

PRINCIPAL'S SPEECH AT THE INAUGURAL GRADUATION CEREMONY ON THE 25th NOVEMBER, 2010

The Chancellor, Prof Francis Gichaga,
The Minister in charge of Higher Education Science and Technology, Hon. Prof Hellen Sambili,
Ministers and Members of Parliament,
The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Higher Education Prof. Crispus Kiamba,
Vice Chancellor, JKUAT, Prof. M. Imbuga,
The Council Chairman, Prof. A. El-Busaidy and Members of MPUC Council,
Deputy Vice Chancellors,
Council Chairmen of other University Colleges,
Principals of other University Colleges,
Distinguished guests,
Alumni,
Graduands, Parents, All Protocol observed, Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of The Mombasa Polytechnic University College fraternity to welcome you all to this Ceremony and to also thank you for being present in spite of your busy schedules.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, this is our Inaugural Graduation Ceremony since the elevation of this institution to a University College, in August 2007, through the Legal Order No.160. Today you will award certificates and diplomas to three (3) cohorts of students of the academic years; 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10.

As an institution of higher learning we have a mandate to offer access to equitable, quality higher technical education and training, for the country to achieve Vision 2030.

Mr. Chancellor, Sir, this College has re-branded itself with our **Vision** which is **A World Class University of Engineering, Science and Technology**. While our **Mission** is to offer quality **Technological Education and Training through: Promotion of Scholarship; Entrepreneurship; Research and Innovation; Outreach to Community for Industrial and Technological Development**.

It has been my duty therefore to remind all members of staff to realize that we have a noble role of transforming this institution to achieve our goals both individually and collectively.

Allow me Sir, to let you know that as a University College we have made a commitment to all our stakeholders on efficient Service Delivery, through the review and publication of our Service Delivery Charter.

Sir, to achieve our aspirations, the University College Management has produced a Strategic Plan for the period (2010 – 2014) that will guide all activities of the College, towards supporting the ideals and aspirations of Kenyans as envisaged in Vision 2030. This Plan captures the Vision and Mission, in recognition of existing challenges and opportunities, giving a road map on how to exploit the existing opportunities, while converting the challenges into opportunities.

The Strategic Plan Sir, crystallizes and embodies our aspirations and hopes for our cherished University College in the most profound way. It provides a valuable roadmap on the development of our University College.

Thus we strongly believe that its strict implementation will enable the University College effectively provide the necessary knowledge and skills which will contribute to wealth creation in the country.

Our students' population currently stands at 7364 comprising of 4745 male and 2619 female students. Our concern is on the decline in the enrolment of female students especially in the Science, Engineering and Technology disciplines.

To address this issue, the institution has launched a vigorous campaign to sensitize the girl child on the need to enroll for technical courses.

I wish to take this opportunity to urge all of us to encourage girls to endear themselves to Science, Engineering and Technology courses.

Challenges

Mr. Chancellor, please allow me to mention a few challenges we are facing:-

- i. The College is bordering the Tudor creek which from the early 50s was accessible to the institution for Marine courses but it has been grabbed by private developers. As we intend to re-introduce Marine related courses, we request that the government reverts this creek to its original use, so that it can be accessible to us.
- ii. The continued occupation by squatters of the College parcel of land where the Kiziwi and Hospitality Training Centre and Professor Ali Mazrui classrooms block stand, hampers development of the College. We are requesting that our parent Ministry provides more support so that this land can be free of the squatters, to enable the College plan for its development.

iii. This campus is sitting on 27.5 acres of land that is built up and also protected under the Museums of Kenya, as a National Monument leaving no room for modification/extension of the existing buildings for expansion of infrastructure. Making it necessary for us to acquire more land somewhere else.

iv. We also need to urgently upgrade both human resource and the training facilities to enable us execute our mandate effectively. This will ensure that we retain our leadership in the delivery of relevant and quality technical training, while increasing research and innovation capacities.

To address this Mr. Chancellor Sir, the University College Council has continued to avail funds for staff development.

Currently 73 staff are on training within and outside the country pursuing various courses; 7 on PhDs, 34 on Masters and 28 on Bachelors degree programmes and the rest on Diploma programmes. We are hoping that when they qualify, they will be able to cope with tasks of offering quality training in their fields of specialization.

Achievements

In spite of the above challenges, I am happy to report that the Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology, through the Council, has allocated funds to address these challenges, to enable us effectively and efficiently discharge our services. The following are some of the notable ones:

1. Mid this year, MPUC completed the construction of the Prof. Ali Mazrui Classrooms Block, a building that has eight (8) lecture halls with a capacity of 80 students each, staff offices, and the relevant facilities.
2. The institution is also constructing 12 other lecture halls, which will have a capacity of 800 students. This project is expected to be completed by the end of this month.
3. Sir, to improve our library services and offer adequate and comfortable reading space and environment, we are extending the library to have an extra sitting capacity of 360 users.
4. State of the art workshops and laboratories are under construction and when completed and fully equipped, we hope that they will help decongest the laboratories and workshops to cater for the increased number of students.

5. Besides, the University College recognizes the critical role that information and communication technology can play in addressing the challenges of limited infrastructure and information resources. In this regard, the College has significantly invested in the improvement of internet facilities at the institution ensuring that all students and staff have access to the internet including the wireless internet network. This includes e-library services where students and staff can access information using ITCS.

6. We would like to thank the area Member of Parliament Hon. Ramadhan S. Kajembe for donating a Kshs. 3million standby generator. This facility serves us well during power outages, ensuring that training is not disrupted.

7. Mr. Chancellor Sir, the University College has embraced research and innovation activities. Our staffs are conducting applied research activities funded at about Kshs. 10m.

Thanks to the National Council for Science and Technology and MPUC Council for availing the funds.

8. Early this year, a Satellite Campus was opened in Lamu, in partnership with the Lamu stakeholders, in the spirit of giving access to quality education to Wananchi. We are glad to report that the courses offered there are attracting quite a number of students.

9. Mr. Chancellor Sir, I wish to inform you that we have successfully launched six (6) degree programmes and soon we will confer degrees to our graduands. Recently the JKUAT Senate approved five (5) degree programmes which were initiated by this College, in respect to our mandate; three (3) of these are Bachelor of Engineering and the two are Bachelor of Technology programmes These have been declared to the Joint Admissions Board (JAB) through our mother university, JKUAT.

10. In line with our Vision of being a World Class University of Engineering Science and Technology, Mr. Chancellor, Sir, our students guided by their lecturers have come up with four (4) innovative products that have already been patented by the Kenya Industrials Property Institute. These are as follows:

- i. Pressure based mobile charger
- ii. Vibration based mobile charger
- iii. Intelligent green house for Farm Household
- iv. Torque Controller for single and three phase alternating current motors

11. Sir, early this year, the Mombasa Polytechnic University College scooped Second position in the National Robot Contest, held in Nairobi.

The contest was quite competitive as it involved 44 institutions; eight (8) Universities and University Colleges and thirty six (36) Technical Training Institutes.

12. At the National Drama and Music Festivals our performance has been outstanding.

13. Mr. Chancellor Sir, I am proud to inform you that the Mombasa Polytechnic University College entered into a Performance Contract with the Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology for the first time in the financial year 2008/09 and managed position nine (9) out of the forty-nine (49) Tertiary Institutions category.

14. The last financial year, MPUC scored the Very Good mark in the State Corporations category, which also is no mean achievement.

Linkages

1. We have Mr. Chancellor, Sir, established linkage with Japan International Corporation Agency (JICA) and currently we have a Senior Japanese Volunteer in the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering for the next two years.

We expect to establish staff and students exchange programmes between ourselves and Kyoto and Nagoya Universities in Japan.

2 Sir, we have formalized a Memorandum of Understanding between us and the Kenya Maritime Authority. This collaboration will give us the mandate to initially offer TIVET based Marine Courses. These courses are targeted to be launched at the Main and Lamu Satellite campuses.

3. We have entered into an agreement with our parent Ministry to train trainers in National Polytechnics and Technical Training Institutions under the School Based Programme in Engineering and Technology. This is a programme that will run up to the year 2013 from next month.

Conclusion

To Parents, Guardians and Sponsors we say thank you for sacrificing your resources and choosing to invest in the education of these youths.

To the graduands, you have successfully gone through your training and are now ready to meet the challenges in the real world.

I wish to re-iterate that MPUC has confidence in you and we believe that nothing will deter you from giving the best in the market and industry.

We release you to the world, go and practice what you have learnt to the full, the development of Kenya relies on you!

As graduates of this college, you should register to become alumni of MPUC. Go and market the name of the Mombasa Polytechnic University College as you discharge your duties!

Congratulations to you all, for making this day a success. It is your day!

God bless you and thank you.

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