SPEECH BYTHE CHAIRMAN, DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, DURING THE UNIVERSITY'S FOURTH GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON 29TH APRIL, 2016.

- **Chancellor Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, Prof. S.O Keya**
- **Council members**
- **Vice Chancellor, Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, Prof. P. N. Kioni**
- **Vice Chancellors of other Universities present**
- **Deputy Vice Chancellors**
- **Deans**
- **Registrars**
- **Teaching and non-teaching staff**
- **Parents and guardians**
- **Graduands and Students**
- **Distinguished Guests, Ladies**

Our business as council is to play an oversight role, to approve policies to guide the management of the University, and to ensure that the required resources, including the human resource, are available for implementation of the University's strategic plan and programmes.

DeKUT is a very young University. Therefore, she has to continue developing her infrastructure in order to have the required teaching facilities, particularly, lecture rooms,

laboratories, and offices. We, as University Council are grateful to the government for the continuing funding for infrastructure developments. The focus this year is to complete the another phase of the Academic block and also to build some labs to house equipment for science and engineering programmes. We have embarked on construction of an engineering laboratory annex which should be ready for use in the next quarter of this year.

We still have as ongoing projects and incomplete projects: Construction of Phase II of the academic block, Phase III of the Resource centre, which is to house an extension of the University library, and provide additional labs lectures rooms and offices; and a multi-purpose hall. These are facilities meant to support the existing academic programmes.

The establishment of world class University of Technology is an expensive affair. It requires a lot of resources to have world class facilities and the requisite logistical support delivery of academic programmes and research by the professors, lectures, and students. The University's main source of funding is the exchequer. Thus, we continue to appeal to the Government to provide the University with more resources to enable development of these basic facilities.

Furthermore, the technological and applied science programme being implemented in this university are relatively more expensive to implement than what is required for the social sciences. The Council, therefore, appeals to the Ministry to adopt the Differentiated Unit cost of funding as the basis for funding universities so that get funding on the basis is of the relative costs of their programmes. This is crucial to this University if we are to continue discharging our mandate as a University of Technology without undue financial strain. This will also enable us

remunerate our staff appropriately and maintain good industrial relations.

The University's student population now stands at around 7000, with approximately 800 enrolled in the Nairobi CBD campus and the rest in this Campus. This is a phenomenal growth from a population of 500 seven years ago. The growth, particularly in the main campus would not have been realised without the support of the host community and and the hostel providers. They have provided the accommodation and other supporting facilities thus enabling the university to focus on the core business of providing education. There has steady growth of hostels around the University. On behalf of the Council and the entire University we say thank you to the Hostel providers.

Nevertheless, the Hostel development is lagging the growth of the student population by far. From a recent survey, the suitable accommodation in the neighbourhood is only for only for 3000 students. The pace of growth is not expected to match the requirements of the University which plans to raise the student population to over 10,000 by the year 2019. For this reason the University Council is exploring development of more hostels under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model to cater for the shortfall. The objective is not to replace the private hostel provider but to complement their efforts by meeting the shortfall, so that the University does not lose its competitiveness for lack of availability of adequate suitable student accommodation.

Governance

This year the Council approved a number of programmes and policies to guide the University in the implementation of the strategic plan and in the day to day management of the university. These include research policy, intellectual property policy, university security policy, establishment of a International

office, relocation of the Nairobi Town Campus from Union Towers to the more spacious and serene Pension Towers Building on Loita street, and the DeKUT student Organisation constitution.

We are very pleased that the DeKUTSO constitution, which is now fully compliant with the National Constitution, has been effected and that the students are able to democratically and peacefully elect their leaders and that they are being effectively represented in various University governance organs. I commend the students leaders for their effective, but peaceful, management of student affairs.

The University is implementing the strategic plan and continue to effectively discharge the annual Performance Contract between the Council and the GOK through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. In this regard the Council commends management and the entire university staff for their excellent performance and dedication to the University. Furthermore, the the Council commends the local chapters of the three Unions in operation in the University: the UASU, the KUSU and the KUDHEIHA for their constructive engagement with the employer. Higher education has become extremely competitive and the appeal to students to join an institution is sensitive to labour disruptions. It is, therefore, paramount that good industrial relations are maintained across the board.

With those few remarks, I would once again like to congratulate the graduands for successfully completing the programmes in which they were enrolled and wish them success are the embark on the next phase of their careers.

Thank you and May God Bless You.