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Egerton University

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“ I take this opportunity to thank these staff members for their hard work for carrying the University flag high across the globe. ”

— Prof. Rose A. Mwonya, VICE-CHANCELLOR



“ SPEECH BY PROF. ROSE A. MWONYA  
VICE CHANCELLOR EGERTON  
UNIVERSITY

## DELIVERED ON FRIDAY, 31<sup>st</sup> JULY 2020 DURING THE 42<sup>ND</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY

Chancellor, Egerton University

Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

The PS Ministry of Education

Chancellors of other Universities present virtually

Chairman, Egerton University Council

Council Members, Egerton University

Chairpersons of Councils of other Universities present virtually

Vice Chancellors of other Universities present virtually

Deputy Vice Chancellors

Members of the University Senate

Senior Government Officials

Members of Staff, Graduating Class, Parents and Guardians

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I take this opportunity on behalf Egerton University Management team , Senate , staff and students to welcome you all to Egerton University and thank you for joining us today as we celebrate our 42<sup>nd</sup> Graduation Ceremony. To those graduating, congratulations for a job well done. I'm aware that this is a unique graduation since we are used to seeing one another, laughing, hugging and taking selfies but because of the Covid 19 pandemic we had to do this virtual graduation. We are here to grace the occasion with pomp, colour, joy and deep reflection because of your faith in yourself, in your abilities, the determination to succeed and your endurance through it all. I know it has been tiring, rough, challenging, but you emerged victorious! Once more congratulations.

Today, a total of 1018 students are going to be awarded diplomas and conferred degrees across our various Faculties. We are just about to award 90 Diplomas and confer 874 Bachelor's degrees, 44 Masters Degrees and 10 PhDs. We take pride in the input of your parents, guardians, your faculty staff, family and friends who participated in one way or another in refining the individuals we are celebrating today though we miss seeing you physically. We still celebrate your achievement.

**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**

Allow me to recognise and thank the CS Education Prof. George Magoha and his team for taking time from their busy schedule to be with us during this joyous occasion. I also thank the PS University Education and Research Amb. Simon Nabukwesi for coming. We as a University are grateful for the support you through the Ministry has been according the us. I also thank the government through the Ministry of Interior for ensuring that the University is secure through deployment of security officers inside the University compound. Finally I thank my staff members for their efforts in making this ceremony successful despite all the challenges associated with covid 19 protocols.

**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**

Im glad that we are graduating students at this tough times of covid 19 which has disrupted learning throughout the country. The academic calendar was cut short and students advised to go home prematurely. The staff members were also advised to work from home. All these were done as mitigati measure against the pandemic. Despite all these challenges the university continue to make tremendou.. progress across various faculties.

Through the Division of Academic Affairs there has been streamlining and the delivery of education through harnessing of technology and other tools vital in enabling progress in learning despite the pandemic.

We have been conducting online thesis defences through the Board of Post Graduate Studies where students have virtually proceeded with oral presentations of proposals both in the department and faculties as well as projects/theses defences from across the country and the world at large. Through this method students from Ghana, South Africa, Rwanda, and Malawi were able to complete their studies on time with support from supervisors spread across the world. Our academic staff have been working round the clock to develop online modules of lecture content and coupled with virtual graduation we are living true to our motto of **Transforming Lives through Quality Education.**

**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**

The Division of Research has made tireless efforts in enhancing our capacity to attract funding through writing excellent research and development proposals, providing numerous consultancies, supporting students involved in postgraduate research, and coordinating student attachment programmes. As a result of these efforts, the students and staff through their various faculties have won a number of scholarships, research funding, fellowships and consultancies as highlighted below:

- Mariam Karwitha from the Faculty of Agriculture won **One planet Fellowship** which seeks to build vibrant, highly connected and intergenerational network of African and European scientists leaders.
- Shadrack Nasongo from Rhodes University who is an alumni of this University won the **2020 Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship** where African born scholars participates in educational projects at higher educational projects in Africa.
- Stephen Mwangi from the Faculty of Natural Resources won full scholarship from Partnership for Knowledge financed by Italian Agency for International Corporation to study MSC in Geoinformatics Engineering.
- David Omondi from the Faculty of Science won two year Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Institute of Parasitology and Tropical Veterinary Medicine in Berlin, Germany among others.

I take this opportunity to thank these staff members for their hard work and for carrying the University flag high across the globe.

**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**

Early this year the country faced Covid 19 pandemic that affected all facets of human life and all resources were mobilised to fight it. I want to report to you that Egerton as world class University for the advancement of humanity was never left behind. Our staff members got involved in one way or the other to contain the pandemic as highlighted below:

- Our staff member from the Department of Industrial and Energy Engineering, Dr. George Owino fabricated and donated to Nakuru Level Five Hospital a booth for testing samples of the virus that overcomes most of the challenges associated with interactions between medical personnel and patients.

- The Faculty of Science through the Department of Chemistry mobilised and started producing hand-rub sanitisers and liquid soaps for the benefit of students, staff and community.
- The Faculty of Education through through the Department of Applied Community Studies also started designing and making face masks for students, staff and community.

**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**

In order to live to our mission of knowledge generation and dissemination, we are preparing to receive about 3490 first years through online admission. Currently the students are uploading documents online for registration purposes. We expect online reporting to be on 13/08/2020 thereafter orientation starts for two weeks, then online teaching and learning starts in September. As for continuing students online teaching and learning is already going and academic staff members are already trained on online lecture content on pilot basis. We plan to continue training of our staff members on online exam management through collaboration with Michigan State University in the US. As for face to face learning and teaching, this depends on the availability of facilities. With the unwavering commitment of our staff and support from our students, we are proud to say that we are on the right track.

**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**


Despite all these success stories the university has also faced huge financial challenges as a result of this pandemic. Since the beginning of this pandemic when the academic calendar was interfered with and the University closed prematurely, this had financial implications on the university since all our sources of revenue were stopped. This situation has necessitated the University to pay staff salaries at 60% of the net and the Ministry is already aware.


Currently we are preparing to resume learning after complying with all the Ministry of Health Guidelines. I wish to inform you that we are still facing the challenges of inadequate facilities if we are to comply fully with guidelines. I make humble appeal to our Ministry for additional financial support to reduce the above challenges.


**Mr. Chancellor Sir,**


As I conclude, I want to remind my graduands that this is not the end of everything but just the beginning of good things to come. I want to remind them to continue beaming with hopes, desires and prospects for the future. We have innovatively influenced your development through holistic education, generation, acquisition, preservation and dissemination of knowledge and skills. It's my wish that all these will contribute to national and global development. I look forward to your coming back for further studies to explore areas that strengthen your career.

Congratulations. I expect great things from you. Please follow protocols and stay safe.

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