
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

I am happy to be here at Kenyatta University on this special occasion of the official opening of the Central Administration Complex and the Graduate School Building. I thank the University Council and the entire University Management team for undertaking such major projects and completing with efficiency. I have noted the remarkable transformation witnessed here at this University and we want to congratulate all those who have contributed to this work. It is clear
that the developments being realized in this University will transform it into a great institution of higher education in this country.

I am happy that Kenyatta University has over the years continued to train many professionals who are now serving in different capacities of the nation’s economy. The University together with the other institutions of higher learning in this country continue to play a significant role in the training of highly trained human capital for the fast growing economy.

Ladies and gentlemen, my government recognizes the fact that times are changing and that to realize fast growth propelled by innovation and knowledge, we must focus our efforts on education at all levels including higher education. It is therefore exciting to see that Kenyatta University is investing heavily on the development of high quality infrastructure that is necessary for the increasing demand and access to higher education for the people of Kenya. Today’s official opening of the Central Administration Complex and the Graduate School Building confirm that the University is committed to effectively play its role in the realization of the country’s agenda as articulated in Kenya Vision 2030. The idea of erecting the significant statue of the founding president in this University will be a reminder for future generations about the history of the institution.
I must once again congratulate Kenyatta University for taking up the country’s challenge of increasing accessibility to higher education for the numerous numbers of qualified students over the last few years. To increase the number of students from 10,000 in 2006 to the current 65,000 is remarkable. I am also happy to note that the University has increased the number of campuses around the country thus taking higher education closer to the people. This approach of decentralizing higher education by creating satellite campuses will spur development across the nation. I have also noted that besides bachelor’s programmes, the University is now offering many postgraduate programmes at Masters and Doctoral degree levels. It is therefore evident that the newly opened Graduate School Building will be an important facility for training postgraduate students whom we need in order to take development to a higher level as a country.

Ladies and gentlemen, the economies of some of the most developed countries in the world depend to a large extent on research and innovations that are generated by projects in universities. Kenya is no exception, as a developing country endowed with many natural resources yet to be fully exploited and developed, the newly built and modern Kenyatta University Graduate School Building is of much significance.

In this regard, I encourage the students and staff of Kenyatta University to take responsibility of the myriad research needs of our country. The Graduate School should provide a forum where
various research themes are pursued and research findings used in informing key sectors of our economy. I challenge the organizations, both private and public to engage with universities to tap the knowledge that is being generated continuously from these institutions. As the government continues to commit more and more resources to research and innovation, universities should also prepare students to successfully compete for funding, conduct collaborative research, and consultancies with various research institutions and the government.

At this juncture, I also note with great appreciation the noble work the University Management has conducted that has led to other key academic and physical infrastructural projects. These include the Chandaria Business Innovation and Incubation Centre where students are mentored to be entrepreneurs and the newly launched Students Work Induction Programme where students are introduced to the world of work thus closing the gap between the University and industries. It is clear that young people are going to do better when they get excited about learning, and they are going to be more excited if they see a connection between what they do in the classroom and how it is applied.

I therefore support the University’s initiative of partnering with private sector organizations to provide students with an opportunity to experience real work environment and apply the knowledge they have acquired at the University. My government strongly supports the
development of Public-Private Partnerships because the logic underlying Public-Private Partnerships is that when the public and private actors work together in such collaborative projects, they often achieve joint results or collaborative advantages. Globally, majority of the governments, organizations and institutions that continue to transform exponentially are those that realize the benefits of pursuing PPPs. Elsewhere in the world, PPPs have been heavily promoted in key sectors such as education and healthcare with the aim of improving efficiency and innovation in the generation and performance of public services. I am happy to note that Kenyatta University is undertaking a project for the construction of hostels for 10,000 students which is commencing next month through a PPP with a company based in the United States of America.

At this juncture, I would like to congratulate the University for the two major projects it is undertaking which will go a long way in enhancing health care provision in this country. The two projects are the Kenyatta University Teaching, Research, and Referral Hospital and the Kenyatta University Children’s Hospital. The Referral Hospital which is the first University Hospital in our country to be opened next year will ease congestion at the Kenyatta National Hospital. My government has committed to support Kenyatta University’s Children’s Hospital because we believe in the health of children who are the future of this country. I would like to
thank the University Management for coming up with these useful ideas that will totally transform the health sector in this country.

While these are specific developmental projects of the University, I acknowledge the fact that once they are completed, they will significantly impact on the country’s socio-economic development. The physical location of these projects also promises to play a significant role in the realization of key objectives of the East African Community.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Children’s hospital once complete will augment what our public hospitals provide. I appreciate this important and visionary development by Kenyatta University that will go a long way in addressing the critical need of exceptional, specialized and quality health care services. I am happy to learn that Kenyatta University is pursuing many options in fundraising for the construction of the hospital to supplement Government funding. I encourage corporate and individuals to emulate Dr. Manu Chandaria who has supported the project by making a donation.

As I conclude, I am informed that part of the University land has been grabbed by people who pose as squatters. I am directing the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Lands and Housing to deal
with this issue and ensure that the University land is not lost. The University needs every inch of the land for use especially as the University continues to expand.

As I conclude, may I reiterate that my government is willing and ready to work hand in hand with all higher education institutions in coming up with useful initiatives that will contribute to the development of this great nation. I therefore urge you all to join hands with other government sectors so that together we can make our nation - Kenya a better country.

Thank you.