



SPEECH BY AMB. (DR.) AMINA MOHAMED, EGH, CAV, CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 6th GRADUATION CEREMONY OF JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY HELD ON FRIDAY, 14th DECEMBER 2018 AT THE UNIVERSITY GRADUATION SQUARE

- **His Excellency, Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya**
- **The Chancellor, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology, Dr. Vimal Shah**
- **Chancellors of Sister Universities**
- **The Rt. Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga**
- **The Chairman of Council, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology, Dr. Walter Ongeti**
- **Chairpersons of other University Councils**
- **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 Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted to congratulate graduands of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology on this occasion of the 6th graduation ceremony. I want to join the entire Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University fraternity in celebrating this momentous occasion.

We are gathered here to celebrate four years of hard work and dedication as we reflect on your achievements and the future of your life and career. The University is realizing graduands who are most sought after in the job market and those who can contribute to the realization of the Big 4 agenda of Government. Such disciplines as Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture, Construction Management and Informatics and Innovative Sciences are key to the realization of the Government's developmental priority areas.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate the President of the Republic of Kenya, His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta and the Right Honorable Raila Amolo Odinga for the conferment of Doctor of Sciences

(Honoris Causa) Degree. Indeed, we take note of your resilient and immense contribution towards expanding Kenya's democratic space.

The University has captured the spirit loud and clear by summing up that you are indeed towering icons.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no doubt that the achievements witnessed here today is a reflection of good governance and management practices engaged by the University Council and Management, as well as the commitment from Senate, staff and students.

Universities now more than ever are being encouraged to produce graduands who are innovative and creative; those who can develop practical solutions to real problems facing the world. We are no longer in need of text book graduands who can only be able to offer text book solutions, we need those who can innovate and offer practice solutions to real problems, to the society.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The quality of teaching, learning and research are great determinants to the quality of products released to the job market. Universities should now more than ever, streamline their academic programmes and make use of available resources to mitigate funding gaps.

In this respect, Universities need to closely monitor the type of content taught; methodologies employed; and assessments given in order to

ensure that they achieve the expected outcomes of university education. There should be a paradigm shift in the approach of training in the wake of this digital error.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

I am confident that the graduands have been adequately prepared for the life ahead. I urge you to harness the resources at your disposal to ensure that this university becomes a leading Institution in tertiary education beyond our borders. The Government is keen in fostering and supporting Private-Public Partnerships that are geared towards socio-economic growth. Given the scarce resources allocated to the University for expansion purposes it would be important for the University to engage with private entities to attract investments for supplementing the Government's efforts in the development of infrastructure.

I am glad to note that Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology is one of the universities that continues to increase its research portfolio. The University should maximize the funding opportunities from institutions such as National Research Fund as an alternative source of funding.

In terms of prudent use of funds, the University is one among few that has managed to have up- to -date records of remitting statutory deductions without fail. I would like to congratulate the University Management and the Council for this remarkable performance.

Ladies and gentlemen,

There is a growing demand, from the labor market, for an increased level of skills and competencies required for a modern, globally-competitive and knowledge-based economy, and the need for continual professional upgrading.

The University has a task to observe quality, through review of curriculum that meets industry needs on the basis of regular stakeholder consultation, and to implement practical components in addressing the knowledge and skills gaps in the job market.

I appeal to our universities to carve out their identities and niches through specific areas of specialization. I am delighted to note that Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology is keen on food security. By establishing a Centre of Excellence in sustainable use of insects as food and feeds, the University directly contributes to food security. The World Bank - Funded Insects as Food and feeds project has put the name of the University on the global map.

Mr. Chancellor sir,

The role of University Education cannot be overstated. It is mandatory for creating a pool of skilled human capital in various facets of our economy and for enhancing productivity. Our universities need to remain focused on producing top notch human capital that competes favorably and is relevant to current needs.

The programmes developed by universities should be relevant and add value to our national development agenda. Our universities should endeavor to conduct cutting edge research and innovations that will put our country on the world map.

The World today is a global village and very competitive demanding the adoption of top notch technologies in order to gain leadership in the job market. The Government has therefore put the necessary premium in University Education because of the pivotal role it plays in creation, adaptation and use of knowledge that are crucial in transforming Kenya into a knowledge-based economy.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Ministry of Education is committed to providing the appropriate support and an enabling environment to enhance the potential of Universities to grow into credible Institutions that produce high caliber skilled labor into the job market.

The Government continues to invest in universities because of the critical role they play in creation, adaptation and use of information that are crucial in transforming Kenya into a knowledge based economy. I challenge all universities to ensure that all their programmes are relevant and internationally competitive.

With this few remarks, may I wish you good luck in all your future endeavors.

Thank you and God Bless!