



**SPEECH DELIVERED BY PROF. NDIRANGU KIONI, VICE CHANCELLOR OF  
DeKUT COUNCIL, DURING THE 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY AT DEDAN  
KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY ON FRIDAY, 28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2017 AT  
THE UNIVERSITY GRADUATION GROUNDS**

## Recognition of all the guests

- Your Excellency, Thabo Mbeki, the former President of the Republic of South Africa,
- Cabinet Secretary for Education Dr. Fred Matiang'i,
- Principal Secretary, State Department of University Education, Prof. Collette Suda
- University Chancellor, Prof. Shellemiah O. Keya,
- Chairperson of Council, Dr. Jane Nyakang'o,
- Council Members,
- Chancellors from other Universities,
- Vice Chancellors from other Universities (read names),
- Deputy Vice Chancellors of DeKUT,

- Registrars,
- Senators,
- Staff,
- Our esteemed Graduands
- Guardians and parents,
- All invited guests and all protocol observed,

**Good morning!**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

I would like to welcome all of you to this 6<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony. I would like to extend special welcome to our chief guest and Honorius Causa candidate, His Excellency President Thabo Mbeki and at this very juncture thank him for accepting

our invitation to be our honoris causa candidate and finding the time to come to this University.

I also make special recognition of the Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Dr. Fred Matiang'i and the Principal Secretary, State Department of University Education. We thank both for their roles as representatives of the Government which is the sponsor this University. Furthermore, we here at the University applaud the Cabinet Secretary for the major reforms he has instituted and successfully carried through within a very short time, first at the primary and the secondary school levels and now at the Universities. Here at DeKUT we join other Kenyans of goodwill in supporting the reforms and are determined to progressively operate at standards higher above the prescribed Commission for University Education minimum academic standards. We have an effective Student Information Management System which enables us to track the progression of all the students from admission to the end of their programme and always give them timely feedback on their performance.

In this regard, Chancellor Sir, this University has been able to run the academic programmes on time and has been able to get the students to complete their studies at

least six months ahead of their peers at Secondary Schools. This has been possible because, through the cooperation of staff and students, we have been able to maintain our academic calendar which runs from May to December. This also required that first year students sacrifice their long vacation to make up for the lost time between sitting of KCSE examinations in November and joining Universities in September the following year. We therefore welcome the Ministry's new approach for early release of KCSE results and the shorter time taken for processing admissions by the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS). Students coming to DeKUT can now join in May on schedule.

**Chancellor Sir,**

As a University of Technology our programmes are guided by the Vision of contributing to National Development. In this regard, majority of our graduands today are in STEM, that is, Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, and we continue to explore and respond to the technological human resource needs of the country. One such area, which we identified four years ago, is the leather sector and, for it, we mounted the B.Sc. in Leather technology. DeKUT was the first to offer such a

programme in the country and as expected the first students to join were unsure what they were in for. This first cohort of students is graduating today. I am pleased to inform them that the Chief Executive Officer of the Leather Development Council, is here today to celebrate your achievements and to inform you that his organization has many job offers for you. Indeed, our Cabinet Secretary will be pleased to know that we have received offers of employment for them from as far away as Uganda.

DeKUT is contributing to human resource and research in critical areas of the economy. Other unique programmes are in Geothermal and other renewable energy areas, and Coffee Technology.

We are also graduating for the first time students in M.Sc. Procurement and Supply Chain Management.

Without going through each programme, I would like to assure the Cabinet Secretary that continue to receive from the industry highly positive feedback on the performance of our students. We are also proud that our programmes are highly competitive and that there is great demand for them by the industry.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

We have encouraged our members of staff to participate in research. We recognize that good research by faculty is an integral part of providing quality education. Thus, our publication outputs is growing steadily. We expect a major change in research upon completion of the ongoing review and formulation of new policies aimed at fostering development of the university as a leading research and teaching institution. We are also progressively growing our postgraduate programmes and students and without doubt this will considerably enhance the University's research visibility.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

This University places great emphasis on internationalization of her programmes as a way of exposing our staff and students to different experiences from abroad and facilitating technology transfer. Thus, we have expanded our network of international partnerships, and collaborations. We now have effective and regular student and staff exchange programmes with Universities in Japan, Korea, Germany, France, Belgium, Canada and Rwanda. This year we started offering a double Masters degree programme in Mechanical Engineering with a University in Germany. We also commenced a joint research programme with the University of Leuven in

Belgium. Further, we have visiting Professors from Korea National Police University for our Forensics and Security Management programmes.

We also started a partnership with Siemens training centre in Germany company so as to make their Siemens Mechatronic Systems Certification Programme (SMSCP) available here to Kenyans as a way of facilitating technology transfer. Siemens is among the leading engineering companies in the world.

We have a number of DeKUT staff pursuing higher degrees in Universities across the Republic of South Africa. Indeed South Africa has become a major source of the PhD graduates recruited into the academic ranks in the last few years. However, we look forward to developing more formal partnerships with the South African Universities catalysed by the visit here of His Excellency President Mbeki. In this regard we are excited that His Excellency is a Chancellor of UNISA, which has over 300,000 students spread across the world.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

As I conclude, I would like to express our gratitude to the Ministry and for their support of the University. Further, the staff and students of this University welcomes the decision by the Ministry to locate one of the first two National Science and Technology Parks in the University. This will leapfrog realization of our innovation and technology transfer strategy. I take this opportunity to assure the Cabinet Secretary that we shall re-double our efforts to provide the research and innovation outputs required to make the Park successful, and so that it can produce great and transformative commercial enterprises.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Once again, I congratulate this you the graduands and wish you well as you go forth to conquer the world. As you do this keep in touch with your *AmaMater*. Join the DeKUT Alumni Association.

Thank you.

