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## **UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**REMARKS MADE BY PROF. PETER M. F MBITHI, DEPUTY VICE-  
CHANCELLOR (A & F), DURING THE WORKSHOP ON NEW LABOUR  
LAWS FOR SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF HELD AT THE CENTRAL  
CATERING UNIT (CCU) ON AUGUST 13, 2009**

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Let me start by welcoming you all to this training session where resource persons from the Federation of Kenya employers will between today and tomorrow take us through critical aspects of the new labour laws. Some of you are aware that since 2007, the government of Kenya revised the previous Employment Act CAP 226, and came up with new laws which all of us are to adopt or have adopted.

As heads of departments, sections and other Units of the University, you play a very big role in interpreting and implementing the University's Human Relations function, normally viewed as the domain of the Administration Registrar. Those who are college registrars are responsible for this role in their colleges while other Central Heads of departments provide a vital linkage between the central registrars and the departmental staff.

As a public institution, the University of Nairobi has an obligation, indeed a duty, to adhere to all statutory requirements. The relevant ones in the Human Resource function have to do with respect of the laws of the land relating to handling of staff matters. Whereas our administrators have generally seen this in terms of how we interpret the terms of service, the same are linked to the various clauses of our three unions Collective Bargaining Agreements, that is UASU, UNTESU and KUDHEIHA. Various staff benefits and responsibilities are captured in the said CBAs, which of necessity, must conform to the existing laws of the land.

Among the laws that the FKE staff will be guiding on are the Employment Act, 2007, the Work Injury and Benefits Act 2007, the Occupational Safety and Health Act 2007, the Labour Relations Act 2007 and the Labour Institutions Act 2007.

Since 2005, the University adopted transformative leadership in its quest to achieve its long term goal of being a world-class University, with the motto "Towards World Class Excellence". This was guided and grounded in the University's 2005-2010 Strategic Plan which was reviewed in 2007 and now we have the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan.

A key objective in the new Strategic Plan is "to develop a governance system that effectively serves the University." The Strategies adopted to realize this objective include:

- To lobby for a more enabling legislative and regulatory framework, and;
- To develop and operationalise enabling regulations.

It follows, therefore, that the University of Nairobi must respect the laws laid down by government before it can lobby for other regulations to facilitate its objectives.

### **Vision, Mission, Core Values**

In its 2008-2013 Strategic Plan, the University has undertaken to pursue a new strategic direction that will propel the institution to higher levels of effectiveness, efficiency and relevance in pursuit of its business. The University therefore adopted the following Vision:

*“A World class University committed to scholarly excellence.”*

Deriving from the Vision, the University also re-cast its Mission as follows:

*“To provide Quality University education and training and to embody the aspirations of the Kenyan people and the global community through creation, preservation, integration, transmission and utilization of knowledge”*

In order to achieve the above Mission and Vision, the University has undertaken to be guided by the following core-values:

- Espouse the virtues of truth, integrity, honesty, tolerance, professionalism, team-work and meritocracy.
- Uphold the ethics and etiquette of teaching, learning and research
- Promote and defend the freedom of thought and academic enquiry as well as freedom of association
- Be creative and innovative
- Ensure openness and transparency in all its dealings and operations
- Nurture responsible corporate citizenship and strong social responsibility
- Be at the forefront in providing leadership in national agenda
- Respect the beliefs and values of others
- Respect and protect the environment
- Have the courage to initiate and adapt to change

## Quality Policy

As you are aware, the University got its ISO 9001:2008 Certificate last year, 2008. This followed rigorous training and several activities aimed at setting up systems and processes to ensure that our services conform to acceptable international standards, comparable to the best in the world. Consequently, the University prepared its Quality Management System (QMS) which was certified by the Kenya Bureau of Standards, the government body responsible for setting up and maintaining standards.

The following is the guiding Quality Policy Statement prepared for the University's QMS:

*The University of Nairobi is committed to quality through teaching, research and creative works; fostering an intellectual culture that bridges theory with practice and producing holistic graduates prepared for a life of purpose, service and leadership. The University is committed to good corporate governance, excellence and professionalism, freedom of thought in academic inquiry, responsible citizenship, creativity, innovativeness, teamwork and adaptation to change. In order to realize this commitment, the University management will monitor and review its quality performance from time to time through the*

*implementation of an effective quality management system based on ISO 9001:2008 standard.*

### **Performance Contracting**

As you are aware, the University of Nairobi has been on performance contract with the government through our parent Ministry since July, 2005. Whereas ISO puts emphasis on continual improvement, performance contracting is about growth and monitoring performance. The thrust of performance contracting is that "what gets measured gets done."

Our University stands unique as one of the very few which have cascaded performance contracting to our colleges and core units. Since 2006/2007, the University's six colleges, SWA and the Main Central departments are on performance contract. Some colleges e.g. CHSS and CBPS have gone further and cascaded the performance contracts to their teaching departments.

With effect from 2009/2010, we intend to start putting our staff on performance contract. This should not be shocking since our staff have already been taken through performance appraisals. The only issue here is that each department's

performance targets will be re-organized and allocated to staff in the department, for them to deliver on them within the contractual year. Such targets are the ones to be negotiated by and with staff for their performance contracts, which will inform the next series of staff performance appraisals. It means therefore that staff performance will be gauged on known and agreed-upon targets.

I wish to thank all of you for the manner in which you have embraced both ISO and performance contracting in our University. They are key operational landmarks that are greatly helping to transform this University. Let us pull together to make these processes successful.

With those remarks, I wish you the best in this training workshop.