United States International University  
Nairobi, Kenya  
Commencement Ceremony  
17th of June 2000  
Vice Chancellor’s Report

Honored Guest- Your Excellency Mr. Batia, Honorable Ministers, distinguished board members, honored guests, faculty, staff, alumni, graduates, family and friends. I would like to welcome you to the 22nd Annual Commencement Ceremony of United States International University in Nairobi, Kenya. We are here to honor the class of 2000 --- the first class of this new millennium -- on this the 17th of June 2000.

This has been an extremely busy year for us as an institution. This year we are proud to be the fifth chartered private university in Kenya having received our Charter from His Excellency President Moi on the 10th of December 1999. A special thank you to our Board members (Nathaniel Tum and Eddah Gachukia) without whose assistance this would not have happened. We have become the only university in the Eastern Region that has dual accreditation, that is, we are recognized as a quality institution of higher learning by both the Kenyan government and the United States government. We have met the requirements of two oversight bodies which assures the standard of education our students receive.

While we see this as a critical goal that took the university ten years to accomplish, we have also been committed to continuous improvement of the calibre of education we provide. While our mortar, bricks and books provide us with the basics, our human resources are the knowledge and heart of the university. Let me begin with the accomplishments of our faculty for without them there is no institution of higher learning. Our faculty has been involved in numerous activities this year. To mention a few:

Faculty
School of Arts and Sciences
The Arts & Science faculty love to see the world. Dr. Cireno Hiteng and Dr. Jacqueline Oduou traveled to San Diego, California to present papers in a conference organised by the Leadership Alliance. Dr. Hiteng also went to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to present a paper title: "Natural Resources Based Conflicts in the Greater Horn of Africa." He later went to the UK and presented a paper titled "New Principles on State Sovereignty: Some Lessons from the Horn of Africa for International Theory" at the British International Studies Association, University of Manchester. Professor Macharia Munene also presented paper at this conference on "Diplomatic History and Its Relevance to International Relations." He is currently in Spain, on special invitation to conduct an intensive 3-week course on "Violence Formation in Africa" at the Universitat Jaume-1 in Castellon, Spain. Dr. Sam Munywoki went to Abidjan in January to provide crisis counseling to relatives of the victims of the Kenya Airways plane crash.

Locally, Dr. Ruthie Rono presented a paper entitled "Emerging Trends in Family Counseling" at the 5th Pan African Regional Conference. Dr. Elizabeth Okech was interviewed by KBC on Discipline in the Schools. Professor Mkangi established the Kwanza Lecture Series that addresses topical issues of interest to faculty and students. Another ongoing lecture series has been introduced by Dr. Jacqueline Oduou along with several other faculty members that focuses on the ever controversial
gender debate. There have been very lively discussions that have taken place over the past academic year.

On the literary side, Professor Katama Mkangi has signed an agreement with the East African Educational Publishers Ltd. to publish his latest compilation of short stories and he has two manuscripts in progress with the Oxford University Press - a novel in English and a play in Kiswahili.

School of Business

Dr. Meoli Kashorda attended a conference on telecommunications in Gaberone, Botswana and presented a paper titled: A Radio-Based National University Network, he was appointed member of the Appeals Tribunal under the Kenya Communication Act 1998 and has been an active member of KENET initiative to bring Internet access to all universities in Kenya. Dr. George Achoki and Dr. Gerald Chege were visiting lecturers at our San Diego campus. Dr. Achoki was also appointed as an examiner of accounting subjects by the Kenya Institute of Bankers. Dr Peter Lewa acted as a resource person on Succession Management for senior officers/commissioners of the Public Service Commission of Kenya. He managed a project involving recruitment and selection of personnel for ZADOK Furniture systems which resulted in four of our students getting employed.

The business faculty continues to participate in World Bank and Donor Funded Projects - Dr. Pius Owino is conducting research on Community-Based Pharmacies in Kenya at the Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR). Dr. Kinandu Muragu is working in Lesotho in a World Bank sponsored project on restructuring Government Financial Systems. Ms. Beatrice Sabana was in Washington attending a workshop on World Bank's African Capacity Building Program for Micro-Finance.

Within the Office of Academic Affairs, we have hired an additional 4 faculty positions that will begin next academic year bringing our full time faculty number to 40.

Staff

We feel very strongly that as an educational institution, it is important for our staff to develop as well for through their intellectual growth the university also benefits. Our staff and their families benefit from our educational tuition waiver that gives them the opportunity to obtain their degrees from the university free of charge. Today, we will graduate four employees, Charles Mutuota and Stanley Mwaguria with an MBA, and Joab Radak and Lucy Mwite with a bachelor's in Business Administration. Six of our staff have used this benefit to educate their family members. Among the graduates today will be: Dr. Kaane's daughter, Mr. Gathua's son, and Dr. Peter Lewa will see his wife graduate in Nairobi and his daughter in San Diego. Three wives have chosen to provide this benefit to their husbands: Beatrice Omolo, Elsie Newa and Loma Lilako. Congratulations to all of you.

Students

Our students have been very busy this year as well. The Business Club has successfully participated in the International InterAd competition sponsored by the International Association of Advertising under the tutelage of Dr. Terry Nevett, a Visiting Professor of Marketing from Central Michigan University in the US. They also sponsored a dinner dance with Professor George Saitoti as the guest of honor. The Youth to Youth drama competition among secondary school students that focused on AIDS was sponsored by the Culture Interaction Club. The Red Cross Club has spent the last six months working with children at the Imani Children's Home. Students in the Community
Service course have painted the Muruirui Primary School located in Maruirui slum and cleaned the public toilet located at Jomo Kenyatta "Nyama Choma" market. They are now on the verge of getting two wheelchairs. One is for a little girl in Muranga who broke her spine.

Sports continue to flourish at USIU. The rugby men are back in action as well as basketball and soccer. The men's soccer club reached the Super Two Division of the National Soccer League.

A special mention, in 1997 the University reinstitution the Jomo Kenyatta Scholarship which is a full scholarship for needy students. The recipient of that 1997 scholarship is graduating today with honors, magna cum laude, Mr. Chyrsostum Masinde. The university continues to have a very extensive financial aid program for needy students.

Curriculum
The curriculum remains dynamic in order to meet the needs of our students and the changing global market. We have introduced a baccalaureate degree in Information Technology and a master's degree in International Relations this academic year.

The Extended Studies program has continued training practicing journalists under the capable hands of Mr. Joe Kadhi with the financial assistance of DANIDA. Additionally, the certificate program on Conflict Management in collaboration with the Center for Conflict Management is flourishing. Dr. Peter Lewa and Mrs. Sabana have worked to register the University with the World Bank Voucher Training program so that these certificate programs will be starting next academic year.

Library
To support these programs the library continues to expand its resources. This year, the library purchased 5,756 new books and Ebscohost which provides access to over 6000 periodicals. Students will be able to use this facility by September 2000 upon completion of the multi-media center that will be housed on the top floor of the extension of the library. I feel the library staff should be commended for they handled over 300,000 visits this year. We also installed a closed circuit security system to protect the universities valuable resources.

Technology
Technology costs are never ending. There is always the need to upgrade software and hardware. We continue with this ongoing process of staying current so that our students can be competitive in the market place. This year USIU has been selected as the site for a new Information Technology experimental lab that will be funded by USAID. This will house the latest technology for examination by the business community and use by the faculty and student body. Additionally, four internships will be available to students from various universities.

Additional software was acquired this year to provide on line registration for students so now our students can comfortably register from home, the office, our computer lab or even a cyber cafe. Students and their parents can look at their grades using the same system. Many of our students do not like this feature.
Facilities/Land

We have continued to improve and expand our facilities. Of all the projects we have completed, I think we hear the most accolades about the road. For those of you who have not traveled to our campus recently, the road is now tarmacked with a side walk and street lighting that makes the night secure for our students and neighbors. The faculty block was completed and now our faculty enjoys very modern offices and most are equipped with computers. We also completed the interviewing room for the counseling psychology program and the darkroom and laboratory for the journalism program.

Future Directions

Every year the administration goes on a retreat to review and update our Strategic Plan with the input of various departments and the faculty senate. This year we revised our plan for the next five years. We have examined our growth and are looking at expanding over the next five years in the following ways:

1. Expand enrollment to 3000 by the year 2005.

2. Increase the number of full time faculty from 40 to 65.

3. Curriculum
   establish an undergraduate science based program,
   expand journalism to include electronic media and a master’s in journalism,
   revise and expand the psychology program
   add two new programs in the School of Business and a doctoral program
   seek professional accreditation for our business programs

4. Facilities.
   Last year, the University acquired an additional 60 acres of land in the Garden Estates area bringing our total land base to 80 acres. We will begin the master planning for this property in July.

   Facilities will be expanded to include:
   new auditorium that will seat 500 and be totally networked for IT access scheduled for completion in January 2001
   more playing fields and changing rooms
   more classrooms and office space for faculty
   technology and research center
   hotel, restaurant and tourism management training facilities
   more space in the library

Yes, we are ambitions, and yes, we have big dreams. You the first class of the new millenium must also have big dreams.
To the Graduates

As I reflect on the challenges that lie ahead of you, the Class of 2000, you must dream the impossible dreams. If I may take a bit of poetic liberty and paraphrase lyrics from The Impossible Dream by Leigh and Darion. You must fight the unbeatable foe and run where the brave dare not go. You are leaving the safe haven of the university at a very difficult time. Here in Kenya, the seemingly unbeatable foe is unemployment, droughts, insecurity, riots, and power rationing. You will have to travel uncharted areas in a quest to earn a living and build a nation. We are confident that the education you have obtained at USIU has prepared you for these new challenges.

You will have to right the unrightable wrong, to fight for the right without question or pause. Corruption is killing the spirit of this continent. You will have to fight to change this. We have tried to model for you an institution of integrity and honesty. As you go about your daily lives do not be compromised. Model this behavior for your children and those with whom you will work. An alumni told me recently that they like hiring our students because they can be trusted. You can make a difference. You can resurrect the spirit of a proud and honest people.

The song also says to try when your arms are too weary, No matter how hopeless, no matter how far. Don't give up your dreams. If one avenue fails look for another street. Use all of those problem solving skills you have acquired and figure out how to reach your goal. There are no easy paths. I am sure there were times you felt like dropping a class or just plain dropping out of school. But look at how great it feels to be here now having achieved this success.

The song ends by saying always dream the impossible dream and you'll reach the unreachable star and the world will be better for this. This will be a better world because we expect you to make a difference by making your dreams a reality.

To the class of 2000, congratulations on making this dream a reality!!!