



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY HON. WILLIAM SAMOEI
RUTO, PhD, C.G.H., PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
KENYA, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE
FORCES, AND CHANCELLOR OF THE NATIONAL
INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH UNIVERSITY, DURING
THE FIRST GRADUATION TO AWARD MASTERS
DEGREES AT THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND
RESEARCH UNIVERSITY**

FEBRUARY 17, 2026

NAIROBI



**Distinguished guests,
Faculty, Staff and Graduands of the National Intelligence
and Research University,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. On 5th November, 2024, I formally awarded a Charter to the National Intelligence and Research University (NIRU), establishing it as Kenya's foremost specialised university to build the capacity of our intelligence community, and as a key national asset for posterity.
2. At the time, I reaffirmed the government's firm support for this university to meet its mandate and issued a clear directive to the institution to expand its academic reach to the Global South, with a specific focus on Africa.
3. I am therefore honoured to preside over this inaugural graduation of the National Intelligence and Research University, an occasion that not only celebrates the awarding of advanced academic degrees but also signifies the realisation of a shared vision to create a strategic institution serving as a centre of excellence in intelligence education and research.
4. I am also pleased to note that more than half of the graduating class - 17 out of 31 - are from African countries, a demonstrable indication that the university is implementing the directive I gave during the award of the Charter.



5. Equally, the enrolment of students from 21 different African countries in the Fourth Cohort signifies not only growth in numbers, but also the expanding and rich diversity that strengthens the National Intelligence and Research University's role as a strategic hub for knowledge creation, exchange, and cooperation.
6. This university is uniquely positioned to contribute to Africa's strategic development priorities, including **Agenda 2063, the Africa We Want**, which envisions a prosperous, peaceful, and integrated continent driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.
7. The theme of this graduation, '**Preparing Strategic Leaders for a Complex World**', aptly captures the realities of security challenges confronting Africa and the wider world. Threats such as terrorism, transnational organised crime, cyber warfare, money laundering, climate-induced conflicts, and economic sabotage transcend borders and demand a coordinated continental response grounded in shared intelligence and mutual trust.
8. Integral to this vision is the progressive reforms of the **African Peace and Security Architecture**, which calls for enhanced intelligence sharing, coordination, and cooperation across Member States. Key to this approach is proactiveness in addressing complex security threats that have consistently held back progress in Africa.



9. It is my expectation that through cutting-edge research, interdisciplinary and policy-oriented scholarship, this university will continue to build capacity for intelligence professionals well-equipped to assist Africa in navigating a complex security environment.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

10. Our continent is uniquely endowed with intellectual capital, lived experience, and contextual insights necessary to develop sustainable, homegrown solutions. Universities like this one are vital incubators of this capacity, grounded in African realities, enhanced by global best practices, and focused on strengthening African sovereignty and resilience.
11. This quest to enhance African sovereignty and resilience aligns closely with Kenya's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, which places people, knowledge, and innovation at the centre of national progress. Education, research, and innovation remain powerful drivers of inclusive growth, strong institutions, and strategic competitiveness in an increasingly interconnected world.
12. With regard to research and innovation, I wish to emphasise the government's continued commitment to this vital sector and why we established the State Department for Science, Research and Innovation to spearhead national priorities.



13. In addition, I would like to draw your attention to the Kenya Research Financing and Capacity Strengthening Master Plan 2026–2036, which provides a clear roadmap for closing the research financing gap. The plan envisions scaling up national investment in research and development to 2% of GDP as envisioned in the Science, Technology and Innovation Act of 2013, a critical step toward sustained national development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

14. Looking ahead, I challenge this university to remain intellectually ambitious and future-oriented by continuously developing cutting-edge programmes that are responsive to Africa's development imperatives and the realities of the Global South.
15. To our graduating class today, you join the ranks of Africa's next generation of strategic leaders. Your academic achievements confer not only credentials, but also a solemn charge: To serve with integrity, strategic foresight, and a steadfast commitment to the public good.
16. Whether your future roles unfold in Kenya, across the continent, or on the global stage, you carry the responsibility to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, ethical intelligence practice, and respect for the rule of law.

**To the Class of 2026, congratulations.
I thank you.**

