



UNIVERSITY OF EMBU

SPEECH

BY

PROF. DANIEL MUGENDI, Ph.D

**VICE-CHANCELLOR,
UNIVERSITY OF EMBU**

2nd GRADUATION CEREMONY

UNIVERSITY OF EMBU

FRIDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER, 2017

- The Chancellor, University of Embu, Prof. Paul Musili Wambua
- Chairperson of University of Embu Council, - Dr. Margaret Gikuhi
- Chancellors of Sister Universities present
- Chairpersons of Councils of other Universities
- Vice-Chancellors
- Principals of University Colleges
- Members of University Councils,
- Members of Universities Management Boards and Senates
- University of Embu Staff
- Members of the Students Council
- Our Graduands, your families and friends
- Students
- Invited guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning to you all.

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the University of Embu and to this 2nd Graduation Ceremony. A warm welcome goes to the Parents, Guardians and Family members of our Graduands.

Karibuni Sana and feel at home. This is where your son or daughter has been spending quality time attending to his or her academic work. I am glad that you have come out in large numbers to celebrate their success with us.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In a very special way, I take this opportunity to welcome our Chancellor, Prof. Paul Musili Wambua as he joins us to preside over his first Graduation Ceremony as the Chancellor of the University of Embu.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Also joining us today, are members of the newly appointed University of Embu Council. The new University Council was appointed by the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education on 1st August 2017. I am happy to note that our founding Chairperson, Dr. Margaret Gikuhi was retained as the Chair for another 3year term. This shows the confidence the government has in her leadership that has seen major achievements recorded in the University over the last 4 years of her stewardship. I congratulate the members of the new Council on your appointment and welcome you to the 2nd Graduation Ceremony. We look forward to achieving greater results for the University during your tenure.

I also welcome our guests from other Universities, Chancellors, Chairpersons of Councils, Vice-Chancellors, Principals, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrars and many government officials who have spared some time off their schedules to join us in this celebration.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

We are indeed very honoured to have you here with us today to lead this great celebration of success as we pay tribute to the good work of the staff and students of this University over the past few years.

Today marks the successful completion of an academic cycle by our second group of students, who were admitted in September, 2013. The pioneer class was admitted in April, 2013 and they graduated in September 2016 when the institution was a Constituent College of the University of Nairobi.

I must also say that I am very happy and indeed greatly honoured to take part in this Graduation Ceremony as the Acting Vice-Chancellor of a fine University like this one; like all of you, I am very proud of our staff and our students for this far we have come.

Let me also thank my colleagues and all members of staff of the University of Embu for finding time to join in the celebration of our students' success.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Serving the University of Embu has been an exceptional honour for me. I have enjoyed working with the graduating class of 2017 since they joined this University. They have been wonderful students, and they have always inspired me to do more and more to make their stay here more fulfilling. For that I say THANK YOU.

Since we opened the gates to our pioneer students in 2013, I am happy that we have also had an outstanding team of academic and administrative staff, who have shown unparalleled devotion to the University and our cause. To all the staff I say THANK YOU.

As a University Community, we must also appreciate the government, through the Ministry of Education, for continuing to honour its financial obligations to the University. For a young University like ours, it is mainly

the capitation that we receive from the government that has kept us going as we increase our capacity for more revenue generation. To the Government we say THANK YOU.

As an Institution, we must recognize the hospitality of the members of the Embu Community who have graciously hosted us in this land of opportunities. They have made us feel loved and comfortable to carry out the mandate of the University. They have hosted our students and staff in their homes; they have invested in ventures for our staff and students' welfare and continued to be a source of encouragement to us. To the Community, we say THANK YOU

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

I want to thank you as well for the enthusiasm and passion with which you took up the position of the Chancellor upon your appointment by H.E. The President. Since you joined the team, you have brought great ideas that will impact positively on the strategic direction of this University. There is a renewed sense of purpose and commitment and the drive to make this University the best in the region since your appointment. To you, Mr. Chancellor Sir, we say THANK YOU.

The list of those we owe our appreciation is endless but let me say that we thank all our stakeholders for the contributions they have made in whatever way, to shape the future of this University and to make it what it is today.

THANK YOU all for your contribution.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Today, we have 278 students graduating with various certificates, diplomas and degrees as follows;

- Bachelor's Degrees - 253
- Diplomas and Certificates - 14
- Master's Degree - 11

This is a 126 % increase from our last Graduation Ceremony in 2016 where we graduated 123 students. This shows just how far the University has come from its humble beginnings in 2013. We are proud to have an institution that has developed so well since its establishment.

On behalf of the University Senate and the University Community, I congratulate our graduands very much; you have made us very proud; you maintained peace and stability throughout your stay at the University of Embu, you worked hard; and your parents, families, government and sponsors have sacrificed a lot to get you where you are. Please join me in expressing our great appreciation to those who have helped you reach this far.

Today is a time to think about the YOU who walked here 4 years ago, and the You who will be walking out of the University after this ceremony later today. It is a time to reflect on what you have gained from your studies and chart the way forward for your future. The knowledge and skills you have received will no doubt help you to make a meaningful contribution to society – and in so doing, make a positive difference to the lives of others.

And now, the graduating Class of 2017, you are about to join a second family, the family of University of Embu Alumni. As you leave the University after the ceremony today, as alumni, you will carry the good name of the University with you everywhere you go. Please represent us well.

We wish you the best for the future. I am confident that you will make your lecturers and your University even more proud through your contributions in society, especially by being disciplined, hardworking, innovative and committed in whatever you set out to do in life.

This is the beginning of a journey, and not the end. We live in a society that demands that we constantly update and refine our knowledge and skills. Don't stop learning - your career will take twists and turns that cannot be predicted and you will find fulfilment in other parts of your life that are currently unimaginable. I hope that you have enjoyed your time at UoEm.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

We at University of Embu take great pride in our quality market-relevant programmes that have consistently continued to attract students and provide a launching pad for our students into their future.

In addition, even though, we are operating in a very competitive environment, and having to share the playing field with older, bigger and more established universities, we still have been able to attract quality students, staff and researchers. We will continue to strive for excellence in education and research. We are working on multiple fronts to make sure we stay at the top and achieve our plans.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

Significant Achievements

Allow me now to highlight some of the major achievements that we have recorded at the University of Embu in the last Academic Year.

1. On September 30th 2017, we held the first Graduation Ceremony where our first 123 graduates were conferred with various degrees and awarded certificates and Diplomas.
2. On 7th October 2017, the University was awarded a Charter by His Excellency, The President of the Republic of Kenya, after successfully meeting all the regulatory requirements for elevation to a full University status by the Commission for University Education (CUE). This was followed by your appointment as the first ever Chancellor of the new University of Embu.
3. Our student population has continued to increase drastically since the first group of 123 students was admitted in 2013. This Academic Year, 2017/2018, the student population stands at 5,591.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, I am glad to inform you and our parents that for the first time during the 2017/2018 intake, out of the 1,400 students who joined UoEm from the 2016 KCSE candidates, more than half, applied to KUCCPS to be admitted to the University of Embu as their

FIRST CHOICE. This means that despite the relatively short period of existence, the University's impact in the society is already being felt.

4. We appreciate our students for the good image that they continue to portray in their conduct and in the good words that they share about the University with their siblings and peers. Mr. Chancellor Sir, As a way of appreciating our students, I am happy to announce today that in addition to the Outstanding Academic Performance Award that has been initiated by you, the University has approved the commencement of a postgraduate studies scholarship initiative for University of Embu Graduates. This Scholarship program will begin with the class that is graduating today. Already we have awarded 20 Scholarships to the Best candidates in this class. May I ask the recipients of the Scholarships to rise up so that we can congratulate them. Thank You.

5. On the research front, the University has continued to do very well; our staff are engaged in major research initiatives that have attracted over \$840,000 worth of research grants. The University has also established numerous collaborations and partnerships with major national and international research institutions and the research portfolios of our staff continue to grow and grow, day by day.

6. The University has continued to excel in Performance Contracting by recording major achievements and performance rankings since its inception. We have managed to attain the **EXCELLENT** score in

performance contracting for three years in a straight row and we intend to remain that way.

7. The University has lived up to the expectations of the Quality Management System of ISO 9001:2008 since 2014 when we got ISO certified. During the last four years, the Kenya Bureau of Standards has continued to conduct surveillance audits and in all the audits, the University was found to be fully compliant and conforming. We are currently in the process of transiting to ISO 9001:2015 and implementing the Information Security Management System (ISMS) ISO 27001:2013 so as to make our institution a better place for all our stakeholders.
8. The University has continued to honour its financial obligations and also maintained full compliance to statutory and regulatory requirements.
9. In the area of infrastructural development, we have just completed two major facilities that will change the image of this University. These are the Administration Building and the spectacular new New Library.
10. On quality Assurance, the University has continued to fair very well in ensuring that all our programmes and operations are compliant to the stipulated standards.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

In February this year, the Commission for University Education conducted a Quality Audit for all Universities in Kenya. The results indicated that the University of Embu is one of the few Universities in the country that were fully complying with the CUE Regulations and Quality Standards.

11. In the area of academics, we have reviewed our curriculum to reflect the needs of our stakeholders as well as the market trends. We have grown our academic programmes from 8 that we started with in 2013 to 78 fully accredited programmes offered in 2017. Our new School of Nursing admitted its first full time undergraduate students from KUCCPS during this September 2017 intake. We have also continued to attract and retain very highly qualified and experienced staff.

Future plans

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

I wish to reiterate that in the years ahead, we look forward to having one of the best universities in the region, nationally and internationally. This academic year we will embark on our next project of building an ultra-modern Tuition Block which will comprise lecture theatres, lecture rooms and academic offices.

We also have plans of starting the School of Health Sciences in Collaboration with the Embu County Government and the Embu Level 5 Hospital, the School of Hospitality and Hotel Management and the School of Law among others.

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

With those remarks, I once again appreciate you for gracing our graduation today. I wish you a long life and many blessings so that you can continue guiding us in our efforts to transfer knowledge through teaching, Research and Service to humanity.

I wish you all a wonderful day as you celebrate the achievements of our students and thank you for listening to me.

Thank you. God Bless you.

Prof. Daniel Mugendi Njiru, Ph.D

Mr. Chancellor Sir,

I now have the honour to invite the Chairperson of the University of Embu Council, Dr. Margaret Gikuhi to address the congregation.