



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND EXTERNAL
STUDIES**

**PRINCIPAL'S REMARKS AT THE OFFICIAL
OPENING CEREMONY OF THE INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON DECOLONIZING EDUCATION
HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**VENUE: LTB 1, LIBRARY HILL, KIKUYU
CAMPUS**

DATE: THURSDAY 16 JANUARY 2020

TIME: 9.00 A.M.

- **Dean School of Education**
 - **Our Esteemed visitors from UK, (University of Manchester) and neighbouring African countries**
 - **Our Esteemed Local participants, including those from other universities**
 - **Chairmen of Departments present**
 - **Students including those from Alliance Girls High School who are special guests to the Conference**
 - **Ladies and Gentlemen**
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I wish on behalf of the Vice Chancellor and entire University of Nairobi community to welcome you all to the University of Nairobi and in particular to Kikuyu Campus. I particularly wish to acknowledge the presence of our partners from the University of Manchester in United Kingdom who will be the resource persons, as well as participants from Rwanda, Somalia, the Republic of South Sudan and other Universities in Kenya.

Please note that Kikuyu Campus is the Headquarters of the College of Education and External Studies. The Campus hosts Bachelor of Education Arts, Bachelor of Education Early Childhood Education, Bachelor of Education in Physical Education and Sport as well as all graduate programmes.

We have a sister Campus – Kenya Science Campus about 10 Km away which hosts the Bachelor of Education Science and Bachelor of Education in Information Communication and Technology programmes. Please find time and pay a visit.

The College also has students at Kisumu Campus and we intent to introduce programmes at Mombasa Campus.

In total, the College has about 8,500 students.

The purpose of this conference is to develop a partnership on decolonization of education that will build solidarity between Scholars from the participating countries, with the following objectives:

- 1. To make deliberations on decolonization of education in Kenya, and the world. I propose that the issues be looked at from policy perspective as well as the political perspective because we need political will to successfully drive national development strategies.**

 - 2. To develop modalities for creating a partnership between the Racial Justice Network of UK and School of Education through the Department of Educational Foundations.**
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3. To develop a Framework that will guide decolonization of education and activism against discrimination and segregation in Kenya right from high School to the workplace.

Our College supports the initiative and hopes to benefit in terms of:

1. Opportunities for Curriculum transformation.

- 2. International linkage and collaboration, especially with the University of Manchester.**

- 3. Local interaction, knowledge sharing and networking.**

Kenya gained independence from Britain in 1963, and with this independence, we inherited the British system of Education. We still have memories of the grading system we had at independence upto the early eighties: the Cambridge School Certificate examination (Ordinary or Form Four Level) and Cambridge Higher School Certificate Curriculum (Form Six Level), which were set and marked in Britain.

Prior to independence, Kenyans witnessed a lot of challenges impacted by the British system of education in public utilities and institutions such as schools, hospitals, and social clubs:

- **Racial segregation**
 - **Spiritual discrimination**
 - **Tribal divisions/lack of cohesion/lack of unity**
 - **Lack of employment**
 - **Discrimination in job placement**
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- **Poor educational planning and evaluation**
 - **Lack of cultural inspiration**
 - **Incoherent relevance in education and training**
 - **Lack of policy and strategies for national goals, and aspirations of national unity, industrialization, and life-long learning**
 - **Lack of clear policy on curriculum mapping and transformation**
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Soon after independence, the Government embarked on addressing reform issues in education that would provide structures to these challenges.

The ultimate objective was to foster unity and create incentives for development through employment creation. To achieve this, a number of Task Forces were commissioned, one after the other.

The first task force for this initiative was called The 1964 Kenya Education Commission (dubbed the Ominde Report).

The Ominde Report focused on the need to make education more responsive to national economic, social and political needs of the newly independent nation.

Thereafter as time went by, other task forces were commissioned with specific Terms of Reference and expected outcomes.

- **The 1976 Report of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (The Gachathi Report) emphasized the need for coordination of educational planning and continuous monitoring and evaluation to promote unity, cultural inspiration and socio economic development of the nation.**

The Report recommended 9 years of primary education which was however too expensive to implement.

- **The 1981 Report of the Presidential Working Party (commonly called the Mackay Report) recommended restructuring of the entire education system. The Report recommended 8 years of primary, 4 years of secondary and 4 years of University education, dubbed the 8.4.4 system.**

The A-Level cycle of secondary education (called the Higher School Certificate stage) was abolished.

The university bachelor's degree was expanded by one more year, with the expected outcome being provision of knowledge and skills to promote self-reliance.

- **The 1988 Report of the Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond (The Kamunge Report) addressed the issue of quality and relevance of education and training in Kenya. It emphasized the need for research and evaluation.**

- **The 1999 Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education System in Kenya (The Koech Report) examined strategies that would facilitate education to respond to national goals and aspirations of national unity, industrialization, life-long learning, quality and relevance.**

The outcome was a document dubbed “Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training (TIQET) which recommended restructuring of the curriculum with reduced subject content but laid emphasis on languages, mathematics and science.

- **Between 2003 and 2012, 4 Reports were commissioned:**
 - 1. The Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (2003-2007).**
 - 2. The Kenya Educational Support Programme (KESSP 2005 – 2010)**
 - 3. The Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research (Report contained in Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005).**
 - 4. The Kenya Vision 2030 of June 2008.**
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The 4 reports still underscored the role of quality and relevant education in socio-economic development, nation building and national cohesion.

In summary, the aim of the Task Forces or Commission Reports that have evolved since independence was to demystify the colonial education system and make it more relevant and responsive to Kenyan needs.

In some way, the initiatives were meant to promote strategies for decolonization of the education system in Kenya.

However, in a continuously changing world, we expect emerging challenges and gaps all the time.

This conference is important to us in Kenya because we are eager to deliberate and exchange ideas for a better Kenya. We welcome our colleagues from UK and hope to come up with useful outcomes especially in terms of:

- 1. Colonial legacies in education.**
 - 2. Alternative education for a better world.**
 - 3. Moving towards a decolonized education system in Kenya and the world over.**
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Mine is to wish you fruitful and objective deliberations.

I now wish to declare the Conference officially opened.

THURSDAY JANUARY 16, 2020
