



## KIBABII UNIVERSITY

### **SPEECH BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROF. ISAAC IPARA ODEO PRESENTED DURING THE ORIENTATION FOR FRESHERS**

#### ***RESILIENCE, INNOVATION AND TRANSFORMATION AS BEACONS IN THE NEW NORMAL WORLD***

**In a very special way, I wish to welcome the 2020 First Year Students popularly referred to as freshmen to Kibabii University.**

I want to start by paraphrasing Charles Darwin (1809-1882) by saying, *it is not the strong or clever who survive but rather those who are resilient, embrace innovation and are ready for transformation.* For the last eight years those who came ahead of you have listened to the Vice Chancellor's Address at the Graduation Pavilion.

This year and maybe for many years to come, new students will receive this address virtually. That is without face to face interaction. You must accept this as the new way of doing things.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

I wish at this point to congratulate you on your sterling performance which gave you a ticket to secure the deserved admission to KIBU. The KCSE results are like a bridge that enabled you to cross to a new world of



empowerment and numerous options. Every decision and action taken now will determine whether you succeed in life or not.

Although you are being admitted to university without setting foot there, I am nevertheless convinced that you were adequately prepared for this new outcome. This is because you belong in the generation Z. A generation of persons born between 2000 and 2005, and just like your cousins the millennial generation that came earlier, you have a good mastery of Information Technology skills.

So as not to disrupt your academic progression, we decided to embrace innovation to ensure you are taken through orientation online and that eventually you will be able to carry on your studies online.

You are very privileged to join KIBU, a University credited with many admirable attributes which include the following;

- The only University where the Chancellor is His Excellency Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta C.G.H., President of the Republic of Kenya and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces.
- Was recently listed number 15 among 127 universities and colleges in Kenya in webometric ranking.
- Boasts of new infrastructure and spectacular landscaping manifested in fabulous green lawns.
- It is among universities that have embraced technology in teaching and learning.

These are privileges that you must guard jealously.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

At this point you must note that you have been admitted to KIBU and even if you have not set foot on the Campus physically, you must bear the tag of



KIBU. You shall carry the image, character, thinking, etiquette and honor of KIBU. Your new status should distinguish you from the rest. The way you relate with others including your parents and siblings and the way you carry yourself should reflect the new persona in you.

I now wish to take you through the aspects that will give you the distinct character. Remember your academic journey of four years to graduation has started today. When preparing for a journey, one must plan and as they commence and continue with the journey they are guided by specific sign posts along the way.

I want to reveal to you the things that will ensure you complete the journey in four years. Those who don't heed this will take more than four years and in some unfortunate cases never complete at all.

The three beacons that should guide you in your journey are:

**Resilience:** This is the ability to withstand difficult events in life and adjust easily and quickly to change.

**Innovation:** Meaning a creative way used to form methods that provide solutions for new requirements.

**Transformation:** To radically change your thinking and character to serve new situations.

You have been admitted for one purpose; to learn. Learning is the most critical thing to human beings. This is what will transform you and make you a useful member of the society. Like the Commonwealth Of Learning states in its recent newsletter: Learning is our common wealth and key to our common future. You must take personal responsibility for your own learning and life.

It is thus important to have a clearly stated **objective** which will form your target to complete your studies and graduate in four years.

As a student of KIBU you must always carry yourself as one characterized by **purpose** and **dignity**.

**To accomplish this, Character** will be critical. This will be revealed by your ability to embrace the six Core Values of KIBU which include;

- **Excellence:** KIBU strives for quality or high standard of teaching, learning, research, innovation and provision of services. The aim is to produce well trained graduates.
- **Accountability and transparency:** At KIBU we embrace openness, fairness and responsibility.
- **Social responsibility:** We serve the community and respond to problems affecting society.
- **Innovation:** KIBU fraternity create new ideas and methods for teaching, learning and well-being of society.
- **Integrity:** At KIBU we have high regard for law and ethical behaviour in all actions. The culture of honesty, truthfulness and reliability stands out.
- **Academic freedom:** We foster inquiring mind, critical thought, free and independent thinking and reflective reasoning.

Your **image** is paramount, it should reflect the characters in our University Logo as follows:

- **Orbitals:** - The orbitals or rings around the globe depict cohesiveness. We are one family working together and uphold strong family values.
- **Gold Colour:** - Gold is a colour of prestige and royalty. You are set for empowerment.



- **Blue Colour:** - is a colour of the seas, a vast natural resource. We focus on education as wealth.
- **Ribbons:** - KIBU is a University of unlimited creativity and resilience.
- **Five Stars:** - The sky is not the limit. You are destined for greater achievements.

The biggest **challenge** you are going to face however is that of your ability to cope with online learning. I wish to advise you that there is no other alternative to learning in the world today, online teaching and learning is the only way. You must do everything possible to adapt to online learning, which will include change of mindset, embracing positive attitude and enhancing your Information Technology skills. As young adults, you need to equip yourself with the know-how that the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs.

**Time management** will become critical more than ever before. So there will be need to adhere to University timetable and prepare your own time table to allow you not only to study but also engage in other meaningful activities including physical exercises, spiritual matters, positive social issues and finally other chores especially family ones.

Another element that will be critical is **collaboration**. The new mode of learning will require serious collaboration between you and your lecturers, fellow learners, family and friends.

We live in times of furious change precipitated by technological changes. The old ways of doing things have been rendered untenable. Going forward, only those who are innovative and accept new challenges will survive. You have no choice but to transform and re-organize to fit in the new dispensation, during this COVID-19 pandemic situation.

Remember you have embarked on a journey of growth through a comprehensive and well packaged subject matter. From today, you must remain open minded, be tolerant to divergent views and receive and evaluate opinions without prejudice.

In the absence of face to face contacts, you need to master skills to communicate **coherently, correctly and eloquently**.

A University student should be distinguished by deep appetite to search for information and knowledge and adopt ferocious reading habits.

You are going through a historical event never witnessed before. It will be with us for a long time. This will be a phenomenon that will form the subject of discussions for a long time. To be part of the community that will look back at the ravages of this pandemic, you must follow the World Health Organization protocols delivered through the Kenya Ministry of Health guidelines to remain safe and well. These are:

1. Avoid close contact with people by maintaining a physical distance of at least two metres.
2. No handshaking or hugging.
3. Always put on a mask whenever in public places.
4. Stay at home and only go out when necessary.
5. Cover your coughs and sneezes with a disposable tissue or cough into a flexed elbow.
6. Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects using detergent and water.
7. Wash your hands regularly using running water and soap or use alcohol based hand sanitizers that contain at least 70% alcohol.



All said, I am optimistic that one day all this agony will be over and that you shall physically come to your University. I guarantee you a grand reception.

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to KIBU, your new virtual home away from home for the next four years. I wish you the very best. May God bless you all.

**Thank you!**