



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**SPEECH BY THE CABINET SECRETARY MINISTRY OF  
EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: PROF.  
JACOB T. KAIMENYI, PhD, FICD, EBS, DURING THE  
FIRST GRADUATION CEREMONY OF SOUTH EASTERN  
KENYA UNIVERSITY (SEKU) HELD ON 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY, 2014  
AT THE UNIVERSITY GRADUATION PAVILLION.**

- The Chancellor, **Dr. Titus Naikuni**
- Chancellors from Other Universities Present,
- Principal Secretary (Education), **Dr. Belio Kipsang**
- Principal Secretary (Science and Technology), **Prof. Colleta Suda, CBS**
- Chairman of the Council of South Eastern Kenya University, **Prof. Louis M. Mumera**
- Members of the University Council,
- Vice-Chancellor, **Prof. Geoffrey Muluvi,**
- Vice Chancellors of other Universities Present,
- Deputy Vice Chancellors,
- Principals of University Colleges
- Teaching and non-teaching staff,

- Parents, guardians and sponsors,
- Graduands and Students,
- Distinguished Guests,
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am delighted to join you during this First Graduation ceremony of South Eastern Kenya University, which I was closely associated with during its establishment while I served as the Deputy-Vice Chancellor in charge of Academic Affairs at the University of Nairobi. May I take this early opportunity to congratulate the Chancellor, University Council, University Management, Staff and Graduands for their determination and hard work that has culminated to this momentous and historical occasion.

I note with gratification that the University is releasing a cohort of 104 graduands in such disciplines as: Geology, Meteorology, Agricultural Sciences, Environmental and Water Sciences, Information Technology (IT), Education, Business Administration and Commerce that are essential for the realisation of Kenya's development agenda, Vision 2030.

It is also worth noting that the university is graduating postgraduate students in this Graduation Ceremony. I would be delighted to see a tremendous increase in the number of Masters and PhD graduands in the forthcoming graduation ceremonies because my Ministry has set this as one of the indicators of Universities academic performance.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

To cater for the increased demand for qualified lecturers in our universities, who have PhD qualifications, we challenge this University to adopt a training policy where academic members of staff with PhD must successfully supervise at least one postgraduate student at the masters or PhD levels per academic year. This will enable the realisation of Government's policy in human capital development at higher and technical levels. This policy may also have to be mainstreamed to teaching staff annual performance contracts to ensure full compliance and implementation of this policy directive.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Graduation epitomizes every student's academic pursuit. It is also a moment to look back at what one has achieved in the programme undertaken as he/she charts the way forward into the professional careers of choice.

Today's graduation is a clear testimony that the graduands have successfully gone through a rigours academic experience that has culminated in the academic award in the relevant discipline. The society will judge you from today based on quality of your service, ethical behaviour, and integrity you display as a result of the values and skills imparted in you by this great university. I therefore challenge the Graduands to be steadfast and seize any opportunity

that unveils unto you and offer the best service to mankind, so that we can transform the livelihoods of our people.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The world today is Global Village and it has become a very competitive place demanding for adoption of top notch technologies in order to gain leadership in the market. As a result the government continues to invest in Universities because of the critical role its people play in creation, adaptation and use of knowledge that are crucial in transforming Kenya into a knowledge based economy. I challenge all universities to ensure that all their programs are relevant and internationally competitive.

My Ministry has made tremendous progress in operationalizing the Education Acts enacted between 2012 and 2013 to support the implementation of Education policy (Sessional Paper No 14 of 2012), on Transforming Education and Training in Kenya. Key bodies established at university level include the Kenya Universities and Colleges Placement Service Board that coordinates admission of students into both public and private universities, and Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) middle level institutions for diploma and certificate courses.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In order to improve on access to higher education and empower the youth, the Higher Education Loans Board will administer loans to



students pursuing diploma courses just as it is for those pursuing degree programmes both in public and private institutions. I therefore challenge the youth to seize this opportunity for them to acquire necessary skills, knowledge and competencies that will enable them compete favourably in the market. I am indeed happy to note that this University offer programs at all these levels.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

My Ministry has a well established Commission of University Education a successor of Commission for Higher Education responsible for accreditation and assuring delivery of quality University education to our people. At Technical level, progress has been made in establishing Technical Vocational Education and

Training Authority responsible for the same. I wish to assure Kenyans that the challenge of mushrooming low quality institutions will soon be history. I therefore call upon all proprietors of private institutions to comply with provisions in the TVET Act 2013 and Universities Act 2012 by working closely with the relevant regulatory bodies.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The quest of Kenyans for quality University education is eminent and therefore as we expand all universities and university colleges we must put in place, elaborate and efficient internal quality assurance mechanisms, to ensure compliance with standards set by the regulatory bodies. The industry should also be involved as key stakeholders in reviewing or developing new curriculum, so as to

meet aspirations of the employer. As a university, your graduates get into a globally competitive labour market, therefore you need to benchmark, collaborate and partner with other top universities in the world. This will result in internationally recognized programmes relevant to local and international labour market.

The courses you develop and offer in this university should equip students with entrepreneurial skills so that on completion of their studies, the graduands can start their own businesses and also create employment opportunities for others. The institution should endeavour to develop job creators and not job seekers!

In order to enhance quality of university education, deliberate effort has been made by My Ministry and I am happy to note the tremendous progress in the physical development, indicating the prudence in the management of resources as evidenced by GOK/ADB funded project in this University.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Government is also keen in supporting Public Private Partnerships by Universities. Given the scarce resources the University should explore the Private-Public Partnerships opportunities to attract investors in order to supplement the government effort in development of infrastructure.

I urge Universities to expand the use of modern information technology by establishing e-platform, more centres and sub-centres for distance, virtual and open learning in the Country. I therefore challenge South Eastern Kenya University to speed up and take advantage of this window of opportunity, to expand and develop its infrastructure and income generating projects due to its extensive land resources allocated to the university.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am informed that the University research kitty has already surpassed Kshs. 200 Million, and there is indication that more support, linkage and contribution is on the increase due to your strategic location in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands in the Country.

While I commend the University management for this great achievement in the last few years, I would like to insist that even as the University undertakes research, it should be charting out a bigger direction for innovation and knowledge transfer through establishment of an incubation centre. The University should also establish a Science Park, which is within its Master Plan to act as a critical link for end users, providing opportunity for application to solve societal problems through extension and other outreach activities.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Finally after those many remarks, let me take this opportunity to challenge our graduands to uphold the ethical values acquired from this University as they endeavour to serve with diligence our fellow Kenyans and the rest of the world at large. You should also make use of the entrepreneurial skills to establish enterprises and may you be good ambassadors of this reputable University. May I wish you good luck in all your future endeavours.

**Thank You and God bless you.**