



## REPUBLIC OF KENYA

### MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND GENDER

#### **SPEECH BY PROF. MARGARET KOBIA, Ph.D, MGH, CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND GENDER DURING THE 43RD DAYSTAR GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON 13TH NOVEMBER 2020**

Prof. Mary Murimi, Chancellor, Daystar University

Rev. Dr. Matthews Mwalw'a, Chairman, Daystar Company Board

Prof. Henry Thairu, Chairman, Daystar University Council

Prof. Laban Ayiro, Vice-Chancellor, Daystar University

The Graduating Class 2020

Distinguished Guests

#### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is an honor and privilege for me to join you as you graduate over **930 graduands** who have gone through the required academic rigor to achieve the academic milestone of award of diplomas and conferment of degrees. Today is also a memorable day for the University leadership and management to demonstrate accountability of students and resources placed in this Institution.

I am informed those graduating today are spread across 13 countries around the globe which I wish to make a special mention of: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Germany, Kenya, Nigeria, Malawi, Rwanda,

South Sudan, Tanzania, Turkey, Uganda, and United States of America. This demonstrates that Kenya offers quality higher education and I wish to congratulate the Daystar University for the global presence.

I am aware that many of those graduating today completed their studies online since March 2020 as necessitated by the Covid 19 pandemic. I congratulate the University for being innovative, and progressive in ensuring such a high completion rate as we have today. I understand that you have also taken advantage of the pandemic to launch your Online, Distance and Electronic Learning (ODEL) programmes to sustain learning. Well done.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is also gratifying to see that the governance organs of the University have worked together to facilitate the graduands to get to the finishing line undeterred by the prevailing global pandemic. I congratulate the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, University Senate and Management, the Council, and the Student Council for working together towards actualizing today's celebration.

To the graduands, I believe you have not walked alone to the great achievement you celebrate today. Allow me to also congratulate and recognize the efforts of those who have made this possible, especially your Deans, Heads of Department and Faculty in your respective Schools.

Let me single out the School of Communication and School of Human and Social Sciences as I congratulate the PhD graduands. Preparing 15 doctorate graduands that you present today is no mean feat. I congratulate you all and particularly the supervisors. Our best wishes go with all the graduands as they join the job market to offer real solutions to real societal needs in line with their chosen theme: *Stars of Hope Impacting the World*.

Allow me also to recognize the contribution of parents and guardians for supporting the graduands throughout their academic journey. Since the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Program over the past three decades, you all will agree with me that education is no longer easily affordable. This is more visible particularly in private institutions where for various social economic reasons funding is constrained.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The importance of education is well documented in government plans. Education is one tool that transforms people's lives for better. It is the bridge that many people use to help themselves and their families and communities. The government allocates close to 30 per cent national budget to demonstrate the value of education to the citizen.

I wish to mention government efforts to avail opportunities to young Kenyans seeking to access higher education amidst socio-economic disparities. In this regard, I acknowledge the efforts made by the Kenya Universities' and Colleges' Central Placement Service and the role played by Higher Education Loans Board.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

In addition to the science and technology programs offered in the University, I am particularly impressed to note that the newest School of Nursing continues to record high absorption rate for its graduates into the job market. I am informed that all the 46 Nurses graduating today have already been absorbed in County Level 4 healthcare institutions while a few have been taken in by Kenyatta National General Hospital, Coast General Hospital, Moi Teaching and

Referral Hospital, Kijabe Mission Hospital, and The Armed Forces Memorial Hospital.

While recognizing that Science programmes require heavy capital investment in infrastructure such as laboratories, I commend Daystar University for not only maintaining state-of-the-art facilities in these areas but also keeping them well resourced.

More importantly, I take note that in offering these opportunities, the University has chosen to give back to society by covering up to 66% of the total tuition for government-sponsored students as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility; while leaving the government to covers 25% and the student only 9%. This goes to demonstrate how private institutions and particularly universities can make a contribution to national goals and priorities.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

One may ask how such a huge financial gap is bridged. I am reliably informed that Daystar University goes out of its way to raise scholarship funds from and through its friends to support needy students. Towards this end, Daystar University has set up operations in USA to raise funds for its own institutional advancement. I urge the University to start local endowment Fund to support the needy student as well as inculcate a culture of touching lives.

I am delighted to know that the University tracks its alumni and particularly the beneficiaries of these scholarships to confirm that they are executing the mission of Daystar in society – that of offering uncompromised servant-leadership wherever they serve. I am informed that 80 of those who graduated in the year 2000 are part of today's graduation as they come back to be honoured for sustaining the vision and mission of Daystar in the marketplace.

As the University refreshes you with the “Order-of-the-Towel” today, may you be re-energized to serve humanity, espousing the core values of *Trustworthiness*, *Responsibility*, *Care*, *Citizenship*, *Fairness*, *Respect*, and *Christ-centredness* that define Daystar.

### **Advice to the graduating class of 2020**

1. Allow me to share some advice based on my experience and lessons learned since I graduated several decades ago. As you graduate today, consider yourself successful as your University has prepared you well and you have a head start or a good departure point. Keep your networks including your classmates but select wisely a few friends.
2. Leaving with a positive attitudes attracts opportunities around you. Have a clear vision and clarity of what you want in life and never accept you have limitations or listen to Nay Sayers. Define your own success and put specific actions that you need to take through careful planning.
3. Your destiny is in your own hands do not expect anyone to do favors for you. We now know it does not matter which university, which discipline/course or where you are, what matters is where you want to go. There are very successful lawyers, engineers, doctors and there are equally failures in the same disciplines. Allow your parents to leave you to pursue your interests and only seek help when needed.
4. Remain a student of communication and leadership. These are critical life skills that support your conceptual, technical and interpersonal competencies. The more you learn, the more you realize how much you do not know. Remember many of today’s jobs will disappear and new jobs driven by advances in technology will become the future of work.

In conclusion, I thank the Government and the Ministry of Education for investing in education as a strategy to realize blue print such Kenya Vision 2030, Sustainable Development Goals and AU Agenda 2063 on the Africa we want where contribution of the youth and women is valued, a united, cohesive and prosperous inclusive world. As you graduate today remember, you are global citizen who can provide solutions to the challenges the world is facing locally, nationally and globally. Class 2020, remember, going through Covid 19 crisis must have prepared you to face the world of work with resilience, determination and make the world better. I believe in you!!!!

I Thank you.