence and ensuring the security of information assets. The implementation of these systems, coupled with the improved performance score, indicates our University's commitment to continuous improvement, quality assurance, and information security. These efforts contribute to enhanced educational outcomes, improved operational efficiency, and increased stakeholder confidence.

**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**

This year, we have made substantial upgrades to our core network infrastructure, achieving speeds of 1 gigabit per second (Gbps). This upgrade ensures that our staff and students experience faster and more reliable internet connectivity. This effort has been complemented by the implementation of a modular video conferencing solution with AI video intelligence capabilities, setting a new standard for virtual communication at the University.

To support online teaching and learning, the University has implemented a robust and user-friendly eLearning platform that is integrated with ERP and library management systems. This is aimed at ensuring effectiveness, engagement, and accessibility on eLearning content. The eLearning system has adopted the concept of modular learning. This involves a breakdown of

curricula into smaller, manageable modules. This enables learners to complete modules at their own pace, which speeds up overall progress. Further to this, our Open Distance and eLearning (OdeL) Centre was accredited by the Commission for University Education (CUE) to offer online and blended learning programmes. The University plans to launch a number of online programmes by September, 2024 and most of our postgraduate programmes will be delivered through blended mode.

**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**

In order to participate in sharing research information from scientists in our University and other institutions, we organised our International Biannual Conference in November, 2023 whose theme was “Harnessing Science, Technology and Innovation for Economic Transformation.” This event was a significant gathering for academics, researchers, and professionals, featuring keynote



addresses, paper presentations, and discussions on various topical issues. Participants shared their latest research findings, innovations, and ideas, fostering collaboration and networking opportunities within the academic community. The University also participated in the 4th Biennial Conference on Universities Research and Innovation, organized by the Commission for University Education (CUE) in June, 2024. Our University's innovations were ranked 1st runners up, after the University of Nairobi.

Further, the University played host to the East African Regional Workshop on Research Networking and Proposal Writing between 29th April and 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2024, jointly funded by UNESCO, the National Research Fund (NRF), and the University. This workshop served as a platform for capacity building, knowledge

sharing, understanding of the funding landscape, and formation of regional research teams.

Furthermore, our School of Computing and Information Technology students participated in the Inter-Universities Hackathon, held at JKUAT in November, 2023 and won positions one (1) and two (2) trophies in the category of Large Language Models and Block Chain Technologies.

We have also developed robust collaborations with a number of organizations and the world's best universities. We believe that these collaborations will enable the University attract the best students and faculty to our shores, thereby creating a truly world class university melting pot. It will also greatly enrich student's social and learning experience on campus and promote excellence in student-centred service delivery. I also wish to mention that through these collaborations, we have received two

students from Tunisia under the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE).

**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**

This University does not concentrate only on academics. We also subscribe to the popular saying that 'all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' Participation in sports and games makes us active, bright and whole. For instance, our Women Rugby team was crowned the National Champions in 2024, while our Drama and Music Club took position one (1) in the National Music Festival that was held in Mombasa in the same year. The University will continue to improve on developing extra-curricula facilities. We are cognisant of the fact that world over, universities continue to invest in sports facilities that have seen significant revenue contribution through sport signings as well as arena leases for international sport competitions. Therefore, with the

right investment, aside from providing good recreation opportunities for our students, we could tap the many talents that would earn Kenya the pride of place in the international sports circles and provide gainful economic opportunities for the youth.

**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**

I wish to conclude by sincerely thanking the University Council for guiding and providing strategic direction for the Management. My gratitude also goes to the Government, especially our Ministry of Education, for the support we have continued to receive. ~~We too appreciate the County Government of Murang'a for its continued support.~~ We further appreciate all other partners and collaborators that we may not be able to mention here today.

To the staff and faculty of this University, you have shown great commitment to our University brand. You have shown exemplary

unity of purpose. It is because of your effort that we are confident that the graduates who will walk out of our gates today are among the very best in the market. Thank you for your dedication..

### **To the Graduands,**

Today, the Chancellor will bestow upon you the power to read and apply the knowledge, skills and competencies you have acquired. You have worked tirelessly, burning the midnight oil.

Today, in this moment, you should sit with your heads held high for you are worthy of the academic recognition being bestowed upon you. We assure you that the quality of education and training you have received in this University measures highly favourably with the best that can be found anywhere in the world. As the alumni of this University, you are our pride and we have faith in you. We now send you into the world. We would like you

to gain industrial experience and come back in future as master's and PhD students to further enhance your knowledge and skills.

Congratulations once again, and may the future be bright and rewarding for each one of you.

**Thank you! And God Bless.**

**[I now call upon the Chairman of Council to make his remarks]**