

**SPEECH BY PROF. DANIEL MUGENDI NJIRU, Ph.D., VICE CHANCELLOR,
UNIVERSITY OF EMBU DURING THE 3RD GRADUATION CEREMONY AT
UNIVERSITY OF EMBU ON 14TH SEPTEMBER 2018**

- The Cabinet Secretary; Education, Science and Technology,
- The Principal Secretary, State Department for University Education and Research
- The Chancellor, University of Embu, Prof. Paul Musili Wambua
- Our Guest Speaker, Prof. P.K. Nair, University of Florida
- Chairperson of University of Embu Council, - Dr. Margaret Gikuhi
- Chancellors of Sister Universities present
- Embu County Government Representatives
- Chairpersons of Councils of other Universities present
- Vice-Chancellors of other Universities present
- University of Embu Council Members
- Principals of University Colleges
- Members of University Councils,
- Members of Universities Management Boards and Senates
- University of Embu Staff
- The Students Council
- Our Graduands, and your families and friends
- Continuing Students
- Invited guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning to you all.

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to University of Embu and to this 3rd Graduation Ceremony. A very special welcome goes to the Parents, Guardians and Family members of our Graduands;

Karibuni Sana and feel at home.

I am glad that you have come out in large numbers to participate in this important occasion as we celebrate the success of our students.

Specifically, I want to thank our Chief Guest and Chancellor, Prof. Paul Musili Wambua for gracing this ceremony and for his continued wise counsel and unwavering support to the University of Embu since his appointment. Sir, we value the visionary leadership that you have provided and continue to provide to this University. Like a true general, you lead from the front and we are happy about that.

I also thank our Guest Speaker Prof. P.K. Nair for coming to Embu all the way from the University of Florida, USA and more so for accepting our invitation to speak during the 3rd Graduation Ceremony.

I recognize and appreciate the commitment of the University Council, the Senate, the University Management, staff and students. Without you we would not have realized the success that we are celebrating today. For this, please accept my heart felt gratitude. May God bless you and the labour of your hands. Indeed, steering this University towards the achievement of its vision and attainment of its mission is and will continue to be our pride and joy.

We recognize the good will and support that we continue to receive from the Government and the Country's leadership. It is not lost on us that we are

privileged to enjoy unstinting support from the local community and the County leadership. We do not take this for granted. Thank you all for your kindness and support.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Let me start by thanking the Almighty God for giving me this opportunity to serve as the first Vice-Chancellor of this great institution.

I express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Kenya, through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the University of Embu Council for appointing me as the 1st Vice-Chancellor of this University. This is a demonstration of the confidence that you have in me to provide leadership and stewardship to a young University such as this one. Since my appointment as the Vice-Chancellor, I have received and continue to receive overwhelming support and goodwill from the Chancellor, the Council Members, Colleagues, the University Management and the University's Stakeholders alike.

Indeed, I am extremely proud of our teaching and non-teaching staff, and the students, for demonstrating extraordinary professionalism, dedication and resolve to grow this young University. I appreciate you all

I assure you that I will do my best to lead the University and steer it to the greater heights that we all envision for the institution.

During my first term as the Vice-Chancellor, I will focus greatly on some key priority areas that we have identified among them;

1. Infrastructural development to provide our staff and students with excellent facilities for teaching, learning and research

2. Providing quality education as well as excellence in research and community service
3. Promoting greater Collaborations and linkages with our partners
4. Good governance through prudent resources management, inclusiveness, transparency & accountability
5. Enhancing the students' comfort and experience in the University with greater emphasis on students welfare and quality service provision
6. Building of strong teams and promoting teamwork among the staff; including greater care for staff to enable them achieve optimum performance levels

Mr. Chancellor Sir

In this regard, I call upon all of us to join our hands together and move forward in unison as we seek to make the University of Embu *an outstanding University that supports outstanding staff and students, working in an outstanding environment, which provides outstanding quality education and research with greater focus on the needs of the society*

Today is indeed a great day and a historic one for me and the University Community for the following reasons.

1. I am participating in this ceremony for the first time as the pioneer Vice-Chancellor. Previously, I was the Principal, Embu University College, from 2012 to 2016 then following the Award of Charter in November 2016, I became the Acting Vice-Chancellor – University of Embu.
2. Today, we have the highest number of graduands since the University was established as a constituent college of the University of Nairobi in

2012. The number of graduands has continued to rise steadily from 123 in 2016, to 278 in 2017. This year, the number has almost doubled a total of 593 candidates will receive various Degrees and Diplomas offered by our 5 Schools.

3. This ceremony marks the successful and smooth completion of studies for the 3rd cohort of students who joined in 2015

We thank God for these great achievements and for the relative calm and peace that has prevailed in the University over the years which is one of the greatest contributor of our success.

To the Class of 2018, congratulations!

We are here to celebrate you and to recognize the years of hard work that you have put in. This graduation serves as a testimony to your great effort and commitment. Let me also acknowledge and appreciate the parents, guardians and sponsors for trusting us with your children and supporting their endeavor to achieve their dreams. Please continue to support them even as they transition from the University to the realities of the real world out there.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

In addition to the Chancellor's Award for the Most Outstanding Graduan in the 2018 Graduating Class, The University will also award 21 Scholarships for postgraduate studies for our best students during the 2017/2018 Academic Year as follows:

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

1. Juma James John
2. Riungu Purity Muthoni
3. Ngicho Okach Dickens
4. Mutegi Casty Mukami
5. Leunorah M Ogutu

SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE

1. Musyoka Kennedy John
2. Wairimu Maureen
3. Musafiri Collins Muimi
4. Musei Kipngeno Sylus
5. Shaankua E. Lemarpe
6. Onkoba Onyiego Stephen

SCHOOL OF PURE & APPLIED SCIENCES

1. Esinyen Lotengan Kelvin
2. Waweru Loise Wanjiru
3. Njiru Muthomi Derrick
4. Muthoka Cecilia Mwendu
5. Bwana Kemunto Billiah
6. Amwoma Gisiana Joseph
7. Chebet Daisy

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

2. Ndung'u Njeri Hellen
3. Karugano Ruth Wanjiru
4. Kamau Kabura Gladys
5. Owino Apondi Peggy

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

In an effort to ensure that we are operating as per nationally and internationally recognized standards, as well as continuously improving our service provision, customer focus and customer care, that the University has successfully transitioned from ISO 9001:2008 to ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System. We have also implemented a new quality management standard known as ISO 27001:2013 Information Security Management System (ISMS).

The ISO 27001 is an international standard which is recognized globally for managing risks to the security of organizational information. Certification to ISO 27001 is an indication to our customers and stakeholders that we are committed to managing the security of all information held in the University so as to;

1. Protect the customers' and employee information
2. Manage risks to information security effectively
3. Achieve compliance with regulations for Data Protection in terms of Confidentiality, Integrity and Access
4. Protect the Universities brand image

We are the first University in the Country to be certified to these international standards and this is an achievement that we are immensely proud of. The journey has been long and winding but we are finally reaping the fruits of implementing the international quality management and information security systems. It is evident in every sector of the University that the culture of quality has become the hallmark of the University of Embu. I thank the entire University of Embu team for making this possible.

Mr Chancellor Sir,

Beginning this Academic Year 2018/2019, the University has successfully commenced the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system that is expected to provide institutional-wide automation for all our processes. The System will fully automate our core business areas in Student Registration and Administration, Academics, Finance, HR, Procurement,

Catering, Accommodation as well as provide real-time access to Management Information at the click of a button among others. On completion, the System is expected to provide increased efficiency and effectiveness of processes, reduce overhead costs, and improve decision making, resource management while contributing to the ease of conducting our business.

I am also pleased to report that our students are now making use of the new library and enjoying the facilities that we have provided. We have also recently broken ground for the construction of a new Tuition Block that will have a capacity of accommodating about 3000 students attending lectures in one sitting. The imposing new Administration Building is Complete and ready for use.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

I am proud to state that we have, in the course of the year, established various collaborations and linkages with national and international partners who I am sure will prove instrumental in our pursuit to generate, advance and disseminate knowledge through training, research and innovation for the development of humanity.

On the research front, our staff have managed to obtain approximately **Seventeen Million Nine Hundred and Forty Nine Thousand and Nine Hundred Shillings (Kes. 17,949,900/-)** in form of research grants and I urge them to keep up the excellent work they are doing.

In addition to this, plans are currently underway to launch the University of Embu Endowment Fund later this year. This fund will be instrumental in

aiding our needy students to complete their studies without difficulties as well as assisting in other University development activities. I call upon all our stakeholders, well-wishers and indeed the Alumni of this University to come forward and support this noble initiative.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

To ensure that our students acquire critical skills and knowledge that will help them in their personal growth and career development goals, the University has established a strong mentorship programme which equips the students with essential life skills to make them holistic members of the society.

The objectives of mentorship are:

1. To develop core values integrity, innovativeness, professionalism, customer focus and team work as well as the spirit of excellence
2. Promote soft skills which are not usually captured in the University academic curricula.
3. Prepare students to face a competitive world where everyone is competing for the same opportunities.

To this end, we invite Guests Speakers who have excelled in various fields thus helping students our to understand what is awaiting them in this dynamic and technologically amazing world.

On the Academic programmes, our menu continues to grow in line with the needs of the society and market demands for well-trained and professionally competent graduates. Plans are underway to establish the following schools which will be first of their kind in this region;

1. School of Law,
2. School of Engineering,
3. School of Hospitality and Tourism Management and the
4. School of Medicine in partnership with Embu Level 5 Referral Hospital and in partnership with Embu County Government.

As with every great success story and great brand, our journey is punctuated by a few challenges such as, inadequate funding from the exchequer, diminishing student enrollment and the attraction and retention of highly skilled human resources. Despite this, we are positive that we will still reach our goal and that these are only speed bumps on our road to greatness.

Mr. Chancellor Sir;

As I conclude, I would like once again, on behalf of the University Senate and the University Community, to sincerely congratulate our class of 2018; you have made us very proud; you maintained peace and tranquility throughout your stay at the University of Embu, you worked hard; and today you are swimming in the glory of your success.

We at the University will forever celebrate you and always be proud of you. And as you join the family of University of Embu Alumni after the ceremony today, you will effectively join the Alumni who have come before you in carrying the good name of the University of Embu everywhere you go. Please represent us well.

We wish you the best for the future. I am confident that you will make your lecturers and your University even more proud through your contributions in

society, especially by being disciplined, hardworking, innovative and committed in whatever you set out to do in life.

This is the beginning of a journey, and not the end. Keep learning and refreshing your knowledge. Don't stop learning, even if your career takes twists and turns that cannot be predicted, I am confident that you will find fulfilment in other parts of your life that are currently unimaginable. I hope that you have enjoyed your time at UoEm. I believe that some of you will return to pursue various Postgraduate Courses that we offer as well as to work in your mother institution.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

With those remarks, I once again appreciate you for gracing our graduation today. I wish you a long life and many blessings so that you can continue guiding us in our efforts to make the University of Embu the hub where knowledge transforms through Teaching, Learning, Research and Service to humanity.

I wish you all a wonderful day as you celebrate the achievements of our students and thank you for listening to me.

Thank You

God Bless you