



**SPEECH BY THE CHANCELLOR, JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA  
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DURING THE 8<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON FRIDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2020  
AT THE UNIVERSITYS' GRADUATION SQUARE.**

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- The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Prof. George Magoha
- The Principal Secretary, State Department of University Education and Research, Amb. Simon Nabukwesi
- The Chairman of Council, Prof. Isaiah Wakindiki
- Chairpersons of sister Universities
- Members of the University Council
- The Vice-Chancellor, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology, Prof. Stephen Agong'
- Vice-Chancellors from sister universities
- Members of the University Management Board
- University Senate
- Graduands
- Parents and guardians
- Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great privilege and honor to preside over this event by welcoming you all to Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology's 8<sup>th</sup> virtual graduation ceremony. Let me congratulate today's graduands for your success.

We are gathered here in this joyous occasion to celebrate your hard work, dedication and commitment that has culminated in today's celebration despite the unprecedented crisis we are currently facing.

Congratulations to your families, guardians and faculty who contributed to your success. It has no doubt taken great vision and dedication to pursue a successful end-goal towards attainment of your success today.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

To defeat this pandemic, science, technology and innovation must all play a crucial role.

The very fact that we're holding this event shows that you know this already. The pandemic has forced us to adopt new ways of working, educating and relating to one another. The technological and social challenges involved in offering the possibility of working remotely (telecommuting) to the maximum number of people, and in providing opportunities for distance learning so that students can continue their studies, have been significant and must be taken into account at this time.

**Dear Graduands,**

With millions of people being forced to stay home to help stop the spread of COVID-19, many have found creative ways to virtually stay social through Microsoft teams, google meet and many others. Zoom, one of the dozens of video conferencing services, has now risen to the top, thanks to intense separation measures and a profound resonance within this new social distancing culture.

The University has given you all the necessary skills you need to be able to perform optimally in the job market. Use your intellect to create job opportunities, let what you have been taught work for you in providing the necessary skilled manpower necessary to drive the economy. I urge you to become good representatives of the University and role models in your respective places of work.

The reality facing you now is that you must keep abreast with the latest developments in your areas of specialization. Some of the professions you hear of today may cease to exist in the near future. Learning is a continuous process. Equip yourselves with skills that can enable you to be dynamic in the changing work environment.

Keep in touch with changes in learning trends and forecast on possible future growth. The state of our workforce depends on how higher learning adapts to the changing needs of the workplace.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the global community's acceptance and use of digital technologies. Health systems around the world are overwhelmed responding to COVID-19 while continuing to

provide health care services, leaders are adopting technologies that only three months ago were on the sidelines of most health care systems.

As doctors, patients and home care providers turn to telemedicine to reduce exposure to COVID-19, they are discovering these virtual consultations are effective for triaging care, sharing critical guidance, and providing emotional support.

The COVID-19 pandemic demands rapid responses. We will be forced to learn quickly about what works. Some responses to the COVID-19 pandemic will be more effective than others. I'm hopeful we will learn which parts of our bureaucracy respond most effectively so we can lean on them in the future. We can also learn how to better use data, evidence, and technology to improve our ability to react to crises. In moving fast and learning fast, we'll strengthen the muscles we as a community need to respond to the uncertain environments that are an inevitable part of our work going forward.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

There is a growing concern about the employment prospects of recent university graduates all over the world. Governments have for years put pressure on universities to be relevant and responsive to society's needs. It was initially focused on applied research, but recently, improving employability has been added to the list.

I would like to urge you, our graduands and more so the continuing students to find avenues for collaborating with other disciplines. This way your world gets bigger. Life and work gets much more exciting.

Therefore, it calls upon all of you graduands to be outstanding at whatever task, you are called upon to perform. It starts with being active and going out of your way to stand out from the crowd. It requires you to keep abreast with the local trends and technology. The university may have limited resources to enable you acquire all the up-to-date technological skills, you should be able to research and come up with innovations that will secure your future and careers.

**Dear Graduands,**

I want to encourage you to be positive always, be principled, pro-active and productive. Make connections; your biggest assets are your networks. Be patient; It won't be easy but you have to start somewhere. This is just the first step on the stairwell, so don't give up, and know that the best is yet to come.

Most importantly, never stop learning; The people who succeed, are not necessarily the people who graduate at the top of the class or have the most money or best connections, it's people who are adaptable and can evolve with the industry. Those who are competitive. So don't get complacent, be aware of what is going on in your industry and where it is headed. Do not let yourself become outdated.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,** with this few remarks, let me wish you the best in your future endeavors.

**Thank you. God bless you and stay safe!**