



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

**SPEECH TO BE DELIVERED BY THE VICE
CHANCELLOR, PROF GEORGE A.O. MAGOHA DURING
THE ORIENTATION WEEK FOR FRESHERS 2013/2014
ACADEMIC YEAR ON THURSDAY MAY 23, 2013 AT 2.30
PM AT TAIFA HALL**

The Deputy Vice Chancellors

The College Principals

Deans and Directors

Staff and students

Ladies and gentlemen

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the University of Nairobi, - we pride ourself as Kenya's Premiere University, with the commitment to providing quality and holistic education and training.

I am aware that this has been a hectic week for you as you have been registering, and familiarizing yourselves with various facilities and amenities available to you at your respective colleges. I therefore, want to take this opportunity to congratulate you for your excellent performance in the KCSE examinations that enabled you to join this great University. Today, you make history as the first group for over twenty years to be admitted in May. This fast tracked pace, no doubt will

be the first of your long sojourn with us and we look forward to the end when we graduate you successfully.

Ladies and gentlemen, the University of Nairobi continues to be a pacesetter, not only in Kenya, but in the region as well. We have trained over 145,000 graduates in different professions who serve the world in various sectors, our current number of students is 63,000 and we have over 5,400 members of staff. The University of Nairobi is thus a leading African university with a commendable status in the rest of the world.

Our strong positioning is due to the quality of the students that we admit, as well as the quality of the academic staff the University engages. Thirdly, it is the quality of learning and teaching resources that the university avails to staff and students, the quality of the learning environment and services enjoyed by our staff and students. It is my belief therefore, that in pursuit of your academic goals, you will play your role in uplifting the standards of this great University.

Ladies and gentlemen, the University is an academic environment, therefore, you are expected to attend classes, undertake tutorials, practicals, assignments and examinations as directed by your lecturers. Those

who fail to meet our academic expectations should expect, stiff penalties. While the lecturers are ready and committed to teaching you and empowering you with new skills, you in turn must consult them whenever you have any academic problems. In addition, two offices - the Dean of Students and the Special Students' Advisor are open to deal with other problems that you might have. I encourage you to make good use of the resources availed to you, we believe that you will find your niche and settle down to learn, and to succeed.

Ladies and gentlemen, we expect that you will be exemplary achievers, world champions, and trend setters in your endeavors as you undertake your

studies here at the University, including participating actively in club activities and professional associations which will provide you with the opportunity to acquire leadership and personal skills, which you cannot get in a formal class or lesson. The time you will spend in the University will be important for each one of you in specific and personal ways, but overall, each one of you should experience growth in intellectual knowledge, personality, cultural enrichment, building personal friendships and career planning. I want to send caution here, that you be conscious of the environment around you. For starters the University of Nairobi is a very safe environment however, its location in the CBD, predisposes it to various security risks. The Chief Security Officer alerted you of the dark spots, but I

want to caution you to avoid certain places at night especially when you are unaccompanied. The areas around the Uhuru Highway Tunnel, Museum gate, the Serena Bus Stop among others, should be avoided at all costs, after 7.00 p.m. Also avoid going to town at night unaccompanied. It is our duty to, rather than of security personnel to do security policing and ensure our safety. Feel free to report any suspicious looking persons to the security offices so that appropriate action can be taken immediately.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to encourage you to enjoy your time and experience in campus, by interacting with people from different parts of the world, instead of being cocooned in your discipline because university

education is a holistic experience. Martin Luther King Jr., once noted that “*intelligence plus character is the goal of a true education*” – implying that for one to be successful, self-discipline is key. I urge you to abide by the rules and regulations that govern student conduct, because at the end of the day, you can only have to blame yourselves if you do not achieve what you came to do in this University.

Ladies and gentlemen, University life will accord you a lot of freedom, with its own social risks. I urge you to keep off activities that will not contribute positively to your future. Such activities include: use of drugs, destructive habit and, bad association, among others. The choice of who to associate with is yours; the sort

of company you keep determines how empowered you will be or how it will lower your opportunities. Again, recognize that political groups will try to woo you, be discerning as identifying with the wrong groups can cause you to lower your opportunities.

At the University of Nairobi, we have not, do not and shall not get involved in partisan politics. We are loyal to the state of Kenya and Government of the day by law established. We shall therefore, not tolerate partisan politics by students within the precincts of the university.

I know you are well aware of the HIV/AIDS pandemic that is claiming many lives in the country. I urge all of

you to lead responsible lives and avoid risky behaviors, let abstinence be the norm and if you cannot, please use protection which is available in our clinics. We also have voluntary counseling and testing services.

Ladies and gentlemen, the University of Nairobi has not prescribed any formal dress code for students, save for the College of Health Sciences. It is however, the responsibility of students and members of staff to observe standards that subscribe to modesty and decency in both dress and manner. By so doing, you are respecting yourself and those around you and above all you are a point of reference or a mentor who will influence others.

Today, we induct you formally into the University community, with other orientation activities until you start your classes next week. The orientation week will usher in the most unforgettable and rewarding experiences in your life as you build your career at the University of Nairobi.

With those remarks, I wish you the most fulfilling and rewarding experience at this great University.

Thank you.