



Remarks by
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
Vice Chancellor
Prof. Mabel Imbuga, PhD, EBS
During
The Annual JKUAT *Tech Expo*
On
October 30 – November 1, 2013
Juja Main Campus

Cabinet Secretary, Industrialization and Enterprise Development, Adan Mohamed
Deputy Vice Chancellors,
Principals,
Deans,
Directors,
Registrars,
Members of Staff and Students,
Other invited guests,
Ladies and gentlemen.

I am most pleased to welcome you back to JKUAT, a University you need no introduction about considering that you chaired its Council, and therefore, you know the depth and breadth of the entire institution. This time though, you have come back home in a different status, that of a Cabinet Secretary, a more prominent position that is meant to spearhead the country's

industrialization and entrepreneurial development agenda. We congratulate you for your well deserved appointment.

As a University, we still remain quite grateful for your contribution towards the development of this great University as past Chairman, and are truly proud of your stewardship. We are indeed proud to be associated with your new position and pledge to at all times to cooperate with your ministry, a reason why we opted for you as our choice to officially grace this occasion.

To bring you up to speed with the University's progress Mr. Minister, we have continued to play our active role in complimenting the Government's provision of service delivery to all our stakeholders both locally and abroad. We have been on our feet either establishing, or enhancing collaboration with respective partners in various fields in sectors such as technology, mining industry and food security among other researches, with countries from as far as Australia, Japan and China just to mention but a few, all aimed at adding value to the country's growth.

Ladies and gentlemen, our University's vision remains lucid, it aims at being a global institution of excellence in Training, Research and Innovation for Development. In fact, the JKUAT *Tech Expo* is one such forum that has effectively helped the University continue to pursue its vision, thus upholding the motto of *Setting trends in Higher Education, Research and Innovation*.

You may be interested to learn Mr. Minister that in our recent launch of laptops for students project, the first ever to be done in the country in the private – public partnership between JKUAT and Samsung, your counterpart in the Ministry of Information Communication and Technology Dr. Fred Matiang'i lauded our efforts in the provision of practical training skills to students whose contribution towards the country's transformation, he noted, was being realized. Dr. Matiang'i equally hailed the ongoing intensive researches at the University which he further noted, were giving rise to great innovations that were in line with the Government's effort in the realization of the country's Vision 2030.

There is no doubt in my mind that it is forums such as the *Tech Expo* that have made great contributions to the milestones the University has made with regard to technological innovative advancements. Over the years, numerous projects have been showcased and the participants reaped huge benefits from their involvement; ultimately benefiting the University as a whole.

An example is last year's winning project in the software category, *Echorest*, a project that provides a platform that allow customers post whatever they want, where they are, and how much they are willing to pay for a service, as well as linking them to offers from various vendors and service providers. The good news about the said project is that it has already been launched as one of the new entrants in the e-commerce field and is doing extremely well with over 4,000 merchants and 20 buyers.

Such is what the JKUAT *Tech Expo* has brought on the table and is continuing to do so as it encourages not only innovation among students but self-employment as the Echorest case demonstrates. The 1st runners up in the Engineering category with a project dubbed '*soft pocket*'

has already incorporated a company; Raven Energy Ltd, whose aim is to design and implement renewable energy projects and provide other electrical engineering solutions.

Other projects that have made an impact after exhibiting at past *Tech Expo* and faring well have been showcased in other similar forums such as the Huawei Android Challenge where the *KaroPay app* emerged the winner, and the Pivot East African competition where the *iDaktari* project was judged among the finalist projects.

Mr. Cabinet Secretary, the University has also incubated some of the winning projects through the Research Production and Extension Division, the aim being to help transform these projects into fully operational and commercial products that will ultimately have a great impact on the technological development of this country. It is my pledge here that the University will continue to support participants in incubating their projects and look for further ways of improving the incubation process to see to it that we as a University continue to positively affect the growth of this country through innovation.

Other than influencing great innovations, the JKUAT *Tech Expo*'s impact has influenced the birth of other events such as the JKUAT Career Fair and the Multimedia Festivals, which have been held for the first and second time this year and last year respectively. The move has helped to further strengthen the ties between the University and the Industry and in the process, fostered new and better relations with the corporate world.

As I conclude Mr. Cabinet Secretary, this is the 4th Edition of the *Tech Expo* and it is my hope, the impact it has so far, may continue to spiral and reach greater heights.

Once again, Mr. Cabinet Secretary, *karibu nyumbani* and congratulation for your appointment to the well-deserved position.

Thank you.