Cabinet Secretary for Education Speech

Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba

SPEECH BY HON. JULIUS MIGOS OGAMBA, CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION DURING THE 33RD GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON FRIDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER 2024 AT THE GRADUATION SQUARE IN LIMURU CAMPUS.

The Guest Speaker, Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, General Secretary, All Africa Council of Churches,

The University Chancellor, Hon. Prof. Margaret Kobia, PhD, EGH,

The Council Chair, His Grace The Most Rev. Dr. Jackson Ole Sapit,

Members of the Board of Trustees, Board of Management and Senate Present,

All University Faculty and Staff,

Parents, Guardians and Sponsors,

Graduating Class of 2024,

Good Morning!

I wish to convey my hearty congratulations to the graduating class of 2024 for a job well done. Today is a special day for you because you are finally reaping the fruits of your hard labor. Allow me to also appreciate the leadership of the University for extending an opportunity to me to be part of this years' 33rd graduation ceremony. I am greatly humbled and do not take this invitation for granted. This is truly a gesture of honor and friendship. To all the parents, guardians and sponsors who supported the dreams and aspirations of these graduating students, you are our true hero's and heroine's. Through your sacrifice, you have made this day become a reality.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I address you today, I am aware that we are operating in an era where the higher education sector is experiencing significant shifts and transformation and private universities have been adversely affected. However, I wish to affirm that the government is committed in creating a level playing field for all education stakeholders to ensure university education becomes affordable and accessible for all. In the meantime, universities have the opportunity to turn around the challenges into opportunities. I am happy that we live in the age of innovation where creative ideas have become drivers of change. Let's embrace innovative approaches in the management of institutions of higher learning to ensure we are responsive to issues that will steer high quality education to greater heights.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In our commitment and pursuit in the transformation of the education sector, good governance principles of accountability, transparency, and effectiveness should be at the core of our operations. These factors will improve the quality of education and management of institutions of higher learning.

Taking into consideration that universities are training grounds for skilled workforce and the government as an enabler through policy formulation and implementation, there is need to harness and solidify these symbiotic relationship. As St. Paul's University, your goal is to prepare graduates for the future that will drive the government's socio-economic transformation agenda, including the Vision 2030. Additionally, in order to spur the growth our economy, there is need to link education to the labor market and create opportunities through entrepreneurship. The government is therefore committed in strengthening universities by initiating policy dialogues that will address existing gaps and challenges such as the new funding model and allocation of funds for research in emerging areas of interest.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Worth noting is that The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has become a key transformative pillar for the government of the day. Why? Because TVET plays a great role in spurring industrialization and with its successful implementation, Kenyan youth will be equipped with hands-on skills that are critical in driving Kenya's industrialization blueprint.

I am impressed to learn that St. Paul's University has taken an active role and has registered TVET centres in Nairobi and Nakuru campuses and the Limuru main campus is also at the final stages of having a fully operational and functional TVET centre. This is a great step in supporting the government build skills and the capacity of the Kenyan youth. I wish to reiterate that the successful implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) spearheaded by the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA) is a key testament to fruitful implementation of CBET in Kenya. This initiative has brought many Kenyans with skills but without certification into the ecosystem of skills qualification turning out to be an excellent tool for inclusivity and opportunity to Kenyans. To date, the government through TVET CDACC has developed more over 400 competency-based curricula and all of them have been developed in close consultation with industry experts to ensure that every skill taught in TVET institutions is directly applicable to the real-world job roles.

For instance, in July/August 2024, there were CBET assessment results across 252 TVET assessment centers in the country, and a total of 59,575 candidates were assessed in 226 qualifications across all levels with 2,929 units of competency. This is a noteworthy achievement. It is important to note that as CBET gains momentum, the Government has established rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to maintain consistency and high standards in TVET training programmes. The government's aspiration is to learn from global best practices and position Kenya as a leader in Competency-Based Education and Training in Africa while at the same time expand opportunities for Kenya's TVET trainees on the global stage.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to state that it takes wisdom to live in tune with the mode of the changing world. Our leadership must be foresighted and strategic. In this way, we will be responsive to emerging issues and challenges appropriately.

As I make reference to this year's graduation theme, I have observed the theme speaks boldly on why we need to develop a complete mind, and study the science of art and art of science in order to learn to see and realize that everything connects to something. Therefore, the idea that religion is one thing, and science is another, is a mistaken idea, for there is no true religion without true science, and consequently there is no true science without true religion.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I conclude, I wish to affirm the government's commitment in addressing the ever-evolving skill's gap as I equally commend St. Paul's University for playing a significant role in supporting the government in training highly qualified graduates who have the requisite skills and knowledge and contribute towards the realization of Vision 2030.

To all the graduands, the journey has just begun. Let this graduation become your launching pad to future career prospects. Go out there and carry the torch of the institution that has impacted you with pride and honor.

Once again, congratulations.

God bless you. God bless St. Paul's University.

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