



SPEECH BY DR. JONAH KANGOGO, PhD, PRESIDING CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL, JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 8th GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON FRIDAY, 18th DECEMBER 2020 AT THE UNIVERSITY GRADUATION SQUARE

- The Chancellor, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology
- The Principal Secretary, State Department for University Education and Research, Ambassador Simon Nabukwesi
- Members of the University Council
- The Vice-Chancellor Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology, Prof. Stephen Agong'
- Vice-Chancellors of Sister Universities
- Members of the University Senate and Management Board
- Staff
- Graduands

- **Parents and Guardians**
- **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**

On behalf of the University Council, allow me to welcome you all to this auspicious occasion of the 8th Graduation ceremony of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology. For the graduands, accept my sincere congratulations on this day when, after years of hard work, you are finally graduating.

I would like to assure you that while the Covid 19 pandemic has disrupted plans for the traditional commencement ceremony, the University remains focused and committed to celebrating your accomplishments and resilience. The challenges brought about by the pandemic makes the ceremony historic. We therefore salute you, our graduands, in a manner that is befitting of your tenacity, adaptability and resilience.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

As Chairman of Council of this University, this is my first graduation here, I am indeed delighted to be associated with this fine institution which has contributed so much to our nation's human capital.

And on this note, I would wish to take this early opportunity to most sincerely thank the Government of Kenya for according me an opportunity to serve in this University. For me, it is both an honor and privilege to chair a Council that is endowed with so much talent. I also

wish to thank the entire University led by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Stephen Agong' for the warm welcome accorded to me and the entire University Council. I assume responsibility of the leadership of this young promising Institution with utmost humility and gratitude.

I would like to state from the onset that I am aware of the demands that this appointment places on me and the entire Council. I wish to assure the Government, the Ministry and all the other stakeholders that we are committed to accomplishing that task.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I take this opportunity to most sincerely thank the former Acting Chairperson of the University Council, Ambassador Stephen Loyatum whose term came to an end. He served the University in this role with rare commitment and exemplary leadership. His wise counsel and wide experience in both academia and public service proved to be a most valued asset during his tenure. I also thank all the members who retired from the Council at the same time as the Chairperson. All of them gave very dedicated and selfless service to the University during their tenure.

In the same vein, allow me to welcome the newly appointed members of the University Council. Together we shall endeavor to ensure that the University meets and advances its core objectives and obligations to society. In this respect, let me express our appreciation to the government for its continued support to the university and its programmes.

I would like to assure you, the University stakeholders, that with the new Council, we can only work harder to spearhead the development and growth of the University to greater heights.

Dear graduands,

But even though there may not be pomp because of our circumstances, never has a graduating class been called to step into the future with more purpose, vision, passion and energy and hope. As a Council, we have embarked on refining the strategy, policies, structures, shared values and systems that are vital in speeding the realization of the vision and mandate of this university.

Allow me at this point, to convey our special message of congratulations to all the graduands on their momentous achievement. This marks the end of one stage and ushers them into another in their pursuit of academic excellence. I am confident that our graduands are fully prepared for the life ahead. I do not doubt that the kind of training that they have received at the University will fit them into the practical side of life and enable them to employ their knowledge for the good of the nation and humanity in general. As University Council, we are very proud of you. We look forward to greater interaction with you as part of our Alumni.

There is no doubt in mind that we will, in consultation with all the stakeholders tackle the challenges ahead of us to raise the bar in terms of

academic excellence, research and outreach programmes. We want to assure our partners and stakeholders that we will uphold key tenets of good corporate governance. As a Council, we shall focus on offering oversight, resource mobilization and other critical ingredients that will push JOOUST to become the beacon of excellence in university education in Kenya and beyond.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The last year was a phenomenal year of growth and expansion for the institution as both students and faculty members continued to excel, in the national and international arena. The increase in number of valuable partnerships at institutional and departmental level was a sign that the institution's capacity to undertake numerous projects has grown exponentially. I cannot fail to mention key partnerships with the North-West University in China, South China Botanical Garden, and Nanning Normal University for their co-operation in faculty and student exchange with several Memoranda of Understanding.

Aware of the university's role in the development of this country, the Council will continue to work closely with the government and the university community to create an enabling environment for the attainment of the University's core functions of teaching and research. I have been briefed of research, covering various fields, which is either complete or ongoing. As a University we will do what it takes to protect the intellectual property in the various research findings, process and other innovations by urgently registering patents to those findings,

processes and innovations. Some of these processes and inventions will then be available to those who may wish to commercially exploit them provided that the university receives payment for its processes and inventions. In this way additional funds are likely to be generated and made available for more research.

The Council will vigorously pursue this, as the University needs to protect its intellectual property. Making inventions and processes available for commercial exploitation will go a long way not only in helping the industry/university linkage, but also in the future ensure creation of steady income stream for the university.

On finances, the University Council will strive to ensure that we operate within the budget. But we know challenges exist. Proper utilization of the finances will be observed to ensure that any revenue leakages are plugged.

Dear Graduands,

Today, you are receiving the key to the door of your future professional success. I trust that the leadership qualities that you will demonstrate out there will reflect the values that you have nurtured during your years here.

This is your achievement, but you should always remember the sacrifices others have made to ensure that you stand here today. Strive to payback

for the sacrifice by serving society with utmost diligence and selflessness, a service that forever seeks to make a positive change and put a permanent smile on the faces of the millions of suffering people in the world.

Chancellor Sir,

I wish to thank all members of staff for remaining dedicated and focused. I thank all our partners: the local and international organizations that have shown interest in working with us. I cannot forget the local leadership and community with whom we have forged a formidable partnership for our mutual good. Their steadfast support to the University has been our foremost pillar of strength.

Allow me to also pay tribute to the members of the University Management Board, Senate and staff for their commitment to duty and immense contribution to the University's success. It is the combined efforts of the various organs that our University has continued to receive numerous commendations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As a University, we continue to explore other sources of revenues to avoid being over-reliant on student fees. One of the key areas we are venturing into is consultancies. In this regard, the University Council approved new strategic modifications including the establishment of the Directorate of Enterprise Services. We believe that this will also provide new avenues for additional tangible and non-tangible resources. With the

on-going development of the new Administration Block at the Main Campus, a Research Center in Miyandhe and Tuition Block in Achego, we hope to increase the infrastructure, so that our students can be able to conduct research in a conducive environment. The Council will continue to work with the University Management to ensure that competent staff in all cadre, quality facilities and financial resources are mobilized for the sustainable development of the University.

Finally, Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Let me register the appreciation of the Council to the Government for the extraordinary and consistent financial and technical support it continues to give in the realization of the University's mandate. We are aware that our academic values should never be taken for granted, but must be safeguarded for posterity. By making ourselves and the wider society aware of the importance of independent research and education, objectivity, critical review and a quality-driven culture, we will achieve a sustainable University. We continue to be immensely grateful to stakeholders, research partners', alumni and friends for their support in steering the University through another successful year.

Once again, may I wish all the graduands a prosperous life in the future.

Thank you and I wish you God's Blessings!