

**Israel  
Ambassador,  
Jacob Keidar,  
with Vice-  
Chancellor Prof.  
George Magoha,  
after talks  
on revival of  
Kibwezi Project.**



# Israel to assist in reviving Kibwezi Farm

**T**HE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, in conjunction with the Israel government is set to revive the Kibwezi Farm project. This was revealed by the Israel Ambassador to Kenya H.E. Jacob Keidar when he paid a courtesy call on the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. George Magoha.

Mr. Keidar said the government of Israel has held talks with the government of Kenya and was waiting for terms of reference from the ministry of water and irrigation to send experts to Kibwezi to undertake feasibility studies. The Ambassador further said that Israel investors were interested in developing Kibwezi commercially and would also target special programmes for capacity building. The talks touched on UoN's plans on dairy, poultry and crop farming among other activities at the Kibwezi Farm.

During the meeting, it was agreed that a joint paper be developed outlining how this initiative will benefit students and staff training in dry land management. The exercise will be driven by the University. To fast track the process, a timeline of two weeks was set for the University team to prepare the way forward.

Under the terms of the project, the revamped Kibwezi Farm would train locals on best practices in water management and develop it into a national resource to benefit the whole country. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Administration and Finance, Prof. Peter Mbithi will

spearhead the joint efforts to revive the project.

The Israel government has also been involved in cascading farm management practices to rural communities in Kenya. Among the beneficiaries include Mwingi and Yatta Districts in Eastern Province which have benefited from irrigation systems while selected areas in Nyanza Province have benefited from fish farms.

The first phase of the Kibwezi project began in the 1980s with initial support from the World Bank for the infrastructure and later the Israel government whose main support was in dryland agriculture. Currently, farming at Kibwezi targets tree, cassava and rearing of beef, cattle, sheep and camels for research and commercial purposes. The farm is also a major resource for dry land research at postgraduate level.

Others present during the talks were the Deputy Ambassador of Israel, Maor Elbaz, Starinskye, Director, Centre for International Programmes and Links, Prof. Simeon Mitema, and the Dean, Faculty of Agriculture Prof. John Nderitu.