



Remarks

By

Jomo Kenyatta University of

Agriculture and Technology

Vice Chancellor,

Prof. Mabel Imbuga PhD, EBS

During

the Fourth Graduation Ceremony of Zetech College

on Friday, September 16, 2011 at the KICC, Nairobi

Prof. Romanus Odhiambo, Deputy Vice Chancellor (AA)–JKUAT

Representatives from the Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology,

Other senior Government Officials

Mr. Ken Mbiuki, Chairman Board of Directors Zetech College

Mr Peter Njoroge, College Principal,

Staff of Zetech College,

Representatives of Zetech College partners,

Parents and sponsors,

Graduands and students,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted to preside over this Fourth graduation ceremony of Zetech College and the unveiling of the proposed structure of Zetech College's Thika Road Campus. I wish to congratulate the graduands on their individual achievements which have culminated in today's ceremony. I also note with appreciation the contribution of lecturers, parents, guardians and other stakeholders in making this accomplishment possible. The happiness you feel today is indeed shared by the whole society which feels a sense of reward for your achievement.

I salute you all on the realization of the objectives you set for yourselves individually and collectively as an institute.

Increased access to higher education is one of the most important pillars in attaining Vision 2030. Private colleges like Zetech continue to play a crucial role in contributing to this pillar by providing tertiary training to those students who would otherwise be locked out due to the limited space in the few public universities in the country. This is evident by the number of graduands joining the job market from this fourth graduation. I therefore challenge tertiary institutions, especially Zetech College, to embrace global trends that will empower our graduates to reap the full benefits of the opportunities available locally, regionally and globally.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Zetech College has a firm foundation, which was laid way back in 1999. I take this opportunity to thank all those who have continued to support the growth of this institution. We give credit to the wisdom and foresight of the founders of the institution, who confidently and with resolve made such a visionary undertaking. These leaders include the chairman Mr. Ken Mbiuki, the Principal Mr. Peter Njoroge and the entire Zetech team. It is their hard work and commitment guided by the vision of Zetech College to become one of the leading regional universities for research, knowledge creation and dissemination in Africa that has seen it grow to a premier tertiary institution that it is today. Taking pride as the widely spread College in Nairobi with six branches, modern facilities and diversity in student population and programmes offered.

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to confirm to you that this growth has also been witnessed in JKUAT programmes. To address increased demand for JKUAT academic programmes, Senate in 1995 mandated Continuing Education Program (CEP) to develop specific curricula and manage the courses offered at accredited centers like Zetech on behalf of the University. Although the programmes are offered at accredited centers, admissions are made possible through CEP. Currently, we have 15 centers under our CEP programmes including

Zetech that offer our programmes. Clearly the current concept widely practiced by Kenya's public universities allowing them to manage satellite campuses everywhere in the country was initiated by JKUAT. We take pride to have pioneered the concept that is now acceptable by all public universities. Furthermore, I am proud to inform you that some of our early centers have been transformed to autonomous universities through our mentorship. These include; Strathmore University, Kenya College of Accountancy, Inoorero University, Kenya Institute of Management, Kimathi University College of Technology and others. It is our hope that this college will equally be transformed to a future autonomous university.

We are particularly motivated by Zetech College that is currently our leading Collaborating Centre with close to 1,000 students enrolled in seventeen different programmes at Certificate, Diploma and Degree level. Your current performance with regard to the applications received for the JKUAT programmes is indeed commendable. I also recognize the Zetech scholarship programme which has enabled needy students to realize their academic dreams. The challenge I pose to you is to ensure that the quality and standard of training offered in your institution and the graduates of the said programmes reflect the expected high standards of a JKUAT graduate.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is worthwhile to note that Zetech College is today unveiling the plan of its Thika Road Campus. I wish to offer my hearty congratulations on this. This is indeed another huge stride in increasing access to tertiary education and a testimony of the important role that private tertiary institutions continue to play in bridging the knowledge gap in this country. I, however, urge you to continue adhering to quality training practices as espoused by Inter University Council of East Africa, Commission for Higher Education and Jomo Kenyatta University Agriculture and Technology which will see further success for your institution.

It is clear that as a country there is need for continuous focus on education as a key priority in our national agenda. This is because without adequate investments in education, Kenya will not have the critical mass of trained human capital to spearhead our development objectives. As scholars and professionals in this field, we recognize that Vision 2030, through which we intend to transform our country into a middle-income economy, requires that we have in place a globally competitive and adaptive human resource base. This calls for increased investments in education. Accordingly, more attention is needed on programmes that stimulate self employment and innovation. I am therefore glad to see that Zetech College is focusing on business, hospitality, Media Arts and Design, Community Development and engineering programmes.

Mr. Chairman,

The government in its commitment to expand access to higher education has mandated Public Universities through the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology to implement the accelerated intake programme aimed at narrowing the time lap that qualified ‘O’ levels students have to wait in order to join a public university. Obviously, the programme is likely to pose other challenges particularly in terms of facilities that are already strained. It is my belief that colleges like Zetech have a role to play in expanding their facilities to allow for more academic programmes to ease the said backlog.

Dear Graduands,

Let me conclude by again congratulating you for successfully completing your courses. You are now set to begin a new chapter in your lives. I take this opportunity to wish you every success in all your future endeavours. The training you have received in this College gives you a sure foundation to face the future with confidence. But in a dynamic and rapidly changing global environment, you are expected to be open-minded, innovative and alert so that you can seize opportunities that may present themselves before you.

I am glad to note that your training in this institution has prepared you to face the challenges of living in a modern society, and to transform such challenges into opportunities that can benefit you and our country as a whole.

I wish all those who have traveled here a safe journey home and to all graduands, always seek the guidance of the Almighty in all that you do.

Thank you and God Bless you all.