



UNIVERSITY OF EMBU

SPEECH

By

PROF. DANIEL MUGENDI NJIRU

Vice- Chancellor,

University of Embu

6th Graduation Ceremony

Friday, 17th September, 2021

**SPEECH BY PROF. DANIEL MUGENDI NJIRU, VICE-CHANCELLOR,
UNIVERSITY OF EMBU DURING THE 6th GRADUATION CEREMONY AT
UNIVERSITY OF EMBU ON FRIDAY, 17TH SEPTEMBER, 2021**

- Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, **Prof. George Magoha**
- Chancellor, University of Embu, **Prof. Paul Musili Wambua**
- Chairman, University of Embu Council, **Dr. Kennedy Okong'o**
- Members of the University Council

- My Colleagues Vice-Chancellors of sister Universities
- National and County Government Representatives present
- Members of the University Management and Senate
- University of Embu Staff and Students
- Graduands
- Parents and guardians
- Distinguished guests who are following this event online
- Ladies & Gentlemen

GOOD MORNING

I am happy to welcome you all to the 6th Congregation of the University of Embu for the conferment of various Degrees and award of Diplomas and Certificates.

This is the second Graduation Ceremony that we are holding virtually due to the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to pray that the pandemic will go away so that we can hold our future ceremonies in the usual way with pomp and colour.

I recognize and appreciate all our graduands, guests, parents, guardians, families and friends, and all our stakeholders following this ceremony through our online channels. I thank God for seeing us through yet another difficult year and pray that He may continue to walk with us through these very difficult times.

I also take this opportunity to thank our Cabinet Secretary in the Ministry of Education, **Prof. George Magoha**, for finding time, despite his busy schedule, to come to the University of Embu and celebrate with us. **Welcome Back** to the University of Embu, **Bwana CS**. We appreciate the support that you have accorded the University of Embu since its establishment as a constituent college of the University of Nairobi.

The exceptional support that the Ministry of Education has extended to the University over the years is truly appreciated. I am confident that the Government of Kenya will continue to support the University through provision of adequate financial resources to ensure that it is able to discharge its mandate of teaching, research and community service.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

I am pleased to welcome you yet again, to confer degrees and award diplomas and certificates to our graduands. On behalf of the University Senate, the University Management Board and the University community, please receive our sincere gratitude for your leadership and support. As you inch closer to the completion of your term as the Chancellor, I can assure you that your name will remain firmly in the history books of the University of Embu as an effective first Chancellor. We pray that you will continue to fellowship with us as the Alumni Number One of this University.

Further, allow me to express my sincere appreciation to the Chairman of our Council - **Dr. Kennedy Okong'o** for the priceless role he continues to play in ensuring that the University is steered in the right direction. I also thank the University Council members for the excellent oversight they continue to give to the University.

I appreciate our staff and students for their commitment to ensure that this day is a success. I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the members

of the University Community, both staff and students, who have left us due to the COVID- 19 pandemic and other reasons. Though their souls are departed, we acknowledge and cherish their contribution.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

This year, we mark the University's 5th Anniversary since the Award of Charter by the President on 7th October 2016. In these 5 years, the University of Embu has become a formidable player in the higher education sector. It is now a renowned intellectual hub for researchers, scholars, students, staff, and a source of economic empowerment for the community. Our programmes are now attracting students from far and wide. Students are choosing to come to the University of Embu as their first choice. This is good for all of us and we are proud for this far we have come in just five years.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Allow me now, to mention some key areas that the University has recorded tremendous growth and achievement during the last 5 years.

STUDENTS' ENROLLMENT

From its humble beginnings as Embu University College with 123 pioneer students, the student population is now at **9,410** during the 2021/2022 Academic Year, up from **8,435** in the 2020/2021 Academic Year. Last week, we admitted 2,475 first year students for various Bachelors, Diploma and Certificate and Postgraduate programmes.

During this 6th Graduation Ceremony, 1563 graduands will receive various Certificates, Diplomas, Bachelors and Postgraduate Degrees. This is also a major increment from 2020 when we graduated 1,137 candidates.

RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

During the 2020/2021 Academic year, The University recorded high research activity amongst the members of staff and students. We have been busy hosting online workshops, seminars and conferences to disseminate research findings. The number of publications has been rising steadily. In the last Financial Year alone, one hundred and four articles were published in high impact journals.

POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

The number of postgraduate students has increased steadily over the years reaching 428 in 2021/2022. During the last Graduation Ceremony, we graduated 11 Ph.D students and 27 Masters candidates.

To increase access to postgraduate education and staff development opportunities, the University of Embu has introduced a scholarship scheme to enable the best performing undergraduate students in every graduation to transition to Masters programmes funded by the University. The number of postgraduate graduands is therefore, set to increase gradually in the coming years.

NEW PROGRAMMES

The University is in the process of establishing the Institute of Technology and Capacity Building (ITCD) which will be the technical and vocational education and training wing of the University. Once operational, the Institute will be offering prospective students technical and professional courses at Diploma and Certificate level. The students in the Institute will then have an opportunity to progress with their studies to the undergraduate level through a well-established credit transfer and waiver system.

STUDENTS' WELFARE

On student welfare issues, we have created a positive academic environment that fosters successful learning and promotes students'

personal development. I am glad that our students have found the University environment to be welcoming and fulfilling that many do not leave Embu County environs after graduating. They have got jobs in surrounding institutions, while others have come back to the University for postgraduate studies.

PERFORMANCE RANKING

Mr. Chancellor Sir, as you all know, the University of Embu was ranked the top performing State Corporation during the 2019/2020 Public Service Performance Contracting evaluations. The evaluations were done by the Public Service Performance Management and Monitoring Unit (PSPMMU).

It is also worth noting that, despite the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which hit our country in March, 2020, when we were in the second quarter of the performance cycle and the accompanying budget cuts, the University of Embu managed to achieve its performance targets even though it was very challenging. Additionally, I also note with great pride and satisfaction that the University of Embu had the overall highest composite score among the Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies. This means that, apart from being Number One among the 37 Public Universities and the 223 State Corporations evaluated, UoEm was also ranked Number One with the highest composite score among all the 366 Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies evaluated in the year 2019/2020 cycle. I thank our Chancellor, the University Council, Management, Senate, Staff and students as well as all our stakeholders for their commitment and contribution towards the good performance.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028

The University Strategic Plan for 2018-2028 is currently under implementation. We are in the 3rd year of implementation and so far we have made tremendous achievements. The areas that have been realized include:

1. Establishment and furnishing School of Law,

2. Installation of 117kw Solar Energy systems which is part of 200kw in the strategic plan,
3. Expansion of Production Facilities - (Water Bottling, Yoghurt and Cleaning Solutions production),
4. Installation of CCTV and Security Enhancement facilities.

Ongoing infrastructural development initiatives under the Strategic Plan period include construction and furnishing of the New Tuition Block, projected to be completed in December 2021 and Construction of the New Science Laboratory Complex which is planned to begin in the next Financial Year.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

I am happy to announce that the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, has approved the construction of the proposed Science Laboratories Complex at the University. The state-of-the-art science teaching and learning environment, will be an artfully designed masterpiece for the University. We are currently seeking concurrence from the National treasury and the Office of the President so that the project can commence in the next Financial Year.

I am appealing to the Cabinet Secretary to help us get additional funding to complete these projects and start the construction of at least one school building in the next Financial Year.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

I am happy too to inform the University Community and the public that University of Embu in conjunction with Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA) have entered into a collaboration to improve the internal road network within the University. Initially, approximately 2.5km of the existing murrum roads will be upgraded to bitumen standards over a

period of 18 months with an expected completion date of December 2022. This is good news for all the staff, students and visitors alike.

These are just a few of the achievements we have recorded during the last Academic Year. You can read more about the specific achievements of various University Divisions and sections in *The Flashlight Magazine* – which you can access on our University website.

To the Graduands

Lastly, on behalf of the University Management and the Senate, I congratulate you for your accomplishment. We are very proud of you because the Class of 2021 has endured probably the most challenging time in the final year of your studies due to Covid-19 than any other. This is your moment; your hard work has finally paid off.

As you move to the next phase of your life, strive to make a difference in your life and in the lives of others. I am confident that you have received very high quality education from this University. And now we release you to the world to go and serve and make the world a better place.

May the knowledge and skills that you have acquired help you to adapt in the world with ease. May God who began the good work in you carry it through to completion. I hope that your journey of life will bring you back to Embu at some point; we will be glad to welcome you again, as continuing students, as staff, as lecturers, as suppliers, as mentors, as parents, as alumni and as friends.

Once again, I thank our guests for coming and I wish you all good health and prosperity in lives. Let us continue supporting one another as well as keeping safe.

Thank you and God bless you.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, it now my pleasure to invite the Chairman of the University of Embu Council, Dr. Kennedy Okong'o, to come forward and address the congregation.

Prof. Daniel Mugendi, Ph.D
Vice-Chancellor