DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
P.O.BOX 657 - 10100, NYERI
Telephone: 0727088807
Email: pro@dkut.ac.ke; website: www.dkut.ac.ke
Public Relations Department

SPEECH DELIVERED BY KIHONGE KAGIRI, DeKUT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CHAIRPERSON, DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, DURING THE 19TH GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON 19TH DECEMBER 2025, AT DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

The Acting Chancellor and Council Chairman, The Chief Guest, 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.

First, graduates, give yourselves the loudest round of applause. You earned this. Clock it.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

When I look at you today, I don't just see degrees and gowns. I see late-night group chats, frantic exam cramming, borrowed notes, campus hustles, homecomings, relationships that survived or didn't, and the small victories that felt huge when they happened.

University was a playlist of hits and skips. Some tracks were bangers: the friendships, the "*I actually understood that*" moments, the projects you thought were doomed that somehow worked. But ..other tracks …. mmmmmmmh? the assignments, the days you lowkey questioned your life choices. But you kept showing up.

Your journey here was not only an academic one. It was emotional, social, and sometimes absolutely chaotic. You learned how to survive on a budget, how to explain to auntie at weddings what your course is, how to navigate feedback that felt like a roast, and how to show up for people even when you had nothing left in your cup. Those lessons will follow you, and they matter.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Now, the real world. Outside these gates, the job market is going to do things. It'll hand you wins, the shiny job, the fellowship, that call where your voice cracks and you finally get the "*we'd like to offer you*" and we celebrate those big wins. It'll also give you delayed wins, chances that arrive late, sometimes years later, that'll feel like fate playing catch-up. Be patient with the slow wins. They're still wins.

And yes, sometimes folks will ghost you. Opportunities will disappear without a trace, people will leave, applications will vanish into the void of "not selected." You'll have moments you question yourself; am I good enough? Did I pick the wrong path? Is my CV cursed? Those feelings are normal. They visit so many of us.

But here's the thing: success after graduation is not a single tweetable moment. It's a weird playlist with a few surprise bops. Sometimes success is a promotion, sometimes it's a small client who believes in your hustle, sometimes it's a little project that gives you purpose. And sometimes success is resilience: you showed up again after the ghosting, you applied after the rejection, you pivoted when a door closed. That persistence? Legendary. That is the real flex.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

A few practical notes that I have learnt:

- ✓ Network - not as in "collect people" but actually connect. Your cohort is now a power network. Slide into LinkedIn, join alumni events, meet a mentor for coffee. The person who remembers your name in five years might be the one who helps you land your delayed wins;

- ✓ Keep learning - the degree is proof you can learn; don't stop there. Micro-courses, internships, side projects, they add up;
- ✓ Be kind to your future self - build small habits now: a savings habit, a habit of reading, and a habit of asking for feedback. They compound;
- ✓ When you fail (and you will, at times) - reframe it as data. Analyze, adapt, try again.

Graduates, celebrate. Throw a proper celebration for this moment. Dance, sing, eat the cake. You worked for this. Your parents, guardians, mentors, thank them. And thank yourselves for choosing to continue.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Graduation is both an ending and a beginning. Today you close the chapter titled "student." Tomorrow you open a chapter called many things: intern, entrepreneur, civil servant, parent, caregiver, founder, researcher or all of them at once. There will be joyful days, days that make you say "I did that!" and days that make you want to hide under a duvet and binge motivational videos. That's normal. Keep moving.

In closing: be brave enough to take bold steps, humble enough to learn from the small ones, and generous enough to lift the next person. Go out, get your wins, and if you get a ghosting moment, remember: it's a plot twist, not the end.

Class of 2025, own your story. Wear it with pride. Celebrate loudly.

Congratulations!!