



SPEECH BY DR JONAH KANGOGO, AG. CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ON THE OCCASION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S 9th GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON FRIDAY, 22nd APRIL, 2022 AT THE UNIVERSITY GRADUATION SQUARE, MAIN CAMPUS, BONDO.

- **The Principal Secretary, State Department of Education and Research, Amb. 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, Sponsors and Guardians**
- **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**

I join the Vice-Chancellor in warmly welcoming you to this occasion as we celebrate our 9th graduation ceremony. I recognize with appreciation

the presence of all our visitors who have made time to be with us today both physically and virtually.

On behalf of the University Council, may I take this opportunity to congratulate the graduands for your perseverance and dedication that has enabled us gather here today. I believe you have not walked alone to the great achievement you celebrate today. Allow me to also congratulate and recognize the efforts of those who have made this possible, especially your Deans, Heads of Department and Faculty in your respective Schools and the entire university staff.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is also gratifying to see that the governance organs of the University have worked together to facilitate the graduands to get to the finishing line undeterred by the prevailing global pandemic. I congratulate the Vice- Chancellor, University Senate and Management, the Council, and the Student Council for working together towards actualizing today's celebration.

We appreciate the opportunity given to us by the Ministry in transforming Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology to a world renown university.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The unprecedented global pandemic brought huge uncertainty and upheaval to an already competitive higher education landscape. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a rapid transition to online teaching

and learning, alternative forms of assessment and a cessation of active research in the field. Many of our staff have worked long hours and under intense pressure to find innovative solutions for our students under resource constrained environment.

The Council put deliberate effort to mitigate the impact and toll of the Covid-19 pandemic on training, teaching, research and outreach activities. A great deal of work took place to plan the new academic year and to create a 'COVID secure' working and learning environment.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am aware that the University has accomplished a lot within the span of its existence. This would not have been possible were it not for the committed leadership of those charged with giving strategic direction to the University's Management.

The Council has and 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.

I want to commend JOOUST'S researchers and innovators who responded with great agility to support the Covid-19 endeavor. A significant number of research projects were registered. The University was formally awarded the USAID Boresha-Jamii grant worth Ksh7.4 billion that is running in four counties: Kisumu, Kakamega, Vihiga and Nyamira.

Similarly, the University signed a tripartite agreement with VLIR-UOS and Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) to implement a Program to strengthen capacity building, research and outreach in five strategic areas, namely: natural resource management, agriculture and food security, human health, ICT and climate change mitigation and adaptation. This is a 10-year programme with a project funding level of 6 billion.

The University has been operating on a five-year strategic plan that is reviewed after every five years. The current five-year plan came to an end in June 2021, the Council has made great strides in formulation of the next strategic planning cycle that we believe will take Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology to the next level of academic excellence and continue playing a significant role in serving society.

The Strategic Plan, 2021-2026 comes to the fore, following the successful implementation of the previous revised Strategic Plan 2016-2021. The University, guided by the Council, recast its strategic direction in a five-year plan that has made elaborate considerations of the dynamic competitive market as well as contemporary and emerging issues in its operating environment and the global arena.

To our Chief Guest,

I wish to register the appreciation of the Council to the Government, which has continued to give us financial and other support. I wish however to state here that this University needs the support of all our stakeholders in order to accord more deserving Kenyans access to quality education.

With the on-going developments of the new administration block at the main campus, a research center in Miyandhe and Achego, we hope to increase infrastructure, so that our students can be able to conduct research in a conducive environment.

I therefore appeal to our Cabinet Secretary, who has been very supportive to us, to remain so when it comes to taking up our agenda with the Exchequer. In the same way, I call upon all our stakeholders to join us in resource mobilization for us to realize the University's dream of becoming a leading center of academic excellence globally.

Lastly ladies and gentlemen,

This has been a fascinating period in the history of JOOUST, with much change and challenge, where obstacles have been approached as opportunities, and where crises have given cause for reflection and growth. Council has and will continue being steadfast in carrying out its governance obligations, future-focused in its' wisdom and guidance, and generous in accommodating the extraordinary demands, often at short notice.

I extend my gratitude to my fellow members of Council, Chairpersons of Council committees and task teams, for the work they have done, and to all members of staff, students and stakeholders for their commitment, hard work and support, which have been critical to our achievements over the past year.

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

Thank you and I wish you God's Blessings!