

SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE CABINET SECRETARY FOR MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROF. JACOB T. KAIMENYI, PHD, FICD, EBS, DURING THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY – AFRICA STUDENTS CENTER GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY HELD ON THURSDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 2015

- The University Chancellor, Dr. Manu Chandaria
- Principal Secretary (Education), Dr. Belio Kipsang
- The Board of Trustees
- The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Freida Brown
- Faculty, Staff and Students
- Distinguished Guests
- Ladies and gentlemen

I am honored to be here today to witness the groundbreaking of the USIU-Africa Student Center.

As an academician and the Cabinet Secretary tasked with ensuring the proper running of education in the country, I am encouraged whenever I witness investments that seek to facilitate positive transformation in the sector. In a country where a lot of emphasis is placed on knowledge gained in the classroom setting, I am highly pleased to see that USIU-Africa continues to not only expand its academic programs, but also invest hundreds of millions of shillings in a student center. This will complement and enhance the overall educational experience of students through development of, exposure to, and participation in social, intellectual, recreational, and governance programs. It is my hope that the centralization of student services that will be located at the center will help empower students to focus more intensely on their studies and their personal growth.

Higher learning institutions must continuously invest in students and student affairs and services as this provides a healthy return to national economies ensuring students success in higher education and their subsequent contributions to national welfare.

Career Services, Counselling, Exchange programs, academic support services, Student Leadership initiatives, all these play a significant part in creating value for the student.

Ladies and gentlemen

Institutions of Higher Learning must play their part in preparing all rounded students and not what is commonly referred to as 'half baked graduates'. Players in the education sector, both public and private, must uphold the highest ethical standards. We must be ready to engage and learn from global best practices and infuse those with our own unique experiences. This will ensure that we prepare students who are balanced from knowledge gained in and out of the classroom. We must unite in delivering quality education with the knowledge that human capital is one of the greatest resources our nation has for securing a brighter future for generations to come. Each one in the sector has the task to ensure that the quality of education delivered is relevant to the current environment and future trends.

While the government is tasked with ensuring the education sector is properly managed, we cannot ignore the vital role private institutions play as partners in delivering education across the nation. While these partnerships are necessary, this comes with numerous challenges in ensuring quality is upheld across the board. My ministry is aware of the alleged dubious institutions that operate whilst delivering substandard education through unqualified faculty who lack both the expertise and basic materials to teach. The government is also aware of the alleged improper upgrading of learners in various public and private institutions through unethical undertakings. I want to clearly state that these institutions will be investigated and appropriate action taken against them and the individuals who continue to bring disgrace to the sector.

Institutions of higher learning must uphold the highest standards of quality education and not become centers of revenue collection by duping unsuspecting customers seeking education. It is the role of each institution to ensure that they hire professional

faculty who are experts of their respective fields and that the necessary tools to facilitate the delivery of knowledge are made available.

Ladies and gentlemen

The government is committed to making education more affordable without compromising quality. To make this a reality, Private-Public partnership opportunities must be explored further to attract investors to construct the necessary facilities that enhance the education experience.

Last but not least

Students are key players in the education sector. I urge you to play your part. Be hungry for knowledge and ensure that you receive quality. Raise an alarm if you are in doubt. Hold your respective institutions to task if you are not satisfied with the level of service. This must however be done through appropriate channels of dialogue. The student government must place consultation with their respective institutions at the core of their mandate to ensure quality education is upheld. Continuously engage with the institution on necessary quality assurance mechanisms that make our institutions globally competitive. Whilst a certificate at the end of your studies is vital, more important is that you have gained useful applicable knowledge that will help you in your career.

As I conclude, let me reiterate the government's commitment to ensuring relevant quality education is offered and the recognition of the significant role of the private sector. I would also like to congratulate USIU-Africa in living the values of the government; that education is not only about course work and assignments, but it is also being part of the social and technical environment that makes our youth true productive leaders of the future.

Thank you and God Bless You All.