

SPEECH BY THE CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION, PROF. GEORGE MAGOHA DURING THE HANDING OVER OF THE CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, ON 29TH MAY 2020 AT 10.00AM.

Your Excellency, Amb. Wu Peng, Ambassador of the Peoples Republic of China

The President of Tianjin Normal University, Prof. Zhong Yinghua

The Chancellor of the University of Nairobi, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi,

Chair Of Council of the University of Nairobi, Prof. Julia Ojiambo

The Deputy Chief of Confucius Institute Headquarters in Beijing, Mr. Ma Jianfei

Vice Chancellor, Prof Kiama

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased that even in the midst of covid-19 challenges, we have found time to receive this precious gift from the Chinese government in a virtual ceremony.

Let me on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Kenya express our gratitude to the Government of the Peoples republic of China for supporting the Construction and equipping of this state of the art facility to the tune of 1.4 billion Kenya Shillings.

The project arrangement and implementation has been executed in accordance with the grant agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation signed on 10th May 2014 between the two governments.

Coincidentally and fortunately it was the same period When I was the Vice Chancellor of the University of Nairobi and I can therefore not hide my joy to witness the successful completion and handing over of this project.

The Centre symbolizes the true friendship that exist between our two countries. This Confucius centre will play a big role in fostering good relations between our two nations through the promotion of Chinese language and Culture in the region.

You cannot be good friends if you don't understand one another's culture. Teaching Chinese language in this Centre will promote greater understanding of Chinese culture in Africa since language is an instrument of cultural expression.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The University of the future is characterized by Internationalization of programs where cross -pollination of ideas is made possible through academic exchanges. This facility will offer the university of Nairobi a rare opportunity for increased students and staff exchanges with Chinese Universities.

I am happy note that from 2005 to date the Confucius institute at the University of Nairobi has trained 17,585 students in various courses. Among the beneficiaries of free language training are staff of the University of Nairobi and staff of key government agencies like the National police service, Immigration Service, Kenya Revenue Authority, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Kenya Air ports Authority. On behalf of the government allow me to thank you once more.

I believe this not that last big project we are receiving at the University from the friendly government of China. There are still many areas where we could still explore wonderful opportunities including collaborative research in pressing global issues like Health, Environment and Climate Change.

Finally, Let me conclude my remarks by giving the unwavering commitment of the government of Kenya to promote trade and cultural exchanges between Kenya and China. We shall continue to strive to address promptly any challenges that may arise in the way of our friendship.

With great humility and gratitude, I accept to receive this landmark infrastructure so that the University can make good use of it.

Thank You.

**PROF. GEORGE MAGOHA.
CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION**