



**SPEECH BY DR. WALTER JUMA, PhD, CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL
JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL, ON THE OCCASION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S
5th GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON FRIDAY, 23RD MARCH 2018
AT THE UNIVERSITY GRADUATION COURT**

- **The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Amb. (Dr.) Amina Mohamed,**
- **The Principal Secretary, Ministry of Education, Prof. Japhet Micheni Ntiba**
- **The Chancellor, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology, Dr. Vimal Shah**
- **Chancellors of Sister Universities**
- **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, sponsors and Guardians**

- **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**

May I take this opportunity, to welcome you all to the auspicious occasion of the 5th graduation ceremony of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology.

Let me begin by congratulating our graduands, seated here today for the sacrifice and dedication that has seen you excel in your studies. It takes a lot of hard work, perseverance and dedication to see you reach here. I want to thank the parents, sponsors and guardians gathered

here for the support and guidance that has culminated in today's celebrations.

Dear Graduands,

The job market is slowly becoming saturated; this is a reality that we must face. The University degree that you will get today is no longer an automatic instrument to employment. It therefore calls upon you to set yourself apart from other graduands. You must now learn how to incorporate soft skills and technical knowledge that you have acquired here to set you apart from others.

Employers are now looking at desirable traits such as personal values, integrity, diligence, passion for excellence, commitment to work, flexibility, reliability, self-confidence and creativity. They are looking for employees who demonstrate the abilities to multi-task and get along with others at the work place. One needs to be a team player and demonstrate competence in service delivery as well as a problem solver.

Let me take this opportunity to challenge you to uphold the ethical values acquired from this University as you endeavor to serve the nation with a lot of diligence. You should also make use of the creativity and innovation acquired here to establish enterprises and be good ambassadors of this reputable University.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

It is one year since this Council was inaugurated. In this period, the council has recast the university's strategic focus with a view of

enhancing performance. We seek to make JOOUST a world class Centre of excellence in research and training. To achieve this, we have embraced a sense of urgency because we realized that we do not have a luxury of time. I want to assure you of the commitment of the University in improving our academic and research portfolio by engagements that are geared towards world class status. The University has continued to increase its relevance in fostering sustainable development solutions both locally and internationally.

To cement our place in training, research and outreach we are shifting our approach towards stakeholder engagement. Towards this end, we intend and are keen on creating mutual partnerships that are geared towards development and growth of the University. We are encouraging public –private partnerships as this is the vehicle to economic growth in the region and beyond.

Mr. Chancellor, Sir,

In line with our mission of strong community engagement, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology continues to be

involved in setting standards that are based on stakeholder –centered approaches.

Towards the end of last year, the University Council was able to engage in an open forum with the University staff as a way of appreciating the role they play towards the existence and development of the University.

More recently we have engaged with the student body through its leadership on cross-cutting issues that will enable the students have a say in the way the University conducts its business.

Last month the University opened its doors to the public through the Open Day. The two-day event saw schools display innovations and solutions to day –to- day activities that could be easily picked up by corporate bodies and up scaled to offer practical solutions.

The event was successful as hundreds of school goers, stakeholders, potential partners and clientele flocked our campuses curious to see

what was on offer. From the comments we received they were extremely impressed. We intend to have a yearly display of our innovations as a way of reaching out to our clientele together with industry that is keen on collaborating.

Not only have we opened our doors to display of innovation and outreach but we are also focusing on interaction and feedback on the services we offer with an aim of improving them.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Other than outreach activities, our staff have been involved in high profile research resulting in winning a number of grants through the National Research Fund.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

At the international front, the University continues to benchmark with international partners towards attaining World class status, recently the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Group was able to establish a research linkage at the University. This research linkage will deal

with the environmental health of Lake Victoria and other water reservoirs in Africa using lessons learnt from Germany and China.

To our graduands,

Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology continues to train and produce graduates who are most sort after in the job market. The skills that you have been imparted with is relevant in today's job market. Not only have you been taught on practical skills but you have been empowered to be entrepreneurs in your various

areas of specialization. Use your expertise to contribute to the development of Kenya and to promote the image of the University.

As a University we continue to hold our flag high. We have overall remained a peace loving Institution. Our students have a reputation as being disciplined and peace loving among their peers. This may seem out of fashion for some of your colleagues in other Universities but the fruits are usually enjoyed once you step into the job market and you are singled out as a brand of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Univeristy of Science and Technology.

I will urge you to be our ambassadors out there and when you succeed in whichever area of your life you pursue, do not forget to come and give back to this University. Be an alumnus of this great University that will one-day look back with pride and admiration, join fellow alumni and form a formidable force that will catapult the University to greatness.

Chancellor Sir,

I would like to assure of my commitment and that of the entire Council to work closely with you in addressing the challenges that are

facing our University while harnessing opportunities that exist out there.

Currently, we have put in place structures to enable us compete optimally. Our research laboratories that were under construction are currently operational and will be able to accommodate more students thereby enabling more practical skills.

The University is focused on increasing facilities that will lead to growth and expansion of the university. We are also setting up a modern University health facility that will be able to manage the

growing student numbers as well as equip it with the necessary equipment to address emergency situations.

Finally, Chancellor Sir,

All the achievements this enumerated above could not be realized without the support from the National Government. Let me sincerely thank the President of the Republic of Kenya for his passion for education and more so science and technology. It is this passion that has seen most of the revenues collected directed to education. As a

university, we continue receiving and appreciating budgetary support for our recurrent and development expenditure.

The Council is also cognizant of the Big Four Agenda. To fit in this agenda, the council has realigned all the University's activities towards this Agenda.

As a young, growing university, we need to be nurtured and hand held. We therefore request the government to continue supporting our expansion infrastructural activities.

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

Thank you. God bless Kenya, God bless JOOUST!