

**SPEECH BY PROF. STEPHEN AGONG', PHD, FAAS, VICE  
CHANCELLOR JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY OF  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DURING THE 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADUATION  
CEREMONY HELD ON FRIDAY 27TH MAY, 2016 AT THE  
UNIVERSITY GRADUATION COURT**

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**The Chancellor, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and  
Technology, Dr. Vimal Shah,**

**The Cabinet Secretary, Education, Science and Technology, Dr. Fred  
Matiang'i**

**Principal Secretary, State Department of Higher (Universities) Education,  
Prof. Colleta Suda,**

**Your Excellencies, the Ambassadors and High Commissioners, members of  
the Diplomatic Corps and other dignitaries present,**

**Chancellors of Sister Universities,**

**Chairman of the Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and  
Technology Council, Dr. Bonfance Jumwa Mwandotto,**

**Members of the University Council,**

**Chairpersons of other Universities Councils,**

**Vice-Chancellors of Sister Universities,**

**Chair, JOOUST Alumni Association,**

**Members of the University Management Board and Senate,**

**Staff,**

**Graduands,**

**Students,**

**Parents and Guardians,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology, let me welcome you all to our 3<sup>rd</sup> Graduation Ceremony. I would like to heartily congratulate all our graduands for their hard work, parents and guardians for the sacrifices made and the lecturers for spending their time in nurturing the graduands to complete their studies successfully and timely.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, let me also welcome you and thank you for accepting to join us this day. Congratulations once again. We are indeed grateful that you have joined us in steering this University to greater heights. We have great confidence in you and the tremendous work you have done for the community at large.

Our CS In charge of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Dr. Fred Matiang'i, I am delighted to warmly welcome you on your second visit to the University. We are indeed very grateful for the support the Government through your office continues to accord us.

**Dear graduands,**

This ceremony may be marking an end to many of you but for those who maintain intellectual curiosity, there is a lot more to learn. It is never too late. I therefore urge you not to stop here; our country needs you to conduct both basic and research; our education sector needs you to teach and train; our families need you

to unravel the next discovery and make theirs a better world to live in. I promise you, that our gates will remain open to render respite to all who dare embark on this pilgrimage in search of new knowledge.

Besides having education within reach, the immediate community is also realizing direct benefit from the fast growing population of staff and students who need food, accommodation and other social amenities. It is therefore imperative that the community embraces and nurtures the University as an asset for spurring socio-economic growth.

**Chancellor Sir,**

Our effort to build this University has received enormous goodwill and support from various quarters. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government for its overall continued support, our partners for assisting us in various projects, the staff for their diligence and hard work and the University Management for consistently working hard towards the development of the University.

I would also like to thank the students for observing the rules and regulations governing their conduct and also for maintaining the very high level discipline that has ensured smooth running of the University. This is definitely a remarkable strength. The University Community is indeed very proud of you.

Let me reiterate that my vision remains true that whatever we set our hearts and minds to do, our delivery must bear the stamp of excellence.

**Chancellor Sir,**

No institution of higher learning can lay claim to academic leadership without a vibrant research portfolio. Indeed, our research policy does encourage scholars to source for funding through local and international collaborators in supplementing the Government grants. The University is encouraging more scholars to network with research collaborators in order to boost our research kitty. I appeal yet again to the industry and other organizations to consider partnering with us in addressing the socio-economic, socio-ecological, socio-cultural and socio-technological issues affecting our society.

Over the years, universities have been accused of training graduates who cannot find a glove to fit in the industry. We are slowly but determinedly changing this narrative. All our programmes are now developed in close collaboration with stakeholders. This approach allows us to integrate the needs of respective industries and to produce graduates with skills that match the needs of the industry. We continue to build in experiential learning in all our programmes, equipping students with the hands-on experience and skills.

It is my sincere appeal to the industry to give our graduates a chance to practice the skills gained here at the university through employment or placements. We will continually appreciate feedback from the University on the performance of our graduates for purpose of revising curricula. This is the only way to enrich our measure of industrial preparedness of our graduates.

This University is committed to continually improving the welfare of our staff within the confines of law and practice. Dialogue and mutual understanding between the unions and the University is the holy grail on matters staff welfare.

This is a continuous process with the best interests of staff at heart. Let me thank each and every member of staff for the support we continue to receive in the discharge of the mandate for which this University was founded. Where there are challenges, the University jointly with the union will for sure secure solutions.

### **Our Graduands,**

Let me address you one last time. Today you leave our gates and head out into the world. We have prepared you as best as we could. Only one thing will elevate you to greatness, character. I therefore beseech thee my graduands, to heed the wisdom of *Lao Tzu* thus;

“I have three precious things which I hold fast and prize. The first is gentleness, the second is frugality and the third is humility which keeps me from putting myself before others. Be gentle and you can be bold; be frugal and you can be liberal; avoid putting yourself before others and you can become a leader among men”

You are among the most talented of our society. It is to you that we look to lead, to re-imagine and reshape our future, to forge just and humane ways of conducting our affairs, and to ensure that reason, people, human development and social justice are at the heart of all of our conduct and actions.

We look to you to exercise, with humility, leadership wherever you find yourself. Of course, this leadership and your knowledge and expertise must be put to work not only for your private benefit but also for the benefit of society at large, to advance the general public good, so that all our people may lead decent, fulfilling and productive lives.

Let me congratulate all of you for your hard work and wish you all the best in the future. With those few remarks, I now welcome the Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Fred Matiang'i to address this congregation.

**Thank you and God Bless!**