



Inspiring Innovation and Leadership

## KARATINA UNIVERSITY

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### **SPEECH BY THE CHANCELLOR AND CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL, PROF. FRANCIS GICHAGA, DURING THE 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON FRIDAY, 9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2022 AT THE GRADUATION SQUARE**

Principal Secretary, State Department for Higher Education and  
Research, Dr. Beatrice Inyangala,

Members of the University Council,

Vice Chancellor, Prof. Mucai Muchiri,

Members of the University Senate,

Staff and student,

Graduands,

Parents,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this 10<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony of Karatina University. On behalf of the Council, staff and students of this great University, I express our deep appreciation to all of you joining us today. Today, we present a skilled resource of graduates ready to take their place as the future workforce of this country. I confidently confirm that these students have received the appropriate training and mentorship and are graduating with 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills ready to productively invest in Kenya and beyond. I thank the Senate, together with all academic and support staff, for their hard work to ensure that this day is a success.

### **Strategic Direction**

Ladies and Gentlemen, Council is cognizant of the important role it plays in steering Karatina University towards providing quality education which is indispensable for the future of Kenya. Council is aware that the higher education scene in Kenya, Africa and the world over is currently undergoing transformation and transition due to the massive disruptions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as other systemic challenges. Apart from these disruptions which exposed deficiencies and inequalities in the

education sector, universities are also suffering from inadequate financial resources, deficient human capital, low research output, lack of adequate infrastructural facilities, under-investment in electronic infrastructure and mismatch between university education and economic needs of the country.

In analyzing all these, we realize that there is a need to develop an agenda for reforms, restructuring and transformation. We are already seeing such reforms being proposed by the recently formed Presidential Working Party on Education Reforms. Council is well aware of these challenges and is committed to providing the required leadership in designing suitable plans and strategies that will contribute to the growth of Karatina University. Already, the University has developed its 3rd Strategic Plan that will drive the agenda of achieving its desired strategic objectives. This Strategic Plan, coupled with the vetted Performance Contract signed with the Government of Kenya, establishes the basis for ensuring that efficient and effective services are delivered to all stakeholders. In addition, the University aims to enhance linkages and partnerships with industries so that it can get financial and material support in view of the dwindling funding from the Exchequer.

## **Resource Mobilization**

Ladies and gentlemen, enhancing resource mobilization strategies is part of Karatina University's strategic objectives. This is particularly important in view of the current national discourse on the funding of public universities by the Government. Karatina University has continued to equip its academic staff with resource mobilization skills in a bid to sensitize them on strategies for seeking alternative funding to support their research and innovation initiatives. As the University does this, however, Council calls upon the different government agencies charged with managing the higher education sector in Kenya to link up public universities with potential national and international donors/partners who can support research development. We believe that when such opportunities are made available, public universities can build capacity on innovation, technology and research to generate extra income to supplement Government funding.

## **Infrastructural Development**

Ladies and gentlemen, the making of any great University is anchored, in great part, on its commitment to scholarly excellence. However, this scholarly excellence largely relies on a conducive teaching and learning environment for the students. Academic staff

also rely on the availability of quality infrastructure to conduct their teaching, research and consultancies. Council is committed to continually upgrading infrastructure to meet the changing demographics of students, curricula and pedagogical demands of 21st-century higher education. I wish to acknowledge with appreciation the continued support that the University has been receiving from the Government through the Ministry of Education towards infrastructural development. However, we note that the lack of land for expansion and inadequate resources for development is hampering the growth of the University. I wish to appeal to the Government to consider the University for enhanced allocation of funds and land for development. This will go a long way in allowing the University put up the required infrastructure to support its mandate.

**As I finish,**

I encourage this 10<sup>th</sup> cohort of graduands to live fulfilling lives in this dynamic world. Many years ago, the world was quite different from its current state. It looked predictable, stable and all indicators pointed upwards. However, the world you are set to inherit is beset with great challenges. Nevertheless, you have a great opportunity to be architects and builders of a new world

because you have been equipped with the necessary skills to take on such a task. We wish you all the best!

Thank you.

**Prof. Francis Gichaga  
Chairman of Council  
Karatina University  
P.O Box 1957-10101,  
Karatina, Kenya  
Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2022**