



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY HON. WILLIAM SAMOEI
RUTO, PhD, C.G.H., PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE
FORCES, DURING THE 5TH GRADUATION CEREMONY
AT UZIMA UNIVERSITY**

JANUARY 30, 2026

KISUMU COUNTY

**The Most Rev Zacchaeus Okoth, Founder of Uzima University,
The Chancellor and Faculty,
Distinguished Guests,
Parents and Guardians,
Our Esteemed Graduands,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. It is my singular honour to address this 5th graduation ceremony of Uzima University, an institution that is steadily distinguishing itself as a bold and emerging force in Kenya's higher education landscape, shaping both minds and hands through cutting-edge medical training in the service of humanity.
2. From its approval 15 years ago to its opening in 2012 with three pioneering programmes - Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, nursing, and microbiology - through the introduction of clinical medicine, the granting of a Letter of Interim Authority, and the crowning achievement of a full University Charter last year, Uzima University has deliberately carved out its place in medical training, and stands ready to leave an indelible mark.
3. Ladies and gentlemen, I am deeply impressed by the ambition of Uzima University. It proves that the greatness of an institution is measured not by its age, not by its size, but by the scale of its ambition; not by what it promises, but what it delivers.



4. Allow me to illustrate. Uzima's global partnerships are fast becoming a launchpad for excellence. The Uzima Global Campus now serves as a working bridge between the Global North and the Global South, bringing world-class expertise directly to Kisumu.
5. Today, we are honoured by visiting medical trainers from leading institutions such as Johns Hopkins University, Harvard University, and the University of Oxford, who have delivered hands-on clinical training, transferring not only knowledge but also the latest life-saving skills in modern healthcare.
6. Through international exchange programmes, students and faculty are strengthening healthcare capacity and professional excellence. Specialist collaborations are expanding neurosurgical care and demonstrating the power of diaspora expertise working hand-in-hand with local talent.
7. And now, through a major global research partnership, Uzima stands at the threshold of establishing a world-class oncology and haematology research centre, a clinical trials hub, and a training ground for the next generation of cancer specialists.
8. Taken together, these initiatives complete the picture of a university setting its sights on excellence, on relevance, and on service to society.



9. That same level of ambition is one we must embrace and cultivate consistently, both as a people and as a nation.
10. I speak about raising ambition and about raising the bar with special conviction because it is a cause I deeply believe in and have relentlessly championed.
11. A nation rises only as high as the level of its ambition. For far too long, we settled for the bare minimum. Too often, when faced with choices requiring short-term sacrifice for long-term prosperity, we chose comfort over courage, content to go along simply to get along.
12. That is why affordable housing remained a promise deferred. That is why Universal Health Coverage remained out of reach for many. That is why our savings were paltry compared to neighbours with smaller economies. That is why many of our universities drifted towards insolvency, funded in promise but not in reality.
13. Not anymore. That era of the average, of mediocrity, is well and truly behind us.
14. Today, Universal Health Coverage is a lived reality, with more than 29 million Kenyans registered under the Social Health Authority. Across the country, over 240,000 affordable housing units are at various stages of completion, restoring dignity, creating jobs, and driving growth.



In 30 months, we have more than doubled what we had saved in 60 years through NSSF. Through the new Student Funding Model, university support is now anchored on merit and need, restoring fairness and sustainability to higher education.

15. These reforms matter because they shape the country you, our graduates, are now stepping forward to serve and strengthen.
16. Allow me to close with a personal reflection. Like many of you, I was not born into privilege. I did not come from a famous family. I did not inherit wealth or advantage. What I received from my parents, though, was far more enduring: Faith in God, belief in myself, and the discipline of hard work.
17. Faith gave me purpose. Self-belief shaped my response to challenge. Hard work opened doors that once seemed firmly shut.
18. Here is the great equaliser of life: Whether born rich or poor, known or unknown, connected or unacknowledged, these three gifts remain available to all, for free. Faith. Self-belief. Hard work. They cannot be bought. They cannot be patented. They are not reserved for the chosen few, even though few choose them.
19. With faith, self-belief, and hard work, your starting point does not define your destination. Your background does not limit your future. Your present circumstances do not dictate your final story.



20. So, go forth and become practical dreamers: Men and women who dream at night and work by day to fulfil those dreams. That is the spirit this university has planted in you. May your purpose be clear, your courage steady, and your effort tireless and rewarding.

Congratulations to you all.

I thank you.

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