



Welcoming Statement

by Prof. Mabel Imbuga PhD EBS

Vice Chancellor

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

During the Official Opening ceremony

Sixth JKUAT Scientific, Technological and Industrialisation Conference and

Exhibitions

Wednesday November 16, 2011

AICAD

The Chief Guest, Prof. Micheni J. Ntiba Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries
Development

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Officials

Keynote speakers, Conference participants

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am delighted to welcome you to Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology and to the Sixth JKUAT Scientific, Technological and Industrialisation Conference and Exhibitions. This is an important event that remains a key activity in our academic calendar since its inception six years ago.

The broad objectives of this conference are to provide a forum for the University to showcase its research activities and leadership; a networking platform for researchers, industrialists and policy makers necessary to get new ideas and products for infusion into the production system.

The theme of this year's conference is **Science, technology and Innovation: towards sustainable development** and brings together some of the best researchers drawn from the continents of Africa, North America, Europe, and Asia. Presentations will cover the following thematic areas, Basic and applied sciences; health sciences; Engineering technologies; Information and communication technology; Agriculture; Water, Energy, environment, climate change, governance and culture.

Traditionally, the conference is staged alongside an exhibition that has this year attracted exhibitors drawn from government ministries, financial institutions, individual entrepreneurs, private sector and JKUAT innovators. The exhibition provides an important forum for the university to promote the culture of innovation to the people of Kenya. You will recall that most of our people rely on merchandise from foreign lands, a situation that denies our people jobs, reduces their self confidence and creativity. Besides this exhibition, and to correct this dependence, JKUAT has developed a number of innovations aimed at empowering the people of Kenya. The university has been aggressively promoting the dissemination of these innovations and technologies using

various channels such as the mass media, community based organizations, shows and exhibitions.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the enterprise of research requires substantial human, capital and material resources some of which the university has to solicit from local and international sponsors. Currently, the university has close to 50 ongoing research and innovation projects spread across the thematic areas that I have cited above. From the government alone through the National Council of Science and Technology, we have received over a Ksh 100 million for the last five years in support of research at our university. We have also attracted funding from other external sources. Recently we received financial support from Belgium worth of Kshs 40 million to be used for research expected to enhance the protein content in beans while Denmark has funded Ksh 200 million that will lead to the construction at JKUAT of an incubator to intensify research on sorghum and its valued added products.

While fully appreciating the significant support towards research from our donors and collaborators, I wish to stress that there is still a large gap between the number of fundable projects and those that are actually funded. We therefore appeal to the government to increase its level of funding to national research institutions including universities. This will not only ensure more research leading to rapid socio-economic growth but it will also enable our university to progress from a teaching university to a research university.

Mr. Permanent Secretary, the success of this conference has been made possible by the generous support of our stakeholders. We would like to recognize the National Council for Science and Technology, Safaricom, the French Embassy-Nairobi, the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute and The Ministry of Labour for the valuable support that has enabled us to stage this event.

Finally, I wish to thank the Organizing Committee of this year's conference for their tireless effort that has made it possible for us to stage this event.

It is now my pleasure to invite our Guest of Honor, Prof. Micheni J. Ntiba who is the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries Development to deliver his address and officially open the conference.

I thank you most sincerely for your attention.