



MURANG'A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

SPEECH

BY

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VICE CHANCELLOR

7th GRADUATION CEREMONY

MURANG'A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

FRIDAY, 29TH SEPTEMBER, 2023

- The Chancellor, Prof. Joachim Osur,
- The Chief Guest, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Hon. Ezekiel Machogu,
- The Deputy Governor, Murang'a County, representing the Governor, His Excellency Hon. Stephen Mburu Munania
- County Commissioner, Mr. Patrick Mukuria
- 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,

I welcome you all to the 7th Graduation Ceremony of Murang'a University of Technology. This is a momentous occasion for all of us as we witness the culmination of years of hard work and dedication by our students and their lecturers. The ceremony,

unlike in the past three (3) years, since the Covid pandemic began in 2020, is being held physically. It is also being streamed live via our University YouTube, Facebook and Instagram accounts, as well as being broadcast live via KTN.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the graduands who are set to get their degrees, diplomas and certificates today. I also convey our gratitude to the parents, guardians and sponsors, without whose support this achievement would not have been realized.

As a university, we are grateful to the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Hon. Ezekiel Machogu for finding time to grace this Graduation Ceremony, as the Chief Guest. Thank you very much, CS. I also thank the Governor of Murang'a County, represented here today by His Excellency Deputy Governor, Hon. Stephen Munania; the County Commissioner, Mr. Patrick Mukuria; and all the other leaders from this County present, including our former staff Hon. Kabuga, who is a nominated MCA for Kiambu County; the University Council Members; the Vice Chancellors from sister Universities; and all other distinguished guests for attending this graduation ceremony.

Hon. CS and Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Today, over 1,200 graduands will be presented for various conferments and awards. Out of these, seven (7) are graduating

with PhD degrees, seven (7) with master's degrees, and the rest with bachelor's degrees, diplomas and certificates. This is a significant growth compared with our last graduation numbers of 870.

Hon. CS and Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Our University has made major strides in academic and physical developments since the award of the Charter in October, 2016. The developments have been made possible through the support of Government and effective oversight by the University Council. These developments have taken cognizance of the Government's transformative model referred to as the "Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) and Kenya's Vision 2030. The developments are also being guided by a recently completed masterplan for the University. The achievements have been in terms of significant growth in student enrolment, academic programmes, and facilities. The total number of students at the University currently stands at close to 12,000, and after today's graduation the population will be just under 11,000.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Following the allocation of 50 acres of land by the County Government of Murang'a at Mariira, in Kigumo Constituency, the University endeavours to admit more students in agriculture-

related courses to optimise the utilisation of the facility. The School has developed degree, diploma, certificate and short courses in agriculture for the benefit of the local community. The Campus will not only increase the total number of students at the University but also catalyse the development of the region. The University has since renovated the existing infrastructure, put up new facilities, and appointed and deployed a number of relevant academic and administrative staff. We believe this will enable the University to prepare and request the Commission for University Education (CUE) to approve the Campus.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

In an effort to support the national agenda of widening access to university education, the University established a Directorate of Open, Distance and e-Learning. The integration of different applications that enable a seamless flow of data and generation of accurate reports has been done. The integration has enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of operations through the e-learning platform. The University endeavours to have a number of its postgraduate, diploma and undergraduate programmes offered under the ODeL framework.

Furthermore, the University continues to leverage on ICT to aid in achieving its goals as identified in its Strategic Plan and to shape

the future direction for information technology (IT) initiatives in order to create a competitive advantage. For instance, the University has developed an e-Learning Management System (Moodle) that is integrated with web-conference applications to advance a student-centred, intellectually stimulating, and technologically advanced teaching, learning and research environment. The e-Learning Management System supports the University plan to target students from various parts of the World through the ODeL mode of study. To this end, I am pleased to inform you that we have attracted students from the region and beyond for postgraduate studies as well as for internships. These include students from Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and Tunisia. Indeed, we have one from Tanzania graduating today with a PhD in Business Administration.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

The University library has taken advantage of a campus-wide network to provide enhanced access to library services. The library subscribes to electronic resources that can be accessed off-campus. It is fully automated and has a functional Institutional Digital Repository that collects and maintains all the intellectual works produced by staff and students. Our Students, Faculty, and Staff are eligible to access e-books and journals on-campus or off-

campus. Remote access to library services and electronic resources, which is available twenty-four hours a day, could potentially save users time and money. The library is now able to provide access to 25 electronic databases offering access to thousands of electronic journals and approximately over 200,000 electronic books.

To preserve and provide a central location for storing the University intellectual output, promote research collaboration, attract research funding, increase visibility and citation of staff research articles, the University has installed an open digital institutional repository software. The repository has nine communities with more than 5,000 digital items.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

The University has continued to embrace performance contracting as we implement operational mandates in response to public expectations with an overall goal of improving service delivery to the citizens. The University Management has ensured that performance targets are established, negotiated, vetted, and eventually cascaded to every department and unit to ensure successful implementation on a yearly basis. The composite score in the past three years has been on the upward trajectory, having

maintained a score of “very good,” and our target is to move this to “excellent.”

As a University, we celebrate the continued certification to the ISO 9001:2015 standard. Our Quality Management System is a demonstration of the commitment to providing high quality education and training to produce competent graduates who meet world standards.

I am pleased to inform you that the University has additionally been certified to the ISO/IEC 27001:2013, which is an Information Security Management System Standard. This is a confirmation that the University is committed to the highest standards of information security at every level and aspires to ensure that the security of our clients’ data and information is addressed and properly controlled in all areas of the University.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Our University is focused on being a centre of excellence in research, innovation and technology. Currently, the University is hosting a number of research projects which are making a remarkable contribution to the local community and the rest of the country. The University has also continued to support staff to engage in research activities. A number of our academic staff

members are currently running research projects funded by international organisations and the National Research Fund.

In furtherance of research promotion, the University shall hold its second international conference from 8th to 10th November, 2023. The conference, whose theme is "Leveraging on Science, Technology, and Innovation for Economic Transformation," shall be conducted in a blended format. The conference will serve as a platform where researchers, industry participants, academia and the general public shall exchange ideas on their areas of expertise. I wish to invite all of you to attend the conference. I have already invited our Hon. CS as the Guest of Honour. We shall be honoured if he finds time to come and open the conference for us.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

This University continues to reach out to other organisations to collaborate with in order to enhance research and scholarly activities. During the 2022/23 academic year, for instance, the University initiated a collaboration with the Regional Centre for Mapping Resources for Development (RCMRD), which entails supporting each other in capacity building in Geographic Information System (GIS), data management and portal development, data access and sharing, research, training, sharing of facilities and data, and organising of scientific conferences,

among others. In addition, the University has engaged with Savonia University of Applied Sciences in Finland to foster academic, research, development and innovation cooperation between the two institutions. Locally, the University is collaborating with Kiharu Vocational Training College and Kandara Technical Training Institute to build their capacities to offer current relevant training to their students. These are just but a few examples.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

I wish to conclude by sincerely thanking the University Council once more for guiding and providing strategic direction to the Management. My gratitude also goes to our Ministry of Education for the support we have continued to receive. We further appreciate the excellent working relationship and support the University has been receiving from the County Government of Murang'a.

To the Graduands,

Today, the Chancellor will bestow upon you the power to read and apply the knowledge, skills and competencies you have acquired. It is a day to celebrate your academic achievements. As you are conferred your degree, or awarded your diploma or certificate, remember that you carry not only the knowledge you gained within this University but also the values and principles that define our institution. Your journey in education and learning should not end

here; today should mark just the beginning of a new chapter in your lives. Ours is to urge you to embrace opportunities for continuous learning, be adaptable, and never stop seeking ways to make a positive difference in the world. As graduates of Murang'a University of Technology, you are equipped with the tools to lead, to contribute meaningfully to society, and to be the change-makers of our world.

As you reflect on your future endeavours, be aware that you will always be an integral part of our University family. Stay connected, continue to inspire, and make us proud.

Having said that, I must let you know that we feel privileged to have been part of your journey at this University for the last four or five years.

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

Thank you! And God Bless.

[I now wish to invite present to take a brief moment to congratulate the graduands, before I invite the Chief Guest to make his remarks, and then finally invite the Chancellor to address the Congregation