



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

**SPEECH MADE BY PROF. PETER M. F. MBITHI,
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF
MACHAKOS TECHNICAL TRAINING INSTITUTE
DURING THE 7TH GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD
ON 11TH JULY 2008.**

The Hon. Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology, Dr.
Sally Kosgey,
The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and
Technology,
The Director of Technical Education
The Provincial Technical Training Officer,
The District Education Officer,
Members of the BoG present,
The Principal,
Invited Guests,
Staff and Students
Graduands,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Let me take this opportunity to warmly welcome you all who are gathered here, as we celebrate the auspicious occasion of this institute's 7th graduation ceremony.

Our Guest of Honor, the Hon. Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology, allow me on my own and on behalf of the Board of Governors and the entire Institute, to most warmly congratulate you on your election as the Member of Parliament for Aldai constituency, and your subsequent appointment as the Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology. That is indeed a remarkable achievement.

Honorable Minister, we take it as a great honor and service to this Institute in particular and people of the region in general, the fact that you have accepted to come and preside over this graduation ceremony in spite of your very busy schedule.

Honorable Minister, our college is fairly young but is growing steadily both in terms of physical development and also in its human resource and crucially, in the number of students that we admit annually.

The greater part of our growth is of course attributable to the support we have continued to enjoy from our parent Government Ministry hitherto the Ministry of Science and Technology and presently, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. In our small

way, we believe we have always contributed towards the provision of Higher Education in this region.

Our Guest of Honor, this college cannot fail to take cognisance of the great assistance provided by your Ministry, notably in the following areas:

1. Construction of the new Library
2. Equipping the centre of excellence i.e. Clothing Technology
3. Provision of bursaries for needy students.
4. Enhanced disbursement of grants which has enabled us to:
 - Do repairs and rehabilitation of some of our infrastructure and equipment,
 - Buy computers,
 - Buy Library books.

We thank you and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology most sincerely for the support granted.

As a technical training institute, we face the challenge of not only providing skilled manpower in the technical fields, but also in assisting our various partners, in government and locally, to meet the challenges from our immediate environment.

As you are aware, achievement in all sectors of the economy is dependent on a well-trained and healthy population. As a partner in the education sector, we have noted the promise by Government in the Machakos District Development Plan (2002-2008) to ensure that measures are put in place to increase the enrolment and retention rates especially in primary and secondary levels.

To improve training, tertiary level institutions have also been encouraged to introduce new curricular in line with changing societal needs. Some of these strategies have started to bear fruit and as a college, we expect to feel the effects of the newly introduced free secondary Education (FSE), when more students will start registering for our courses.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as a Technical Training Institute, we must be at the forefront in providing guidance in the broad field of Technology, but most importantly, in the area of information, Communication and Technology (ICT).

The world has within a few years become a global village in the sense of how we are able to communicate, thanks to IT. Computers and the internet are not only the main tools of communication, but also the

critical requirements in forward looking institutions. The effects of mobile telephony which uses these technologies have been felt by all.

Our challenge as a training institute therefore also includes provision and installation of modern technology, especially computers. Necessary training shall then be undertaken to equip our staff and students with modern data and information management systems.

Our Guest of Honour, our college is still young and we believe that as we grow, we will continue to entrench ourselves in our chosen field of technical training. It is an area where we are ready to collaborate with government, NGO's and other stakeholders not only to train, but to provide solutions to problems affecting society.

It would for example be good if this institute could more aggressively participate in drought management, for as you know, some of the areas in this district are semi-arid. There is need to develop an early warning system to detect the droughts in good time so that coping mechanisms can be put in place. The institute should also participate in promoting irrigation for both livestock and agricultural production and research on drought resistant crop varieties.

As Board Chairman, I see our challenge as that of consolidating efforts in the Board, and among staff and students to ensure the Institute meets its objectives as per Government programme for technical institutes, and to put in extra efforts that will in the near future bring the institute to a polytechnic status.

Honorable Minister, in today's graduation ceremony 217 graduands will be awarded diplomas and certificates in various fields of specialization. This is their day and as a college, we take pride in having moulded the young kenyans up to this level. There were challenges but we have managed well. And we continue to enroll more students annually.

It is therefore my humble request that even as we appreciate the assistance referred to earlier, that the Ministry considers giving us additional support to enable us put up modern classrooms, workshops and purchase new equipment. We would also like to put up a new office block so as to have a polytechnic face.

Ladies and gentlemen, with those remarks, it is now my pleasure to invite the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology to address us.

Thank you.