

SPEECH BY PROF. PAUL MUSILI WAMBUA, CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF EMBU DURING THE 3RDGRADUATION CEREMONY AT UNIVERSITY OF EMBU ON 14THSEPTEMBER 2018 AT 9.00 A.M.

- The Cabinet Secretary; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Amb (Dr.) Amina Mohamed.
- Our Guest Speaker, Prof. P.K. Nair, University of Florida
- Chair of University of Embu Council, Dr. Margaret Gikuhi
- Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Daniel Mugendi
- Chancellors from other Universities
- Members of the University Council
- Chairpersons of other University Councils
- Vice-Chancellors of Sister Universities
- Members of the University Management Board
- University of Embu Senate
- University Staff
- Distinguished guests
- Graduands
- Students
- Parents and guardians

Ladies and Gengtlemen,

Good morning!

It is my great honour and privilege to join the University of Embu Community, our guests, graduands and family members for this 3rd Graduation Ceremony since this University was established.

I am very excited to be speaking to all of you today and presiding over my 2nd Graduation Ceremony since I was appointed as Chancellor, following the Award of Charter in 2016.

First, I begin by thanking most sincerely, our Guest Speaker, Distinguished Prof. P.K. Nair, University of Florida for the words of wisdom. I also thank the Chairperson of the University Council, Dr. Margaret Gikuhi, the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Daniel Mugendi, the Council Members, the University Management, Staff, Students, graduands, the community around the University, and all our stakeholders and well-wishers for working tirelessly towards the realization of this great day; and for being part of this outstanding accomplishment by our students.

Secondly, I single out the parents and their guardians for working hand in hand with us during the entire academic journey of our students. We all share in your joy and pray that you will be able to realize your biggest dreams sooner than later.

My special congratulations go to each graduand. Your graduation is one of your greatest achievements in your lifetime, but more is yet to come.

And because you have made dramatic strides in your education as disciplined, determined, spirited, and responsible, focused young adults, you are now on the path towards the achievement of your life goals. You will join and become part of an elite University graduate population in the

Country and around the World, from whom a lot is expected. Your Professors have prepared you fully for the challenges of your chosen career and beyond and also groomed you for leadership. Leadership carries with it responsibilities, and as future leaders and proud carriers of the University of Embu standards, I urge you to maintain the name of the University in high esteem and keep the fire of success burning in you wherever you go.

Go out there and serve the community with discipline, diligence, integrity and the passion you have cultivated throughout your life journey. As you scale the heights of success in your careers and professional work, remember that not everyone in society is as privileged as you are; serving the community and achieving excellence in whatever you do should be your motivation and the driving force behind all that you do. Let integrity be the hallmark of your training at University of Embu. As you are aware, the country is at the moment, through the initiative of His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta confronting an entrenched culture of corruption that has permeated through all the layers of the society. For many years, this scourge ate away the country and its opportunities for growth. Our hope is that when you step out there, and using the training we have accorded you, you will lend your hand to this transformation and restore Kenyan's hope in their systems and processes. If you do not take anything from my speech as your Chancellor, please take this with you; that always compel yourself to do whatever you can to make positive contributions to the advancement of the community as responsible corporate citizens and future leaders.

As Nelson Mandela put it:

“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead...”

In addition to fighting corruption, I also urge you to look for the best opportunity and the best way you as an individual, can contribute to our country’s Big Four Agenda whose four pillars are **manufacturing, universal healthcare, affordable housing, and food security**. I can assure you that with the knowledge and skills that you have gained from the University, there is definitely something you can do to make a difference in whatever small way. I know that some of you will go into business and entrepreneurship; others will go into agriculture or education sectors and many other careers. So in whatever you do, and as the President has always stated, let us put our differences aside, pull in the same direction, and work towards a common goal of building our nation.

While today’s celebration is about YOUR achievement, you should always remember the sacrifices others have made to ensure that you are where you are. This celebration today would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of your family, relatives and sponsors, many of whom I know are here today to proudly witness this great moment.

Please take time to appreciate them and wish them well as they continue to support you in your life after University.

Dear Graduands,

I cannot fail to remind you that you are the most powerful young generation in human history. You are powerful because you have the most amazing technologies at your command which no other generation could even dream of. I would like to encourage you to use this technological strength and the power of your generation to convert impossibilities in your life into possibilities. It is good to know that about a quarter of the wealthiest people on earth currently, have made their extraordinary fortunes through founding and building today's largest technology companies especially in the software and social media segment.

The world we live in has many problems; unemployment, poverty, bad governance, corruption, increasing numbers of young people are dying from drug abuse and violence. You Graduands have the opportunity of changing all that. That's what this Graduation Ceremony is about. This Ceremony is meant to prepare you to get ready for action in the workplace and in the society. Go ahead, and create a world which will be different, which will be way much better. Go ahead, and create a world where there will be no poverty and unnecessary suffering, be the source of change that this Country and this world needs.

This University will always be proud of you because you have learnt how to use your power to change the world. Use this University, your *alma mater*, as the hub of all your creative minds and initiatives. We would like to learn from you, and pass this learning to the next generation of young people so that they can follow your footsteps.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As the Chancellor, I am committed to seeing this University grow into a formidable powerhouse and center of excellence in teaching, research and scholarship as well as service to humanity. In the last few years, the university education sector in Kenya has been forced to confront a number of challenges which call for innovative thinking and tough solutions. More than ever before, the pressure to churn out all-round and quality graduands who will make a difference in society is on us. We are required to think out of the box to fund university programmes while improving on quality of training but while also not making university education inaccessible to those who qualify for it. On my part, I continue to be proud of the many initiatives and good developments that are being implemented in the University to confront these and other challenges. I pledge to continue supporting the University Council and Management to ensure our University's Strategic Objectives are realized.

When I was here last in January 2018 during the inaugural *“Chancellor’s State of the University Address”*, I highlighted some of the key initiatives and developments that we would like to see at the University. The Vice-Chancellor, in his speech, has enumerated some of the key accomplishments of the University during the just concluded Academic Year 2017/2018. This is very encouraging and I am pleased that the University is moving in the right direction towards realizing our vision and delivering on our mandate.

Allow me therefore, to thank most sincerely, our Vice Chancellor, Prof. Daniel Mugendi, and the Council, Management, Staff, Students, Graduands,

Government (both National and County), Sponsors, Parents, Embu Community and other well-wishers of the University for their good work.

Let us clap for ourselves. Thank you.

I see the future of this University as being very bright. Despite the challenges that we have faced in the past, the University is positioning itself as a center of excellence through increasing partnerships and support, especially in the area of infrastructural development to accommodate more staff and students - these include construction of more classrooms and academic facilities. It is my dream that one day, the University of Embu will transform Embu town into a major University City in the region; and be the largest contributor to the County economy for the betterment of the people in the community and beyond.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, let me once again appreciate everyone present here today for your great contribution in making this day a success.

Let us celebrate the day and make it uniquely memorable for our students and those that will come after them.

Thank you and May God bless you.

God bless the University of Embu.

Prof. Paul Musili Wambua

Chancellor, University of Embu