

SPEECH BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR DURING THE 1ST MMUST YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT AT BISHOP STAM PASTORAL CENTRE ON THURSDAY, 28TH APRIL, 2016

Our Guest of Honour, the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Dr. Fred O. Matiang'i,

H.E Hon. Wycliffe A. Oparanya, the First Governor of Kakamega County,

Hon. Ababu Namwamba,

Hon. Musalia Mudavadi,

All the Officials from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology,

Deputy Vice Chancellors Present,

University Staff,

Our Distinguished Young Leaders,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning!

First allow me to most graciously thank our Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Fred Matiang'i for accepting our invitation to grace this very important occasion. We are indeed honoured to have you with us. Your personal presence here today, is truly an affirmation of how you hold the Kenyan youth dear. We in Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, are excited to have you in our midst. To all our guests, *Karibuni sana*.

Ladies and Gentlemen, due to the premium placed on MMUST as a major economic driver in the Western region of the country, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) recently elevated MMUST to a

Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) university, one among the selected few in the country. We are grateful for the confidence that the national government has in our university.

MMUST as a TVET university has quickly embraced its role of providing leadership by bringing all Kenyan youth on board to be guided on career development, entrepreneurial development and life skills.

Our Guest of Honor Sir, MMUST is right at the heart of economic renaissance of Western region and has therefore invested heavily in unique market driven academic programmes that are not only transforming this region but have a great socio-economic impact on the lives of the communities around Kakamega and beyond. To achieve this, we have chosen to be in touch with the most important segment of the Kenyan population. The youth are our entry point and that is why we are gathered here today.

This summit, the first of its kind in the Western region of the country is aimed at shaping the Kenyan youth into holistic citizens who will not only set their sights to getting into employment after school, but be the innovators that will change the economy of this nation. This is in line with our mission as a university.

To demonstrate our commitment in ensuring that our students acquire the necessary skills that will give them an edge over their competition in the labour market, we have a graduate internship programme. The MMUST internship program that is specific to MMUST graduands allows the selected interns to gain hands-on exposure and skills in their relevant areas of study. (We realize that most employers require one to have some working experience, therefore we ensure that we fill that gap for students who wish to get into employment).

The Western Business and Leadership School that we hope to launch in the near future will also help our students to gain the necessary knowledge,

skills and attitude that will prepare you for the labour market. Remember our performance will be measured against the rest of the world.

Our efforts must extend beyond the lecture halls. We must invest in research and innovation that will create avenues for youths to be creators and not just consumers of innovation. I therefore urge our youth to focus on attaining skills that will also open up entrepreneurial opportunities.

The MMUST Talent Scholarship programme which is in its second year is one among the many things that you should learn about as it could prove to be beneficial to the various budding talents amongst you.

As you brace yourselves to inculcate the knowledge that you will receive during the two days of this leadership summit, allow me to remind our youth that as one among America's great Presidents, Abraham Lincoln, aptly put, '*Great leadership is a product of great character and therefore character matters.*' We should therefore strive to develop and maintain personal integrity if we hope to be successful leaders.

Thank you.

PROF. ENG. FAO OTIENO, FAAS

**VICE CHANCELLOR MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY**