

THE ADDRESS OF THE UNIVERSITY CHANCELLOR,

REV. DR. SAMUEL KOBIA,

AT THE 26th GRADUATION CEREMONY OF ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY,

ON FRIDAY 6TH OCTOBER 2017

The Guest of honour, **HON. JUSTICE DAVID K. MARAGA**, CHIEF JUSTICE &
PRESIDENT, SUPREME COURT OF KENYA

The Chairman of the University Council, His Grace The Most Rev. Jackson Ole Sapit,

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Joseph Galgalo,

Members of the University Governing Council and Board of Trustees,

Invited Guests,

Faculty Members,

Staff, Parents, Guardians,

Distinguished Graduands,

Students and friends of St. Paul's University,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I greet you all in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Good Morning.

With great joy, I welcome you all to St Paul's University on this auspicious day of 26th graduation, the 6th day of October 2017. The 26th graduation ceremony is also our 11th graduation since the university received the award of charter in 2007. We are grateful to God for great strides we have continued to make. We also are grateful for the great plans we have put in place in order to accomplish even much more than we have already realized.

Dear graduands, first things first, congratulations to you all! We rejoice with you, and if you as happy as me, let us praise the Lord in the words of the Psalm and appreciate that "this is the day the Lord has made, and we shall rejoice and be glad in it." Well done to you, and glory be to God!

Let me recognize all our esteemed guests for honouring our invitation, and being with us on this auspicious occasion. St. Paul's is great because of you, and we are grateful for your continued support. To the Management, governance bodies of this university, our staff and students, I say thank you. We owe to you the good progress, conducive environment and sustained growth to your cooperation with one another and the concerted effort from everyone one of you.

Please also join me in appreciating and welcoming our chief guest, the Chief Justice, Hon David Maraga, who also is the president of the Supreme Court. Chief Justice, thank you very much for accepting our invitation to grace this graduation as our guest speaker. It is not lost to us that this occasion could not have come at a busier time but that you still found time to be with us. Thank you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The greatest gift one can give to posterity is education. We at St. Paul's University are privileged to have played a key role in birthing this gift for these graduands. As Nelson Mandela once said, "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." And if I may also quote Martin Luther King, Jr. "the function of education is to teach one to think intensely and to think critically. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education." Today is a great day because once again, we celebrate qualified men and women of character who are receiving the power to read and do all that appertains to their qualifications. Graduands – with your qualifications, you have such a powerful tool in your hands, and we hope St. Paul's emphases on spiritual formation has also moulded your character for better. Please go out and service with a difference, utilizing your education to change the world.

Because we are keen on equipping learners with both holistic knowledge and Christian values, we are confident that our graduates are ready to make creative contributions and make valuable impact in the society. This conviction is reflected in our theme for this year's graduation, which is "***Unlocking human Potential through Creativity and Innovation***". St. Paul's is highly focused in this regard, and our graduates are challenged to provide creative solutions in their spheres of service. This commitment will continue as the University will prioritize research and innovation for social transformation and enhanced economic growth in the country. The class of 2017 is well prepared for this task. Empowered with knowledge and ecumenical values, we are confident that they are well on their way to finding success and creating value for themselves and their communities. We are releasing adequately prepared students for service to God and humanity.

We are greatly encouraged by the Government of Kenya commitment to reforms in the educational sector. This will create a conducive environment for creativity and innovation. The country's vision 2030, the government envisions education that will provide equality, training and research for sustainable development, which will position Kenya as a regional centre of research and development in new technologies. The journey towards the realization of this vision is already well underway. The introduction of technology and specifically the use of computers in schools is a step in the right direction.

A bold step has also been taken in overhauling the current education system, with the new education system currently being piloted in schools across the country. The transition from the 8.4.4 system of education to the new 2.6.3.3.3 is aimed at enabling every Kenyan to become an engaged, empowered and ethical citizen. If handled well, these changes can

position Kenya as a well-resourced and a powerhouse for highly skilled human resource that is well prepared for the 21st Century.

We have also welcomed this year the second cohort of the government sponsored students admitted through the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Services (KUCCPS). We highly commend the government for placing government sponsored students with private universities. This move will level the playing field in the higher education sector and expand education space for all Kenyan children who qualify to join university programs. We are prepared to work with the government towards the realization of the noble goal to enhance access to university education for qualified Kenyans.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Unlocked potentials lead to creativity and innovation. Creativity and innovations opens possibilities of new frontiers. It demands from us to take charge of our destiny. The culture of waiting for employment is longer tenable. Successful people do not simply look for jobs and expect help from others. They generate new ideas and create new things and news of doing things. The world of technology is a world of possibilities – and you do not need to just wait for something to happen, but you can make things happen.

As I think about creativity, two young innovators come to my mind. The first one is Jack Andraka who at the tender age of 15 years changed the world with his innovation. He developed a new way to detect pancreatic, ovarian, and lung cancer during early stages when there is a much higher likelihood of a cure. In 2012, he won the Gordon E. Moore Award, the grand prize of the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair. He did not only create wealth for himself, or made a name for himself, but he also made a world a healthier, safer place by his innovation.

The second one is EeshaKhare, who at the age of 18 won the 2013 Intel Foundation Young Scientist Award for a ground breaking invention. She created a tiny device that could charge a mobile phone in 20-30 seconds — a revolutionary technology she called a “super-capacitor.” These are simple but life changing innovations. Do not just wait to see things happen, boldly think, create and win – it is possible.

Our dear graduands,

As you exit this stage and begin a new chapter of your life, we are confident that both your academic and extra curricula experiences here at St Pauls have adequately prepared you for the life ahead. You have been moulded into citizens of great asset to this country and your communities. The question for most of you would be where to start, especially when you see the competition out there given the number of graduands being realized to a shrinking job market. I would like to encourage you that there is always room for creative minds. Apply your learning and create opportunities for yourselves – make your training count.

As I conclude, I would like to draw your attention to the words in the book of Colossians 3:23 that says: “whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.” This is a call for you to work hard and be the best that you can be in

whatever station of life in which you may be. Carry high the banner of St. Paul's and touch the world with ethical difference that can truly make valuable change in your area of service.

Once again, Congratulations to the graduands. As good alumni of St. Paul's, distinguish yourselves as the "light of this world, and the salt of the earth." May you always shine in this dark world. We wish you all the best. Thank you.

With those remarks, it is now my honour and privilege to introduce and invite our Chief Guest, the Chief Justice, Hon. David Maraga, to address the congregation.