



UNIVERSITY OF EMBU

**SPEECH BY PROF. DANIEL MUGENDI NJIRU, PhD
THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF EMBU
DURING THE
OPENING CEREMONY OF 2019 CULTURAL FESTIVAL
ON
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH, 2019 AT UNIVERSITY OF EMBU
AT 3.00PM**

The County Leadership present
Members of the University Management
Staff and Students
Our valuable partners and sponsors
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon.

I am delighted to welcome you to the 2019 University of Embu Cultural Festival dubbed CULFEST. This is the third Cultural Festival, having held the first two events in 2016 and 2018. I want to begin by thanking the organizing committee of this event led by Dr. Timothy Kinoti for their tireless efforts that have made this day a success. I also wish, in a big way, to recognize the management of the Kenya Commercial Bank for their great contribution in sponsoring this event.

The theme of this year's CULFEST is aptly captured as: ***“Celebrating Talent and Promoting Cultural Diversity”***. It aims at appreciating and promoting cultural ties among Kenyan communities as well as the provision of opportunities and a platform for exchange of cultural information and ideas. These are reflected through performances such as narratives, drama, comedy, poetry, music and dance among others. By tapping talent from our diverse cultures, this festival plays a great role in enhancing national cohesion and integration, which is highly emphasized in our country. It also provides an opportunity to rediscover our roots, and to remind ourselves of our tangible and intangible cultural heritage that has been in existence for generations.

Those who have been here for the last four years will agree with me that we have always been improving from our first Cultural Festival in 2016 and last year. The University is committed to supporting cultural activities of our students as well as providing the necessary support for talented students to ensure they reach their desired goals. The event is about commemorating our culture and other cultures beyond our communities and country. It must be well understood that, preserving our culture doesn't mean disrespecting other peoples' cultures, but ensuring we pass on that which defines us to the next generation.

Culture has been known since man came to existence and we are still practicing it till today. Through cultural integration, we learn how to be better people in the society and how to live together as brothers and sisters. Every individual has a distinguished attitude, behaviours as well as traits. It is only through appreciating each other's culture that we will live in harmony as a community.

Cultural Festivals are catalysts for intercultural dialogue and they reach out to people from different backgrounds and across generations. In addition, they open our eyes to our historical existence. Our cultural heritage keeps our memories alive of how beliefs and cultural expressions have contributed to the growth of society. Cultural Festivals, like this one, bring people together in shared experiences at regional and national levels. Under no circumstance, should a person abandon his or her culture.

I want to call upon all students and staff to try all their level best to appreciate and feel proud of their culture. This is because it is believed that you will not know the importance of something unless it is taken away from you. It is also

important to appreciate that culture is not static; it changes as the human beings develop. We, therefore should not let ourselves be prisoners of any retrogressive culture.

Ladies and gentlemen, through our talents, contributions, ideas and knowledge that we acquire here at the University of Embu, let us shape the future of Kenya's cultural landscape.

With those remarks, I declare the 2019 University of Embu Cultural Festival officially opened.

Thank you and God bless you.