

Introductory Remarks

Prof. Francis Gichaga PhD, EBS

Chancellor JKUAT

By

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Vice-Chancellor JKUAT

During

The Chancellor's inaugural visit to JKUAT Institutions

Mombasa Polytechnic University College, JKUAT Mombasa CBD Centre and

JKUAT Taita Taveta Campus

Friday March 4, to Saturday March 6 2010

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honor to introduce our new Chancellor to you,

He remains unique in many ways. As a top Kenyan academician, he has spent up to fifty years (or over 70 percent) of his life at the University of Nairobi – first as a Civil Engineering student, and then Professor of Civil Engineering and later on as the institution's Vice Chancellor, making him a perfect and inspiring example of a truly Kenyan scholar. His immense works are felt everywhere particularly in our country's airports and road network that have benefitted from his time consuming research expertise and his personal and extraordinary engineering design ability. His impact has also been transmitted through the effort of the numerous students that has trained over the years.

Prof. Francis John Gichaga who becomes our 4th Chancellor after Presidents Daniel arap Moi and Mwai Kibaki and renown international scholar Professor Ali Mazrui, was born 68 years ago in Central Kenya where he received his basic education in ordinary rural primary school in Nyeri where he outshined in his A levels earning him a place at the then University of East Africa (University of Nairobi) to study Civil Engineering in 1965. He has never moved away from the University of Nairobi where in 1968, he graduated at the top of the class with a first class honors degree in civil engineering. He immediately embarked on his postgraduate degrees obtaining M.Sc and PhD degrees in Highway Engineering at the University of Nairobi in 1971 and 1980. His M.Sc thesis was entitled *a study of deflection characters and elastic response of flexible pavements in Kenya* while in his PhD thesis; Prof. Gichaga focused on *structural behavior of flexible pavements in Kenya*.

As a university don, Prof. Gichaga joined the University of Nairobi as Senior Lecturer in 1974 after a short stint as Assistant City Engineer at the Nairobi City Council where he rose through the rigorous academic ranks to the apex, assuming the ultimate position in a university- that of University of Nairobi Professor of Civil Engineering in 1986. He gave his inaugural lecture in November 2, 1989 on the subject *the engineer in road building; The Kenyan Perspective*. His administrative star too continued rising at the University that saw him serve for two terms as vice chancellor of the University of Nairobi starting in 1991. Prof. Gichaga also served the University of Nairobi as Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of academic affairs, Principal, College of Architecture and Engineering, Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Chairman, Department of Civil Engineering.

Our chancellor, an authority in a complex area of civil engineering dealing with airfields and roads pavement has a prolific and impressive publication record with over 28 highly scholarly papers in peer refereed journals to his credit and has written three books and separately contributed chapters in three other books. He has also been active in numerous professional consultancy services including among other;

- *Mombasa Polytechnic Development Project* where he was instrumental in a study that culminated in a report on the design of laboratories, workshops and equipment requirements. The report was presented to the Ministry of Education in January 1978 that led to the construction of the said facilities by 1982.
- *Aircraft Pavements Investigations and Design of Rehabilitation Works*. Investigations Report, Final Report and Contract document (1988 & 1989) Runway, Taxiway, base drains and surface drainage works. Ministry of Transport and Communications (Team Leader and Designer).
- *Eldama Ravine-Kwamosor Road: Rift Valley. July, 1984*. Report on sub grade soil investigation and sources of road building materials and pavement design.
- *Third Nairobi Water Supply Project- Operational and Billing Training- (1988, 1989)*. Training project for the Nairobi City Commission staff by the World Bank. (Project Director)
- *University Staff Conduct and Responsibility*. Report submitted to the Public Universities Inspection Board, Ministry of Education. December 2005.

Prof. Gichaga who has travelled extensively has also been decorated with several national and international honors including Kenya's Elder of The Order of Burning Spear (EBS) and the highest award of Honor, Soka University, Tokyo Japan.

It is now my great pleasure to invite Prof. Francis John Gichaga to speak to you.

Prof. Gichaga!

Thank you.