

Address by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. F.A.O Otieno, to the 2017/2018 Fresh Students of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology on Tuesday, 26th September 2017 at the Graduation Square.

The Deputy Vice Chancellors,

Deans, Directors and Heads of Departments,

Members of the Senate,

University Management Board,

President, Executive and Parliamentarians of Student Leadership,

Staff,

Our fresh Students,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning, Hamjambo!

I wish to welcome all of you, our fresh students, to Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology; the University of Choice. We are glad that we are starting a journey with you that will, hopefully, change the destiny of your lives once you graduate. I have seen many of you walk the streets of MMUST the last one week and I can see the pleasure in your faces to have, at last, joined the University. MMUST has brought all of you from far and wide with different backgrounds and upbringing. We pray that as you interact with one another, you will develop a sense of brotherhood and community. That MMUST would become a place where you find fulfillment and belonging. I urge all of you to be your brothers' keeper. Let us show Kenya, and the world, that our differences are not a source of division rather something we can use to bring us together. This is because no matter where you come from, MMUST will bind you together for the next four or five years. Let us

start from the outset, therefore, to cultivate values that will make your stay at this University a place of safety.

Each year, and with every batch of new students that come in, we are presented with an opportunity to instill our culture and values to our incoming students. To you our fresh students, we hope that you will leave a legacy that will be spoken of with great pride. That you will be known for bringing a difference to MMUST. May I urge you to deeply search yourselves and determine to be the best group of students that will put this University on a different pedestal. I encourage you to maintain a positive attitude throughout your stay here even when we face turbulent times because such times will surely come. I urge you to own MMUST and its values so that when you go back to your homes, there will be a noticeable difference in your walk and talk. Let us, together, build a culture that will be the envy of every one.

At MMUST, we encourage holistic growth of our students. Many of you, while at high school, may have engaged in different co-curricular activities. We encourage you to continue with the same at MMUST. Through the Dean of Students Office, you will be able to know the different kinds of services that we have at the University. You are free to join a sports team of your choice, drama, choir and the many clubs that are in existence. Such fora present different opportunities that may interest and catapult you in to the limelight. What we are saying, therefore, is that living an integrated life at this University is of utmost importance. Do not only think of academics and making good grades. While that is important, we encourage you to try your hand in other activities as well. Some of you may become student leaders in two or three years' time. I hope you will become leaders with a conscious

mind and sober heads. I hope you will be able to lead other students towards the right trajectory. I want you to keep in mind that the University administration is always in your corner. Whatever we do, we do it with you in mind. Therefore, working together should be the main driver of our actions; creating a world class student-centred University.

Even though it is exciting to join the University, I would like to warn you of the dangers that exist when you are not under the constant surveillance of your parents and guardians. Please note that being at the University, and the freedom that comes with it, is not a license for you to engage in harmful and/or negligent behavior. In as much as our differences should bind us together, may I add that we should not be bound together by behavior that will lead you to destruction. Let us, where necessary, engage to solve our differences. Violence has no place in any civilized society. Being at the University is one way of showing that you have become mature enough to make right choices. Please do not abuse the freedom that your parents have trusted you with. I must warn you against drug and alcohol abuse, illicit sexual behaviours, HIV/AIDs, violence and many other vices. Please stay away from these. May you never forget the reason why you came to the University; to attain a degree. Let nothing and no one derail you along the way. If you find yourself in such a path, though, I urge you to seek counsel from the Deans of Students Office which has guiding and counselling services.

Many of you will, hopefully in future, become leaders. Others will be followers. Remember, great leaders never lose sight of the Big Picture. As a University, we pride ourselves in producing good leaders who:

- See the ultimate goal and potential

- Driven by their vision for tomorrow
- Larger perspective on everyone's' abilities
- Stays on track by focusing on the goal.

We appeal to you to try and embrace these good leadership skills.

As I finish, I thank you for choosing to come to MMUST. We look forward to celebrating your success at this Graduation Square; older, more intelligent and wiser, some four or five years on. I wish you the very best in your stay at the University.

God Bless You. God Bless MMUST. God Bless Kenya.

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