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SPEECH DELIVERED BY ANGELA OCHIENG', SCHOOL OF NURSING, DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY DURING THE 15TH GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON 15TH DECEMBER 2023, AT DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

The Chancellor, The Chief guest, Council Chairman, Members of the University Council, Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor, The University Senate, University staff, parents, guardians and sponsors, fellow graduands, ladies and gentlemen; Good morning.

My name is Angela Ochieng', a student from the school of Nursing. I am humbled to be standing before you during this splendid occasion as the valedictorian.

The word family refers to a group of people related by birth, marriage or adoption. However, at DeKUT, this meaning has been refined, marinated and flavored to mean a group of unique individuals united by their diverse characteristics, interrelating with an aim of personal development and enhancing lives through technology. Getting to learn in a student-centered, well-equipped and a cutting-edge facility, which promoted both academic and extra-curriculum activities, was an exemplary opportunity. DeKUT has been indeed a delightful home.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Echoing the words of Lao Tzu, a Chinese Philosopher, 'A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step'. To the class of 2023, we have made it and we impenitently deserve to be celebrated. We are the reason for this distinguished gathering that we have today and this, unquestionably, is a proof of the four incredible years of our resilience, dedication and relentless pursuit of knowledge and skills.

Let's drift back to the beginning of our journey in DeKUT. The long queues made during the initial registration, the definitions of new complex terms, the formations that were disbanded during the exams, the tears and sweat shed in pursuit of excellence. Even when the COVID pandemic hit, our flexibility and tenacity was beyond comprehension and we made it. The networks we've cultivated, the knowledge and experiences that we've gained have indeed shaped us into reliable individuals and catalysts for progress.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the spirit of Africanism, it is said that, 'To mold a child, it requires the effort of the whole village. In this context, who we are today is greatly attributed to the efforts of the various support systems strategically placed in our lives by the Almighty. To our lecturers, I am yet to comprehend how you shape fresh minds into brilliant ones. You are a great inspiration, equipping us with knowledge and skills that guide us through the complexities of academics and life. On behalf of the graduands, I extend our heartfelt gratitude.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To our dear parents and guardians, words can never be enough to express our gratitude. Your sacrifices and encouragement have laid the foundation for our achievements throughout this journey. We are forever thankful. To the university support staff, we are grateful for the efforts that you always put in to ensure the smooth running of the university. From security to making and maintaining the institution's environment attractive. We see you; we appreciate you and we love you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To the class of 2023, there is power in finishing, it not only signifies the end but also shows the beginning. Having been adequately equipped to face the outside world, as we disperse into the world, let's be ambassadors of positive change. As Theodore Roosevelt said, "Believe you can and you're halfway there". So, my fellow graduates, always believe in yourselves, and let's conquer every challenge that is ahead of us. Once more, to the class of 2023, congratulations. Thank you.