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SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE DeKUT VICE CHANCELLOR DURING THE 15TH GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON 15TH DECEMBER 2023, AT DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Acknowledgements

- The Chancellor DeKUT, General (Rtd) Dr. Julius Waweru Karangi EGH, CBS, DCO, LOM
- Representative of the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Dr. Wahome;
- The Council Chair DeKUT University; Dr. James Kariuki
- Members of the University Council;
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor Administration and Finance, Prof. Esther Magiri;
- The University Senate;
- Members of staff;
- Parents and guardians;
- Students;
- Graduands;
- Distinguished guests;
- Ladies and gentlemen;

Good morning?

It is a great honour to join you today as you celebrate the 15th graduation ceremony and as we release the 784 graduates into the world of work. Graduation is a time in which we have the opportunity to not only celebrate our accomplishments in molding the life of our graduates, but additionally to reflect, and strategize for the future with hope and optimism.

1. **Congratulate the Chancellor on his appointment and welcome him**

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I would like to congratulate and welcome our new Chancellor General (Rtd) Dr. Julius Waweru Karangi on his appointment as the second Chancellor of DeKUT. This is a momentous occasion, and I am confident your leadership, Chancellor Sir, will bring immense value to our esteemed institution. Your wealth of experience, dedication and unwavering patriotism make you an outstanding choice for this prestigious role.

2. **Thank the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Education and the DeKUT Council for the appointment**

Chancellor Sir,

Today also marks my first graduation as the Vice Chancellor of this great University, following my appointment in August this year.

I express my sincere gratitude to the esteemed Cabinet Secretary and the University Council for the honour and privilege of being appointed as the second Vice Chancellor of DeKUT. It is with great enthusiasm and commitment that I took this significant responsibility. I am eager to contribute to the growth and development of the University, fostering academic excellence, research, and a nurturing learning environment.

3. **Thank my Predecessor, Prof. P. Ndirangu Kioni**

Chancellor Sir;

As I embark on this journey as the second Vice-Chancellor of DeKUT, I would to express my deepest gratitude to my predecessor, Prof. Eng. P. Ndirangu Kioni, for his exemplary leadership and vision that has laid a strong foundation for this esteemed University. Your

unwavering commitment to academic excellence, innovation, and inclusivity has set a standard we aim to uphold and build upon.

As Sir Albert Einstein once said," The only reason I stand tall, is because I stand on the shoulders of giants." DeKUT stands tall because we stand on the shoulders of the giants who have been there before us.

4. **Congratulate the Honoris causa**

Chancellor Sir;

We are delighted to be conferring an honorary doctorate, Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa, to Mr James Waibochi, who was one of the Board of Trustee that initiated the established of then Kimathi Institute of Technology. He selflessly served in the Board for over 40 years alongside H.E President Mwai Kibaki and Hon Duncan Ndegwa, and together with others, are responsible for establishing this great institution. His commitment to the success of this institution is a good example of dedication, sacrifice and selfless service to the society. This are values we hold dear in this University.

5. **Why DeKUT?**

Chancellor Sir;

As we celebrate our graduands today, I also extend my deepest gratitude to the parents and guardians for having entrusted DeKUT with your children for the last 4 to 5 years of their study here. Thank you for choosing DeKUT.

At DeKUT, you are assured of quality service delivery and timely completion of studies. Moreover, we are committed to development of skills and competences that are required in the world of work

I am happy to inform you that, we are graduating the first students with a minor degree in Critical Thinking and Communication Skills because we acknowledge the importance of soft skills in career development.

6. Key Achievements of DeKUT for 2023

Chancellor Sir,

DeKUT is keen on building a strong ecosystem towards being an entrepreneurial University, which is focused on applied research, innovations, creating of Intellectual property (IP) and establishment of start-up companies for national development.

As a University, we continue to build on our strategic focus areas aligned with the Government of Kenya Agenda. We recently won the Entrepreneurial Award of the Year during the Commercialization and Entrepreneurial Institutions Leaders' Summit (CEIL).

The University has built an ecosystem that fosters innovation and entrepreneurship. It has Financially Independent Centers (FICs). These centres serve as centres of excellence in their specialized research areas and work to attract funding for technical research projects to solve societal challenges.

Chancellor Sir,

The University has established the DeKUT Science and Technology Park to promote cooperation and synergy between Universities, research institutions, the government and the private sector to create a favourable environment for innovation, renovation, and training. DeST-Park covers three thematic areas, which are Agri-tech (Food bioresources and natural products value-addition), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and Design, Materials and Manufacturing (DMM), which includes the popularly known Semiconductor Technologies Limited, which manufactures nanotechnology products for the global market.

Chancellor Sir,

In a ground-breaking move towards fostering research and innovation in Africa, DeKUT has solidified its commitment by entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). This collaboration has given rise to the Origin Research and Innovations Labs, a transformative initiative to address intricate challenges across the continent.

The Origin Lab concept revolves around a cross-disciplinary research and innovation framework tailored to surmounting Africa's multifaceted challenges. Positioned at the nexus of idea generation, product development, testing, commercialization facilitation, and innovation management, Origin's mission is to harness Africa's top talent for pioneering research, development, and innovation.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The establishment of the Dedan Kimathi University Comprehensive Cancer Management Centre is in line with the Kenya Vision 2030, which aims to provide high-quality and affordable health care to improve the quality of life for Kenyans. It also aligns with the Big 4 Agenda to achieve Universal Health Care. Its design, which emphasizes the full range of healthcare from scanning, diagnosis, treatment, and palliative care, seeks to fill the gaps in cancer care in the region regarding early diagnosis and treatment.

7. **Congratulate the Graduands**

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I want to extend my congratulations to the students graduating today. Congratulations on your unrelenting determination to move forward and complete your studies. Your journey here for the last 4 to 5 years has been challenging. Thank you for maintaining discipline and exemplary character during your stay at the University.

As you cherish the fruits of your hard work, I hope that success follows you in everything you do. The University has equipped you with the best education to tackle any challenge that you may encounter. Go forth confidently and embrace the journey with courage and determination to last the course.

May The LORD bless you and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine upon you,

May you prosper in ever and be great in the Land!

Congratulations to the Class of 2023!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The University has confidence in your education and the skills you have been equipped with to deal with emerging problems and be problem solvers. We have also provided you with the best education to tackle any challenge. Go forth with confidence and embrace the journey with courage and determination.

Congratulations to the graduating Class of 2023!