



SOUTH EASTERN KENYA UNIVERSITY

SPEECH BY DR. SWABAH AHMED OMAR, CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL, SOUTH EASTERN KENYA UNIVERSITY DURING THE UNIVERSITY'S 8TH GRADUATION CEREMONY TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, 23RD NOVEMBER, 2021

Prof. George Magoha, Cabinet-Secretary-Ministry of Education

Amb. Simon Nabukwesi, Principal Secretary, State Department for University Education and Research

Chancellor,

Prof. Geoffrey Muluvi, Vice-Chancellor, South Eastern Kenya University

Parents

Graduands

Distinguished guests

Staff and students

Ladies and gentlemen

It is my pleasure to join the Vice-Chancellor in welcoming you all to the 8th Graduation Ceremony of South Eastern Kenya University. I thank you for finding time to be with us physically or through our various online platforms as we celebrate the success of our graduands.

To the graduands, on behalf of the entire Council of South Eastern Kenya University, and on my own behalf, I congratulate you on your graduation. This is a great achievement in your life. You have worked hard and braved many challenges, which include adjusting quickly to the blended modes of learning introduced as a way of responding to the call for managing the COVID 19 pandemic. Your graduating today demonstrates that you have what it takes to exit from SEKU as fully prepared skilled manpower ready to join the job market and provide solutions to the many challenges facing our Country.

As we witness the end of the 2020/2021 Academic year that has culminated to this graduation ceremony, I wish to appreciate the University Management and staff who have been working with you by providing you with quality teaching and administrative services, without which your academic journey would not have been a success. The Council has always ensured that the staff



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engaged to provide you with both teaching and administrative services are fully qualified and competent. It is my pleasure to report that the services that are provided by the Management and staff of the University are professional. I also leverage on this to assure the public that our graduands are fully prepared and equipped with requisite skills that will enable them fit in the various sectors of our county's economy that would require their services.

For this success, I wish to sincerely thank the entire staff of the University who have put at the disposal of the students, the necessary physical and intellectual resources to enable them then achieve this feat. My further gratitude goes to the parents, guardians, and sponsors of the graduands, who ensured that they got what they needed to smoothly go through their studies at this University.

The University has continued to receive enormous support from the Government of Kenya, through the Ministry of Education by releasing exchequer funds to facilitate implementation of capital development projects and operations of University functions. The University Council has administered the received funds for the purposes which promote the interest of the University in accordance with procedures laid down by the Government of Kenya. For this reason, the University has operated optimally in delivering its services to the students.

Last year, I reported that the University was finalizing its capital Development projects. Today I am glad to report that the University completed all its projects as planned. The Kitui Town Campus project and the Wote Town Campus project were completed in record time and with no variations. The works in the Central Administration, School of Humanities and Social Sciences project are still ongoing as per the Government financing. In the financial year 2021/2022, the University submitted proposal for construction of the University Library. Further, the University has planned to improve students' welfare and security by undertaking several projects using internally generated funds. These include construction of a swimming pool, perimeter fencing of the land at the main Campus and perimeter fencing of the University land at Emali. All these projects were planned for to be implemented in the 2019 – 2023 University Strategic Plan. The projects are aligned with the aspirations of the Vision 2030 and the Big Four Agenda.



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In its quest to cut down on administrative costs, the University is in the process of restructuring its functional units. To start with, approval was granted to phase out the Finance, Planning and Development Division. From the financial year 2023/2024, there shall be only two Divisions, Academic, Research and Students Affairs Division and Administration, Planning and Development Division headed by Deputy Vice Chancellors respectively. Further, the University has merged the School of ICT and School of Physical and Applied Sciences to one School of Sciences and Information Technology headed by one Dean. Further, a few departments have also been merged as a way of cutting down on administrative costs.

The Council has continued to hire and retain competent human resource to drive the University's academic and administrative processes. Much focus has been directed to hiring academic staff in critical areas, especially in new programmes in the School of Health Sciences and School of Engineering. Our desire is to engage staff and maintain optimal levels in all areas. We shall ensure that the University hires enough academic staff to provide academic leadership as per the Commission for University Education guidelines and guidelines as outlined by other regulatory bodies.

I wish to most sincerely thank the Management of the University for its prudent utilization of funds received both from the Government and from appropriation in aid. I am happy to report that same as in the previous years, the University dutifully met all its statutory obligations. The University does not have pending bills and has remitted all statutory deduction to date. It is our resolve to see to it that all resources – human, financial, and physical - are utilized in a prudent and responsible manner. We as a Council shall continue working together with the Management and staff to enable the University to achieve its vision of being a globally competitive centre of excellence in teaching, research, innovation and service.

Ladies and gentlemen

Parents have sacrificed a great deal to maintain students at the University by paying fees and providing them with personal/ basic needs. I wish to thank our parents and guardians for this sacrifice. We all know that education is the best gift that a parent can give to his/her child. It is an



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investment that transforms the thinking of the student and makes him/her fit in any environment. Our hope is that our graduands will use this gift you have given them to harness the best from the reserves of opportunities that will come their way.

Finally, I want to promise that as Council, we shall endeavor to continue making SEKU a conducive learning and working environment for the welfare of the students and staff respectively. We shall work in consultation with the University Management Board and other relevant stakeholders to achieve this.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is now my pleasure and honour to invite the Principal Secretary, State Department of University Education and Research, Amb. Simon Nabukwesi to address the Congregation.