



SOUTH EASTERN KENYA UNIVERSITY

SPEECH BY PROF. LOUIS MUMERA, PHD, CHAIRMAN, SOUTH EASTERN KENYA UNIVERSITY COUNCIL, ON THE OCCASION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S 3RD GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON THURSDAY, 31ST MARCH 2016 AT THE UNIVERSITY GRADUATION SQUARE

Our Chancellor, Dr. Titus Naikuni,

The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Dr. Fred Matiang'i,

Chancellors of other Universities present,

Council Chairmen of other Universities,

Members of the South Eastern Kenya University Council,

The Vice-Chancellor, South Eastern Kenya University, Prof. Geoffrey Muluvi,

Vice-Chancellors of other Universities,

Graduands,

Parents

Members of the South Eastern Kenya University Senate

Staff and students

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and gentlemen.

I join the Vice-Chancellor in warmly welcoming and sincerely thanking you for accepting our invitation to grace this occasion. I wish to take this opportunity to convey our special message of congratulations to today's graduands on their momentous achievement that marks the end of one stage and ushers them into another in their pursuit of academic and professional excellence. I am confident that these graduands are fully prepared for the life ahead. I have no doubt that the kind of education and coaching that they have received will fit them into the practical side of life and enable them employ their knowledge for the good of the nation and humanity at large.

Dear graduands,

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

May I reaffirm the University Council's commitment to providing guidance, oversight and strategic direction to the University management towards the realization of SEKU's mandate and the national socio-economic aspirations as espoused by the Kenya Vision 2030.

As a young institution striving to expand its operation amid limited resources, the Council, has preoccupied itself with the provision of necessary physical infrastructure. I am glad to report that on this score, we have recorded considerable success, working diligently to plug the gaps in accommodation both in the learning and office facilities.

However, student accommodation remains a major challenge considering our location, which is far removed from major urban centres. To address this, the University is pursuing public private partnerships for the development of hostel accommodation for an additional 5,400 students. Considerable progress has been made on this and we are optimistic that fruitful conclusion will be reached soon.

At the same time, the earth road connecting SEKU to the main Kitui-Machakos road remains a major impediment to our progress. The road holds the key to the success of the University both in terms of attracting human capital and increasing the student numbers. I am glad to report that County Government of Kitui has promised to tarmac this road in the 2016/2017 financial year.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Water shortage is another chronic challenge at the University. We further appeal to the Government, through the Tanathi Water Services Board to help expand water supply to the University to solve the chronic water shortages at the University's Main Campus. On our part the Council has allocated funds to construct earth dams to help alleviate this problem

On human resource, I am equally pleased to report that the University has been able to hire and retain well qualified staff to take care of our fast growing academic programmes.

We shall continue to evaluate the staff strength both in the academic and administrative areas in line with our strategic goals.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

As a public institution, SEKU relies heavily on the exchequer disbursements to fulfil its financial obligations. I wish to register our profound gratitude to the Government through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for the support we have so far got from the exchequer. We are optimistic that this goodwill will continue as we move to the next phase of our development.

The Council has approved the University's Master Plan as well as the new University Strategic Plan 2015-2019, which seek to take us to the next level of our development agenda. We shall rely heavily on all our stakeholders for the implementation of these two instruments. We remain optimistic that the goodwill that we have enjoyed from the Government and other stakeholders will continue in order for us to successfully implement these plans.

Last year, the University attained the ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management System certification. I am confident that the University Management will ensure the ISO procedures are strictly adhered to for the sake of quality and standards in the services we offer. In this regard, I wish to commend the University Management for competently steering the University's day to day operations and implementing policy decisions in the most prudent manner. I wish to commend too, the Senate for diligently conducting the academic affairs.

Our Chief Guest,

I wish to register the Council's appreciation to the County Government of Kitui for its steadfast support. Notably, the County Government has assisted in grading the murram road linking the University to Kwa-Vonza. The County Government has also put up street lights up to the main gate and constructed a water pan for the University. The Council, on its part, has prioritized collection of revenue to upgrade internal roads to cabro.

And finally Mr. Chancellor Sir Allow me to express the Council unreserved gratitude to you for your steadfast guidance to the council and Management of the University. Through your wise counsel, The Council and the Management have put in place structures and systems, and maintained the desired quality standards aimed at setting our University on the right path as a centre of excellence in training, research and innovation; and still ensuring we remain at the grass root with the people through community outreach.

Thank you.

Prof. Louis Mumera, *PhD*

Council Chairman