



**WELCOME SPEECH BY PROF. OGODO M. J. NANDI, AG. VICE
CHANCELLOR KAIMOSI FRIENDS UNIVERSITY TO FIRST YEAR
STUDENTS ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2022 AT 10 A.M ON
UNIVERSITY GROUNDS**

- My Acting Deputy Vice Chancellors
- Other Management Members Present
- Deans and Directors
- Heads of Departments
- Heads of Sections
- Staff
- Student Leaders Present
- Our esteemed First Year Students of 2022/2023 academic year
- Ladies and Gentlemen

GOOD MORNING

On behalf of the Kaimosi Friends University fraternity, it is my great pleasure to extend our warm and hearty welcome to you our new students to this great university, Kaimosi Friends University (KAFU).

Dear freshmen, university entry comes with apprehension and anxiety. By earning entry into KAFU, you are already a cut above competition. Out of the 826,807 students only 145,145 candidates met the minimum university entry requirements. Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to congratulate you on your admission and commend you for selecting KAFU as your university of choice. I

want to assure that; you made the right choice. To those of you who revised your first-choice universities in favour of KAFU, I thank you for the vote of confidence.

I wish to extend my gratitude to your parents, guardians and sponsors whose support has enabled you to be here today. Indeed, they understand that an investment in knowledge pays the best interest.

Students, allow me from the onset to inform you that you are the first students to join KAFU as a fully-fledged university. The University was awarded a Charter by His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta on 2nd August, 2022 at the State Lodge, Kakamega. Before this, the University was a Constituent College of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology and was known as Kaimosi Friends University College (KAFUCO), which was gazetted on 2nd May, 2015. KAFUCO started as a campus of MMUST in September, 2014. As a result of this change of status, the University is still in a transition period.

My Dear Freshmen, my address is the culmination of a rigorous orientation programme to acquaint you with the university leadership, academic programmes, facilities and environment. As you settle in, I hope this orientation week has offered you the necessary support you need to become part of this growing community, and to focus on your core business here as soon as lectures begin.

I want to assure you that Kaimosi Friends University is a serious and caring University that is committed to achieve its vision of academic excellence in teaching, learning, research, innovation and holistic development. We also want to live to our Mission, to provide quality education and training, research and innovation to meet the needs of a dynamic Society. You are joining a student-

centred academic community that is fast growing and beginning to make an impact locally, regionally, nationally and globally.

Students, in our quest to make this place a centre of excellence in education and research, we are committed to offer market driven programmes and we promise to take your ambitions seriously. Currently, we offer over 43 cutting edge academic programmes spread in five schools; School of Education and Social Sciences (SESS), School of Computing and Information Technology (SCIT), School of Business and Economics (SOBE), School of Science (SOSCI) and the newly launched School of Health Sciences. We are placing at your disposal a well-grounded faculty who are highly qualified, engaged and excited by your prospects. They will challenge you to raise your achievements intellectually and academically.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to inform you that we are in the process of reviewing our programmes to be in line with the government's newly rolled out System of Education, the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC). As such, preparations to receive the first CBC cohort to the university system in 2029 are in top gear. The CBC system of learning is based on the needs and potentials of Individual learners under a flexible framework and parameters that move and shift according to the learners ability. The system is outcomes-based rather than content-based. The focus is not on knowledge for knowledge's sake, but on how that knowledge can be applied and how to improve the quality of learning, and preparedness of students for the labour market. It is certification-based on demonstrated learning outcomes.

My Young Scholars, this curriculum is designed to expose students to their career interests and thereafter to choose their career pathways. Here at Kaimosi Friends University, we are part of the conversation on CBC and not observers. Our University has introduced a programme on CBC for all our first year education

students titled, CIT 100: Introduction to CBC, in semester 2. Am proud to say, being our first born since the acquisition of the chatter, you will be the pioneer KAFU students to take this course.

Indeed, our approach to educating you rings true to the words of Professor Adams Grant, an organizational psychologist, philosopher and bestselling author who explores the science of motivation, generosity, original thinking, and rethinking. In his *New York Times* article of 2021, he said the mark of higher education is not the knowledge you accumulate in your head. It is the skills you gain about how to learn.

Dear students, the first year of university education is a foundation time. You will need to immerse yourself in the university to enrich your campus experience. Take advantage of the resources and opportunities that this university avails to you. We endeavour to give you the best foundations to an independent life in your chosen career paths.

Our priority is to provide each of you with formal qualification for a rewarding career. We have opened a window of cross-faculty as well as intra-faculty transfers because we want you to settle on a career path of your choice. The Registrar Academics will give you guidelines on how to go about it.

Ladies and Gentlemen, your success in the career programme you selected will, however, depend largely on your conduct and commitment as a student. Unlike primary and secondary schools where success is pegged only on the final national examinations, the university system is different. All forms of assessments from 1st year will cumulatively contribute to your exit grade at Fourth Year. Treat your classes and these examinations as crucial components of this exit grade. Read the regulations on exams in your student handbook and abide by those rules and regulations to avoid consequences of exam malpractices.

Freshmen, we pride ourselves in timely completion by students. I therefore wish to urge you to work hard from the very beginning and remain steadfast. However, I also want to inform you that university life is not all about studies. We have put in place programmes and initiatives aimed at ensuring that you leave KAFU armed with ethical, digital, global and entrepreneurial skills necessary to enable you take on the next phase of life with confidence.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I urge you to remember to cultivate your social life as well. We have a vibrant campus life as you have already been told. There are clubs, societies, outreach and voluntary programmes which will help build you into a wholesome person. Please appreciate that extra-curricular opportunities are linked to high quality student engagement and success.

Young Scholars. I urge you to embrace dialogue and make use of the student governing body to address your issues. The University also offers Psycho-social support. Know where to go for help. We have Academic offices, Guidance and Counselling, Career Services, religious groups, drug abuse support unit, Health Centre and Complaints Office. From now henceforth, you will be expected to be more self-reliant. You are responsible for what you do and for ensuring that you do the work that will be required of you. While we expect you to assume a new level of responsibility, please realize that you are not alone. If you find things difficult, do not run away but seek help. Part of being responsible for yourself is to recognize when you need support from others. All our offices will always be open for consultation, counselling and guidance.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are all aware that the season of politics is now behind us. Those of you who were old enough to take part in this civic duty did so and now we have new leadership in place. A University is a place for education and research. We must therefore strive to transcend tribal and political ideologies, but instead, embrace national cohesion values espoused in our Constitution. These

values ought to guide our goals and relationship with one another and the society around us. We must shun negative ethnicity. The university is cosmopolitan and there is a lot you can learn from one another. I therefore urge you to network for diversity and national cohesion.

My Dear Freshmen, I want to assure you that my management will go to great lengths to protect you and champion your interests as a student throughout your stay here. Report any member of staff who denies you service. Likewise, feel free to report any attempts of mistreatment and abuse by any member of staff.

Students, like many young universities, KAFU strives to provide an enabling environment to students, staff and research collaborators. We strongly encourage you to be involved in research and we promise to fund innovations geared towards solving societal problems. A good example is St Paul's University students who created Eco-Friendly Sanitary Towels from Banana Fibres. On July 23, the group of 5 represented Kenya in Boston at the Global Hultz Prize Acceleration after coming top at the Regional Competition held in South Africa. This competition is worthy over 120 million Kenya Shillings. I urge you to aim higher and compete in bigger competitions.

Young Scholars, I wish to inform you that the success of this University depends on you playing your part by promptly paying fees as spelled out in your admission letters. We have fees payment policy which stipulates that payment should be made within the first four weeks of opening the semester. Failures to which, one will have to differ studies for an entire academic year. Students, I want to implore you to keep to the timelines.

My Dear Freshmen, we are devoted to our Mission to provide quality education and training, research and innovation to meet the needs of a dynamic society. To achieve this, we are placing at your disposal resources such as a modern library

with improved access to learning material; a robust ICT infrastructure as we migrate to the digital platform so as to offer learners the much-desired flexibility in accessing quality education, including smart boards in some of the lecture halls, and some of the best programme leaders and lecturers in the field of academia. So, make good use of the resources that this university avails to you and abide by the guidelines contained in your student handbook. Our primary aim is to mould and send into the dynamic world a competent professional or an innovative entrepreneur who drives change.

Students, to prepare you for this revolution, we at KAFU have embraced technology and have dedicated resources to ensure that you are a part of the transition from the beginning. As you have learnt during the earlier phase of this orientation programme, some of your classes may be online or blended. You have been inducted and on boarded onto the e-Campus. We are in the process of getting connected to the ICT Ministry to enhance our internet connectivity. I want to urge you to fully embrace technology enabled learning because even the future of the job market is digital.

Ladies and Gentlemen, just like the settings you all come from, KAFU is established in a community. We have cultured a good relationship with the surrounding community and I want to appeal to each of you to make a positive contribution towards that relationship. Take time to understand and appreciate the way of life of your new neighbours and treat everyone with respect and humility. I want to implore those of you residing in hostels off-campus to respect your hosts. Respect Yourself too. Avoid being morally repugnant. Pay your rent on time and take good care of the resources availed to you.

My Young Scholars, our vibrant campus life will offer you a lot of freedom which comes with its share of social risks. You need to exercise this freedom with a lot of responsibility and endeavour only to cultivate healthy and beneficial

friendships that will build positively towards your future. In the university, you are considered an adult responsible for all your decisions. Moreover, I urge you to lead a responsible life. Shun companies and activities that will lead you down the path of destruction such as reckless sexual behaviour, use of drugs and alcoholism, as well as other destructive habits.

Students, reports indicate that college and university students make up one of the largest groups of drug abusers and most affected by HIV AIDS nationwide. Young people (18 to 24 years of age) are prime targets for drug abuse, illicit sex, binge drinking, addiction and alcoholism. The temptation to fall prey is high because, according to these reports, alcoholism and drug abuse make socializing easier. Some of the reasons cited for this kind of behaviour include peer pressure, curiosity and stress.

Young Scholars, I want to appeal to you to explore healthy community activities we have on offer such as social clubs, games and sports for better health and a stronger mind. These will, in turn, help you focus on your mission here. We have recently formulated Sports and Talent Policy to help nurture your gifts. I wish to urge you to fully explore these gifts both for wholesome growth and for the added advantages they present as career or scholarship opportunities.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as you embark on this journey under the prevailing circumstances, I wish to warn you that great challenges and great opportunities lie ahead. Accept the challenges so that you can feel the joy of victory. I kindly ask you to be disciplined, focused, hardworking and God fearing as you face your future here.

My Dear Young Scholars, I wish at this juncture, to salute the Council, Management, Senate and all staff who together have built KAFU brick by brick. You have been the backbone of this university and ensured continuity.

Finally, students, I take this special opportunity to wish you a safe, happy and challenging academic journey at Kaimosi Friends University. Once again, welcome, class of 2022.

Thank you and God bless Kaimosi Friends University!