



SOUTH EASTERN KENYA UNIVERSITY

SPEECH BY PROF. LOUIS MUMERA, PHD, CHAIRMAN, SOUTH EASTERN KENYA UNIVERSITY COUNCIL, ON THE OCCASION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S 4TH GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON THURSDAY, 30TH MARCH 2017 AT THE GRADUATION SQUARE

The Chancellor of South Eastern Kenya University, Dr. Titus Naikuni,

The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, 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 and guardians

Members of the South Eastern Kenya University Senate

Staff and students of South Eastern Kenya University

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and gentlemen

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

We at South Eastern Kenya University are greatly honoured today that you have spared time to grace this auspicious ceremony.

As we release into the job market and the world of academia over 1,000 graduates today, I take pride in the knowledge that the Council has always put quality at top of its priority list in our strategies to steer the University on the right path to academic excellence. We are committed to ensuring that systems and structures are in place to support the growth of the University, not only in size and scope but in terms of quality output as well.

Mr. Chancellor, Sir,

I am glad to report that, to this end, the University now has in its ranks highly qualified academic staff at the level of professor, associate professor, senior lecturer and lecturer.

We have also embarked on an ambitious staff development programme for those pursuing their PhD and masters studies.

Besides the academic staff, the Council has in the last one year, dedicated resources to boost the staffing levels in the administrative cadres. We have recently filled up the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Administration and Human Resource Management following the departure of the former occupant, whom we released to take up a higher appointment elsewhere in a sister university.

At the same time, the University has created and filled another crucial position of Director, Resource Mobilization, to coordinate funding and general management of the various projects and that we have lined up.

As a young university, inadequate physical infrastructure is a constant challenge to us. While we have done our best to provide adequate learning facilities and office space, accommodation for our students is yet to be adequately addressed. It is worth noting that unlike many of its peers, our University is located far away from urban centres making the issue of accommodation particularly serious.

In its endeavour to address this, the Council, last year, approved proposals for the construction of student hostels through Public Private Partnership arrangement. This, once realized, will significantly ease the current pressure on our accommodation facilities. I appeal to our Ministry to lend us the necessary support towards this end.

In working to bring education within the reach of the people, the University, early this year, signed memoranda of understanding with Kitui South Government Constituency Development Fund, and Kangundo Constituency Community, with the objective of working together to establish campuses of our University in the two areas. These are long-term development projects whose fruition will make higher education accessible to a larger population.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

One major challenge that our University has faced since its inception is the poor state of the road that links us to the main Machakos-Kitui road at Kwa-Vonza. We are pleased that the National Government, through the Kenya Rural Roads Authority, has awarded tender to upgrade the road to bitumen standard. The completion of this link road will herald a major transformation of our University.

As I conclude my remarks, allow me to register my appreciation and that of the entire Council to various parties, who have supported us throughout our tenure. I wish to thank the National Government, through the Ministry of Education and the National Treasury, for diligently funding the University. The two ministries are well represented in the University Council and have offered invaluable support to the Council in matters of policy formulation

We are equally grateful to the Kitui County Government and the various arms of the National Government for the support they have continued to accord the University. Our gratitude also goes to the various organs of the University led by the Senate and the Management Board.

Finally, to our graduands today, I have this to say. You have worked hard to earn your degrees and your diplomas. Use them to transform this country and the rest of the world into a better place for all.

Thank you

Prof. Louis Mumera
Chairman of Council