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SPEECH DELIVERED BY KIHONGE KAGIRI, DeKUT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CHAIRPERSON, DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, DURING THE 18TH GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON 16TH MAY 2025, AT DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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

Today, your name is not just a name. It's attached to a degree, and that's powerful. I stand before you not just as the Chairperson of the Dedan Kimathi University Alumni Association, but as your biggest cheerleader for what lies ahead.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Let's begin with something simple: How many still remember the campus Wi-Fi password? Be honest. If you do, you deserve another certificate—because that Wi-Fi, let's face it, was a lifeline. Sometimes more crucial than the actual meals! University life wasn't just a chapter—it was a whole movie. Drama. Comedy. Thriller. Even a bit of horror (especially around exam time). Some of you walked in fresh from the KCSE. Others joined

after waiting, working, or on the parallel program. But today? You all walk out as graduates.

You conquered 7 a.m. classes (well, you survived them). You survived HELB delays, "being processed" for three months. You endured group projects—where two worked, one vanished, and another just texted, "Yoo, update?" But beyond the struggle, you hustled. You made things happen. You sold clothes, coded apps, ran content pages, baked, braided, DJ'd... You didn't wait for the doors to open—you built your own. That's what this country needs. Not just youth asking "Nifanye nini?" but youth declaring, "Acha nianze hapa."

Ladies and Gentlemen;

As the Alumni Association, we are so incredibly proud. I am so proud that we made sure the world saw you. That graduation spotlight on Citizen TV and in the Daily Nation? That was us—alumni who once stood right where you are, choosing to shine the light forward. Now it's your turn. And let me clear something up—the Alumni Association isn't for "old people." It's for us. It's a platform to connect, grow, give back, and further carry the DeKUT legacy. Because after the photos, after the hugs, after the celebrations, real life begins. And life will test you. There will be rejections. Ghosted emails. Confused moments. But there will also be wins. Quiet victories. Big breakthroughs. When they come—and they will—remember where you came from.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Whether you become a CEO, a developer, a creative, an innovator, a changemaker, or maybe the next Chief of Defence—let DeKUT be your compass. Let it remind you, greatness often comes from humble beginnings.

So, take those photos. Cry if you must. Hug your classmates. Shake your lecturers' hands. Thank your parents. But above all—walk tall. You have earned this.

Class of 2025—Welcome to the alumni family. Welcome to the world of work.

As we like to say:

“Tumetoka mbali. Tunaenda mbali.”

Congratulations once again!