



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR. JOHN SIMBA, CHAIRMAN
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI COUNCIL, DURING
THE OCCASION OF THE 33RD GRADUATION CEREMONY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI HELD ON FRIDAY
14TH OCTOBER, 2005 AT THE CHANCELLOR'S COURT.**

**Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Prof.
George Saitoti**

**Chancellor, University of Nairobi, Dr. Joseph Barrage
Wanjui,**

**Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science
and Technology, Prof. Karega Mutahi**

**Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi, Prof. George
Magoha,**

Chancellors of Sister universities,

Members of the University of Nairobi Council

Vice-Chancellors of our sister universities,

Members of the Diplomatic Corps.

Deputy Vice Chancellors of the University of Nairobi

Principals of Colleges

Deans of Faculties and Directors of Institutes

Chairmen and Head of Departments

Graduands

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the University Council, allow me to welcome you all to this most auspicious occasion. For the graduands, accept my sincere congratulations on this day when, after years of hard work, you are finally graduating.

It is a delight to see your happy faces, as indeed, this is by no means a small achievement. You have endured several years of intense learning to reach this day and adorn a graduation gown, cap and tassel. Once again congratulations. But remember in reality, whichever way you chose to pursue your dreams; your goals, this is only the beginning.

As Chairman of Council of this University this is my first graduation although I have attended graduation ceremonies here but in other capacities, I am indeed delighted to be once again associated with this fine institution which has contributed so much to our nation's human capital. And on this note, I would wish to take this early opportunity to thank the government for having appointed me as Chairman of Council. For me it is both an honour and privilege to chair a council that is endowed with so much talent and for the opportunity to serve. Together we shall endeavour to ensure that the University meets and advances its core objectives and obligations to society. In this respect let me express our appreciation to the government for its

continued support to the university and its programmes.

The University of Nairobi has a long, rich and proud history. Indeed when one talks of University in Kenya, this University is the first that comes to mind. It is out of it that the other public universities such as Kenyatta University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Moi University Egerton University either sprouted from it, or were nurtured by staff drawn from the deep pool of academics that the University has on offer. Of course, this distinction portends greater responsibility on the part of the University, as it has to lead by example and act as a role model to its sister universities. It is also from this university that solutions to the many challenges we face as a nation such as, poverty eradication, HIV/AIDS and other development issues have to come. The University, working in tandem with other institutions and agencies, should therefore be the first stop for research funds to address these national concerns.

The University of Nairobi as expected produces some of the best graduands who after graduating have gone on to excel here and abroad, in academic achievements, in business, industry, government and many other sectors of our exonomy. This is simply because we admit some of the best students from our secondary schools and our academic staff have proved themselves both at home and abroad, in extending the frontiers of knowledge, in their areas of specialization. Aware of the university's role in the development of this country, the council will continue to work closely with the government and the university community to create an enabling environment for the attainment of the University's core functions of teaching and research. Talking of research, the University of Nairobi is expected to take a lead in research activities given the high concentration of PhD scholars and other researchers. In fact, nothing should stop us from having the highest number of applicable research findings. Indeed during my visits to various Colleges – at Chiromo, Kabete, and Medical School at Kenyatta – I was briefed of research, covering various fields, which is eithter complete or ongoing. What now needs to be

addressed is protection of the intellectual property in the various research findings, process and other innovations etc by urgently registering patents to those findings, processes and innovations. Some of these processes and inventions will then be available to those who may wish to commercially exploit them provided that the university receives payment for its processes and inventions. In this way additional funds are likely to be generated and made available for more research. The council will vigorously pursue this, as the University needs to protect its intellectual property. Making inventions and processes available for commercial exploitation will go a long way not only in helping the industry/university linkage, but also in the future ensure creation of steady income stream for the university.

On finances, the University Council will strive to ensure that we operate within the budget. But we know challenges exist. Proper utilization of the finances will be observed to ensure that any revenue leakages are plugged.

The University is determined to complete its stalled projects. Already a Committee is addressing this matter. The findings of this committee will be presented to the management for consideration and action. The completion of these stalled projects will go a long way in providing office and laboratory space for staff and also provide enough teaching classrooms and laboratories for students.

Ladies and Gentlemen, my familiarization tour of the various Colleges of the university as stated above have been an eye opener. Primary is the realization that the University is endowed with a lot of resources, both physical and human. Council will endeavour to ensure that this vast resource base is harnessed and put to good use to enable the University to move ever closer Towards World Class Excellence - our ultimate objective.

In conclusion, let me once again congratulate the graduands, I believe that each one of you has a dream – let that dream come alive.

Thank you.