

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI



**GRADUATION CEREMONY
SPEECHES**

27th OCTOBER, 1977



GRADUATION CEREMONY SPEECHES

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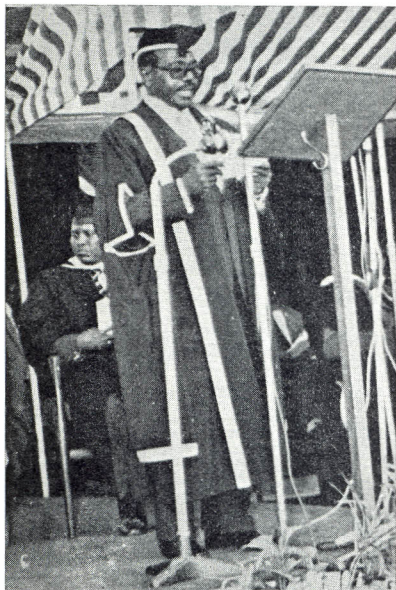


The Procession



Some of the Graduands

Text of Speech by Mr. B. M. Gechaga, Chairman of the Council of the University of Nairobi, at the Conferment of Degrees and Award of Diplomas, on Thursday, 27th October, 1977, at 2.30 p.m.



**B. M. Gecaga, Barrister-at-Law,
Chairman of the University Council**

Mtukufu Rais wa Jamhuri ya
Kenya

Bwana Chancellor wa Chuo
Kikuu cha Nairobi

Twakutolea makaribisho ya
uchangamfu
Pamoja na wote wageni wetu
waheshimiwa
Siku ya leo ambayo ni ya
shangwe
Hasa kwa wale wanafunzi
waliotia bidii
Mwaka kwa mwaka jasho tele
kawatiririka
Na mwisho wakastahili kupata
ufanisi
Bahati yao leo watatuzwa shahada
za ushindi
Ambao ni ukumbusho mwema
Miaka ijayo watasimulia
vizazi vyao
Vile ambavyo walipokea shahada
zao

Kutoka mkono wa mwenyewe
Chancellor

Rais wa kwanza wa Jamhuri
ya Kenya

Mtukufu Rais Mzee Jomo
Kenyatta.

Your Excellency Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya and Chancellor of the University of Nairobi, Your Excellency Mama Ngina Kenyatta and all our honoured guests:

It is with warm hearts that we welcome Your Excellency and Her Excellency Mama Ngina Kenyatta to this auspicious occasion at which we are also happy to see so many of our guests.

We are always indebted to you, Mr. Chancellor, Sir, for the keen interest that you take in the affairs of the University of Nairobi, and how every year you do us the great honour as Chancellor of the University in conferring degrees and awarding certificates and diplomas to the successful students. This act symbolizes the seal of approval which, on behalf of the University, you place on the results of the successful graduates, thus proclaiming that they have received suitable and satisfactory academic preparation and are ready to go out and serve the country in whatever field they have specialized. Needless to say, our graduates are to be found in increasing numbers working in both the public and private sectors, and it is most gratifying to learn from time to time, from various sources, of the commendable contribution which they are making in nation building.

For several years now the University has been going through a phase of consolidation and it is good to note how, during this past academic year, both the staff and students have got down to solid work except, regrettably, for an isolated eruption earlier in the year but which was swiftly settled: appropriate disciplinary measures were taken by the University Administration with the full authority of the University Council, and I am happy to say that the majority of the students concerned have now been readmitted to the University. Violence as a weapon to solve University's problems cannot be condoned and must be replaced with reasoned discussions and dialogue which, when carried out with reasonable people, usually yielded far more than violence ever can, and also avoid I might add, wanton destruction of property, including expensive scientific equipment, and possible injury to human beings.

For some years now little or no capital development has taken place in this University owing to shortage of funds. There is now a population of 5,162 students (both post-graduates and undergraduates) in the main University, plus 1,200 undergraduate students at our constituent college, Kenyatta University College. It is becoming increasingly apparent that one University, if it is to remain manageable, is insufficient to meet the needs of Kenyan young men and women who aspire to University education and

who are breaking pass records in their Higher School Certificate examinations. I suggest that time is ripe for urgent consideration to be given to the establishment of one or two more Universities, preferably in suitable rural areas—more especially bearing in mind that agriculture is the mainstay of this country's economy and ought, therefore, to be given commensurate emphasis in Kenya's educational structure including University education. The planning for the establishment of a new university is of necessity a lengthy process. In my view, therefore, it is not too early to start the necessary planning in the hope that such planning can be translated into reality in three to five years' time.

Finally, Mr. Chancellor, Sir, I wish on behalf of the Council to record our appreciation of the devotion displayed by many members of both the administrative and academic staff in the performance of their duties. At the same time I would like to commend and congratulate the many students whose diligence in the pursuit of their studies is being rewarded today as they receive their certificates, diplomas and degrees. We wish them every success when they enter their working careers.

Allow me, Mr. Chancellor, Sir, to single out one rather special graduand who, I understand, has been a model student working hard at his studies and causing no trouble whatsoever to the University! He fully merits the Ph.D. degree which is to be conferred on him today and for which we warmly congratulate him. I refer, Mr. President, to one of your own Cabinet Ministers, the illustrious Minister for Education, the Hon. Taaita Toweett.

It now gives me pleasure to call upon the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Karanja, to address the congregation.

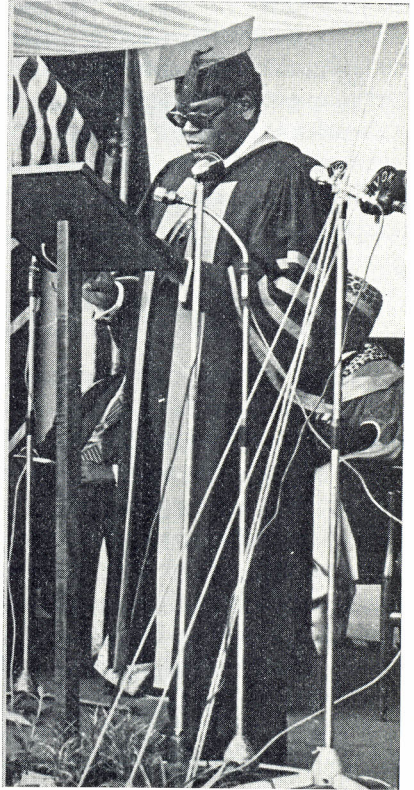
Text of Speech by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. J. N. Karanja, on the Seventh Graduation Ceremony, on 27th October, 1977

Your Excellency Mr. Chancellor Sir, Your Excellency the Vice-President, Honourable Ministers, Chairman of the Council, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I would like to extend to you all a very warm welcome on behalf of the University to this Seventh Congregation for the award of diplomas and the conferment of degrees by our Chancellor, His Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya.

We are much privileged and honoured to have you, Sir, on the campus. The University community look forward to this annual event with immense sense of occasion and pride because it is a visible testimony of the esteem with which you hold the University and its eminent place in the Nation.

Your presence here, Sir, by tradition during the week of Kenyatta Day, affords us a splendid opportunity to add our warm felicitations to those that you have received from near and far. On this Silver Jubilee Year of this milestone, I would like to record our tribute to Your Excellency as the Father of the Nation, for your supreme sacrifice and



**J. N. Karanja, B.A. (Delhi), M.A. (Atlanta), Ph.D. (Princeton),
The Vice-Chancellor**

for the subsequent sterling service you have rendered to your people over the years.

Graduation day is a day of rejoicing for the graduate, parents, friends and professors. It is a day of fulfilment and pride in seeing our efforts rewarded and applauded. It is a day for reflection, of looking back and regretting our failures and recognizing our success and looking to the future with hope and a sense of awareness and determination to improve. It is also a day on which we remind ourselves of the main purpose of the University.

The University is the central point of the nation's intellectual activity. It is a centre both of learning and service, with a public service grounded firmly on the needs of the nation. It serves the crucial needs of the society through teaching and research and the training of the high level manpower needed by the country. Our activities are organized in such a manner as to be sensitive and responsive to the great intellectual and educational issues that confront us. We engage in all forms of direct service to society, such as extension work, consultation with Government by many of our scholars, and assistance to other institutions.

In an institution of higher learning like our own, the twin functions of teaching and research must go hand-in-hand in a carefully calculated balance. We should realize that the Achilles Heel of any University is a low level teaching performance which we must guard against. Efforts must be made to enrich the educational experience so that the students' interests and aspirations assume first priority in all faculties and departments. In this way every student is able to develop to the full his natural attributes and thus improve his capability to contribute to national development. Neither hiding this neglect behind a historically nurtured professional mystique nor the continued hope in the patience of the young, will serve as adequate defences. The time is here when we must consciously demonstrate that quality instruction is everybody's business.

In this regard, we must be prepared to reward examples of outstanding and perhaps inspired teaching, that is highly creative and often crucial in enabling students to achieve understanding. While we are doing this, we must also recognize the central role of research in a University like ours. If we are to maintain our

high standards, we must equally emphasize the need of research in carefully selected topics that are relevant to this country and the type that can be studied because we are here rather than in spite of it.

To meet this important aspect of our work, I would like to appeal to the Government for a greatly enhanced increase in post-graduate scholarships than here-to-fore because, apart from improving on our research potential, it also helps in our staff training programme. Since the Government is committed to research, we would like to feel that the University is recognized as one of the centres in which research in matters relating to national development is carried out.

The University, Sir, has after a very rapid initial expansion reached the peak envisaged by the University Grants Committee. Together with Kenyatta University College, we have nearly 7,000 students taking courses in a variety of faculties. Our annual intake has levelled at around 1,500 students.

We realize fully that this intake leaves out a very large number of young people who obtain minimum entrance requirements and who could easily benefit from a University education. As a result the University is under considerable pressure to increase the intake and parents and students alike have expressed anxiety and concern. Our intake is directly controlled by the available space and academic facilities at our disposal, and also by estimates projected by Government. We cannot take more students within the existing facilities without straining to the limit these facilities and risking endangering the standards of tuition and training that we offer.

Because of the very rapid growth in secondary school output over the years, more and more young people are demanding and expecting higher education. The only way to relieve this immense pressure on the pinnacle of the pyramid of the educational system is by providing other appropriate post-secondary training facilities in the country so that every sixth former does not believe that his salvation lies in University education. More important, perhaps, as has been mentioned by the Chairman, is by planning and developing another University somewhere else in the country

designed to meet the technological and professional training of future generations. Kenya is perhaps one of the few countries with similar resources and potential that has only a single University. I say this because even if financial resources were made available to us now, or in the immediate future, further expansion of this University is both undesirable and impractical as the land available to us in an urban setting is very limited indeed.

Within these limitations, we have consolidated our work within the existing departments and faculties. Financial resources at our disposal will be used to improve the existing facilities at Kabete and at Chiromo where new laboratories and lecture hall will be built for the large number of students in Biological Sciences, and to expanding the main library which is hopelessly inadequate. We shall also build premises for the newly established Centre for Population Studies and Research.

Our policy of Kenyanization continues apace. More and more Kenyans have joined our teaching staff. Although we have still a complement of expatriate professors and lecturers whose valuable contribution we clearly need and appreciate, I am happy to say that our rigorous policy of direct recruitment and staff development programme has significantly helped us to Kenyanize our academic staff who are naturally the base on which the Institution firmly stands.

We are constantly aware that the stability of our staff and therefore of our University depends on the pace at which we can recruit and hold Kenyans in all levels of academic positions here. We have made considerable progress in this regard and our enhanced terms of service will enable us to do this and to encourage our people to rise to the highest levels here through merit on the results of their contribution in teaching and research.

The University community, Sir, accepts that the Government has a primary interest in the well-being of the University. It is necessary for us to work deliberately and consciously to ensure that the life and work of the University is in clear harmony with the central values of the society we live in and the basic objectives of our national life. In a society like our own which is struggling

to achieve national unity and sustained economic growth, the University is clearly a significant instrument of national policy. For this reason, among others, we can only secure and retain our rights if in exercising them we take into account the needs and sensitivities of the community.

The Government has fully supported our work. Even in these periods of financial strain when the urge to keep a tight control has become obvious, our essential requirements have been provided for. The only complaint we have is that the annual budgetary allocation tucked away as a one line vote in the Ministry of Education Estimates causes considerable problems and wrangling as members of Council are aware. We would plead for triennial grants directly from Treasury to us since this procedure would help us to plan ahead for all our activities.

Although naturally the Government of Kenya is our greatest benefactor, the University has continued to receive financial support from many foreign governments, international agencies and foundations and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for the magnificent and generous ways they have supported our work through grants for scholarships, staff support, faculty development and in capital development.

This is a community of scholars, of students and tutors. Our sense of togetherness and cohesion depends on co-operation by all. Everyone should have a sense of belonging and there should be no hostile feeling of "they" and "us" but rather of unprejudiced unity of the heart and the mind. Everyone must care for the University and care for his fellow student or fellow lecturer and must not lose sight of our institutional goals otherwise the community ceases to be. Whoever you be, look up to the ideal and face up to the obstacles for without ideals, without effort, without scholarship, without philosophical continuity, there is no such thing as education. As Seneca said:—

“Truth lies open to all, it is not yet anyone’s possession. Much of it is left open even for those to come. Nothing, indeed, is more hostile to truth than to take away the freedom of speculation.”

In all our actions, we must act as mature people remembering

always that fundamental principles that underlie University relations are reason, compassion and wisdom and that these are the essential attributes we must cultivate among ourselves. We must be prepared to assess realistically both the situation to be faced and our own capabilities and limitations.

The call then, upon University men and women, is to uphold the cause of reason wherever we go, in whatever we set out hands to; to uphold it not as a sole and sufficient answer, but as an indispensable part of that better world we want to bring about.

If we can do this, both in the University and in our callings beyond it, then the promise of the future which the present holds is large indeed. To be sure, no generation is uniquely endowed with perception, or judgement or compassion. But it may be that today's young people will have a stronger will to work and to sacrifice for a better world than many that have gone before.

It is for the young that this University exists. We try to provide them with adequate opportunities and facilities both academic and domestic to enable them to lead a full life. While the lecturers are here to teach them, we would like to encourage students to accept the greatest possible responsibility for their own studies for there is no substitute for self-directed inquiry and learning in a University.

The University has made arrangements for students to participate and be represented in all areas of University activities. We want to encourage this deliberately because of the conviction that the students should be active members of the University community. Participation by students benefits the University because it provides clear channels of communication which help the teacher to teach better and the students to learn better. Secondly, it helps the student in learning decision-making which in itself is a valuable part of their education in the University; collective decisions that are arrived at through discussion and consensus and not confrontation and confusion.

We would like to urge them to accept the challenges of true leadership and organization through an active student government that is truly responsible and run properly for the benefit of all students without regard to tribal or notional origin.

I hope that everyone will participate in competitive and other recreational activities available here. May I here congratulate our rugby team, the Mean Machine, who through brilliant play are the national champions in the game. Similarly, we praise all other University clubs that have distinguished themselves in their activities and in particular the University Travelling Theatre who though beginning in a modest way, have taken theatre to the rural areas with great and commendable success.

I would like to finish, Sir, by thanking all my colleagues and particularly the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for their splendid and selfless support during the year. I would like to thank all members of staff and students, who in their steadfast work and example have contributed to the well-being of the University and to maintaining its high standards in spite of occasional diversions here and there. And to the community at large for their genuine concern and goodwill towards the Institution.

I would like also to pay tribute to the Members of the Council, these distinguished citizens of considerable experience beyond the University, who willingly give generously of their time and effort without reward to help us in many ways to administer the affairs of the University.

Finally, Sir, I would like to present and commend to you our graduating class. They have, each one of them, satisfied their examiners and I testify that they are worthy recipients of their awards.

I hope that while they have been here they have learnt that perfect objectivity and perfect detachment are not easily or fully attainable ideals, but they can be attained to a significant degree, and the mission of the University is to help men to attain them and use them in the highest measure possible in their new lives where their talents are needed. I hope too that we have succeeded in training them to accept, with a sense of humility, the challenges that lie before them in the co-operative venture of nation building. If we have succeeded in doing so, our mission has not been in vain.

HARAMBEE AND THANK YOU!

**Speech by H.E. the President, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, on the
Occasion of Graduation, on 27th October, 1977**

It is a matter of great pride that the new graduates have satisfactorily completed their degree courses and I would like to express our deep appreciation of the good work of the professors which makes this possible. I would also like to thank the University Council for guiding the institution wisely through the past year. In this same vein, I should like to pay special tribute to those governments and agencies which have continued their support of University programmes of capital development, teaching, research and training.

The University and the country as a whole have offered you the resources in knowledge and skills and you have accepted both these and so far shared your own with others. It is my hope that you will go through life in this rapidly changing world sharing with other fellow citizens who have not been fortunate to avail themselves of the opportunities that have been put at your disposal whilst you have been here.

I hope that you will always wish to add to your knowledge of the field in which you are going to work, not only by finding out what others have discovered and developed but by keeping an open mind and seeking out for yourselves the further truths that lie



H.E. The Hon. Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, M.P., C.G.H., Hon LLD. (Nairobi), (East Africa), (Manchester) and (Haile Selassie I), D.LITT. (Nairobi), President of the Republic of Kenya, Chancellor of the University of Nairobi

in that world of practical affairs which you have now joined on leaving the University. Although you have shown your academic worth, the real test is still to come and your value will be measured largely by your practical and useful output.

You should be constructively analytical and clear of issues at hand. I urge you to live up to your ideas as practically as possible and add to the community something in return for the benefits you have received. The way will not be easy, but if you retain your intellectual consistency and integrity and moral strength, you will then be true to things of value, your fellow men and above all to yourselves.

A University exists to mould the minds and aspirations of those who go through it. As citizens of this country, the University of Nairobi has moulded your minds and aspirations thereby giving you ability to focus clearly what you can do for this country.

On acquiring *Uhuru*, everyone in Kenya had to work hard to build the Kenya of today. Yet we must continue to make our Nation stronger. With this in mind, our people expect you to come out and use your knowledge and love of your country, to make Kenya economically stronger and stable and to be ready at all times to defend what your countrymen have, built and what you will build. The only way to effect these is to have a spirit of determination and above all, a spirit of undivided loyalty and patriotism to your country.

I will conclude by offering you my warm congratulations for your achievements and my best wishes for your future careers. I also welcome you to join hands with the rest of Kenyans in continuing to build and to defend our strong and stable Nation in the spirit of our national motto HARAMBEE . . .

APPENDIX I
NUMBER OF GRADUANDS—1977
i) FIRST DEGREES AND DIPLOMAS:

	<i>Degree/Diploma</i>	<i>Number</i>
1.	Diploma in Adult Education	17
2.	Diploma in Journalism	10
3.	Bachelor of Science in Agriculture	43
4.	Bachelor of Science in Food Science and Technology ..	9
5.	Bachelor of Architecture	22
6.	Bachelor of Arts in Design	9
7.	Bachelor of Arts in Building Economics	50
8.	Bachelor of Arts in Land Economics	32
9.	Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art	1
10.	Bachelor of Arts	211
11.	Bachelor of Commerce	146
12.	Bachelor of Education (Arts) (Nairobi campus)	308
13.	Bachelor of Education (Science) (Nairobi campus)	62
14.	Bachelor of Education (Arts)—KUC.	181
15.	Bachelor of Education (Science)—KUC.	98
16.	Bachelor of Education (Home Economics)—KUC.	20
17.	Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering	62
18.	Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering	49
19.	Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering	48
20.	Bachelor of Science in Surveying and Photogrammetry ..	9
21.	Bachelor of Laws	66
22.	Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery	86
23.	Bachelor of Science	106
24.	Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine	75
25.	Postgraduate Diploma in Meteorology	4
26.	Diploma in International Relations	12
27.	Postgraduate Diploma in Education	1
28.	Bachelor of Philosophy (in Economics)	3
29.	Diploma in Advanced Nursing	18
	Total first degrees and diplomas awarded	1758

ii) MASTERS DEGREES:

	<i>Degree/Diploma</i>	<i>Number</i>
1.	Master of Science in Agriculture	17
2.	Master of Architecture	9
3.	Master of Arts (Planning)	22
4.	Master of Arts	24
5.	Master of Business and Administration	10
6.	Master of Education	4
7.	Master of Arts in Education	7
8.	Master of Science in Engineering	2
9.	Master of Science in Medicine	5
10.	Master of Medicine	10
11.	Master of Science	7
12.	Master of Science in Veterinary Medicine	3
	Total Masters degrees awarded	120

iii) DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREES

1.	Faculty of Agriculture	1
2.	Faculty of Architecture, Design and Development	1
3.	Faculty of Arts	2
4.	Faculty of Medicine	1
5.	Faculty of Science	7
6.	Faculty of Veterinary Medicine	1
	Total Doctoral degrees awarded	13