



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

**REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL, MR.
JOHN P.N. SIMBA DURING THE 37TH GRADUATION
CEREMONY AT THE CHANCELLOR'S COURT ON
FRIDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2007**

Dr. Joseph B. Wanjui, Chancellor, University of Nairobi

Hon. Prof. George Saitoti, Minister for Education

**Prof. Karega Mutahi, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of
Education**

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

Members of the University Council

Vice-Chancellors of our sister Universities

Prof. Jacob T. Kaimenyi, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (AA)

Prof. Peter Mbithi, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (A&F)

Principals of Colleges

Deans and Directors

Chairmen and Heads of Departments

Parents/Guardians

Graduands

Members of staff

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to be with you here today to celebrate the 37th Graduation Ceremony of the University of Nairobi.

On behalf of the University of Nairobi Council and on my own behalf, I wish firstly to welcome you all to this auspicious occasion and, secondly to congratulate our graduands for having worked hard to arrive at this day and harvest the fruits of your labour. For the parents and guardians, today is a confirmation your investment was wise. We as a University are proud of our contribution to the

nation's human capital through the training of highly skilled manpower. You are therefore leaving this University with a heavy responsibility. My belief is that this University has prepared you well to shoulder tasks that await you outside. I therefore challenge you to go and make a difference; provide direction because you are armed with the relevant knowledge and skills.

This graduation marks the award of degrees and diplomas to over 2000 graduands from four colleges – College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences,

College of Architecture and Engineering, College of Education and External Studies and the College of Biological and Physical Sciences. The remaining two colleges will constitute the 38th Graduation Ceremony to be held later this year.

For the third year running, Mr. Chancellor Sir, we have been holding two graduation ceremonies to ensure that students who complete their studies early are released immediately instead of waiting for groups that are still in session. This system has solved the problem of crowding during graduation as

was the case when all the six colleges graduated at the same time.

Ladies and Gentlemen, our rating as a responsible corporate citizen has improved considerably. Our public image is now much better and, going forward we shall endeavour to improve; thanks to a concerted effort by all concerned in their efforts to instill discipline and embrace dialogue. Our internal publics have continued to conduct themselves with utmost decorum devoid of confrontation which has in turn enabled our institution to run its programmes and

activities without any interruption. In this regard, I wish to commend the university management, the staff and students. This year, the unions held elections with no incidents being reported. Once again I commend all those involved for conducting these activities with maturity and dignity. That is how it should be.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, this year the University of Nairobi was privileged to acquire another campus from the government and this will play a greater role in increasing access to higher education in the country.

The Kenya Science Teachers College is now a campus of the University of Nairobi that will offer courses in education, science and computer studies. Preparations are ongoing to admit 180 students in the next academic year due to start this October. On behalf of the University of Nairobi Council, let me take this opportunity to thank the government for handing over this excellent facility to the University. On our part I would like to assure the government that effective systems and structures will be put in place to ensure success of academic and other programs at the campus.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in recent years the government initiated reforms in the public sector – all geared towards improved service delivery. Public Universities have been part and parcel of these reforms. The University of Nairobi Council, as part of these reforms, has now for the second year running been signing performance contracts with the government. I am happy to report that in the 2005/2006 contract year, the University of Nairobi was ranked number one in the public universities category. We hope that the reforms that we have

embarked on notably the Rapid Results Initiative (RRI) and preparations for ISO certification will greatly improve service delivery and move the development of this University to the next level. However, even as we feel elated at these achievements, we are awake to the fact that every situation is capable of substantial improvements.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the University Council has continued to build on previous gains. This year for instance we were able to complete projects through internally generated funds and support from external

partners. This has enabled management to complete more stalled projects of the 1990s and initiate new ones. We are still improving our infrastructure and equipping our learning facilities to mirror what is best in modern institutions of higher learning. In this connection, I am appealing to all our stakeholders to continue contributing to the development of this institution. Let what we have accomplished be the springboard to propel us to the next level.

Today is for graduands to celebrate their achievements. You can now go forth to the wider world secure in the knowledge that you have been well prepared to face the challenges you will encounter in life. But remember this is only the beginning. In matters of knowledge and skills the landscape is never static.

My appeal to you is to reciprocate the opportunities accorded to you by joining our Alumni Association to participate in building this University.

I wish you the best of luck and God speed as you join the over 90,000 alumni of this great institution to make a positive contribution to our nation's development and the world. May whatever you wish for as you journey through this life come true.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL.