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TURKANA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
(A Constituent College of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology)

Office of the Principal

**WELCOMING ADDRESS BY PROFESSOR GEORGE N. CHEMINING'WA,
PRINCIPAL, TURKANA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, TO FIRST YEAR STUDENTS
ON THURSDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER, 2023 AT 9.00 AM**

The Deputy Principal, Administration, Finance and Planning, Prof George Muthaa;

Registrars, Deans of Schools, Directors, Dean of Students, Chairpersons of Departments, Heads of Sections, academic and administrative staff, student leaders, continuing students;

and, most importantly, our esteemed First Year Students,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning!

I am pleased and excited to address you, our esteemed 2023 first years and the newest members of Turkana University College (TUC), a constituent College of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. This is a special day in the calendar of our esteemed institution.

On behalf of the Council, Management, Academic Board, staff and continuing students, I am very delighted to warmly welcome you, our esteemed 2023 first-year students, to TUC. Rest assured that you made the right decision to join TUC. In due course, you will be vindicated by the fruits of your decision.

Our esteemed New first years, I congratulate you for passing the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations which enabled you to join the University. Your diligence, discipline and intellectual curiosity paid off. Kudos!

Our dear first years, I implore you to embrace TUC's strategic vision- what we hope to become tomorrow- in all your actions. Our vision is "To be a globally esteemed University in teaching, research and outreach", in addition to embracing innovation and entrepreneurship. Our Motto is: The Cradle of Knowledge, Chimbuko la maarifa in Kiswahili; our Slogan is "Scanning the Horizons" (seeing and seizing opportunities). Our Mission is to generate, preserve, utilize and disseminate quality knowledge for the advancement of Humanity.

We have six core values that guide us on how to operate, behave and interact on a day-to-day basis: 1. customer focus (quality products and services), sustainability (thrive now and into the future), Excellence (outstanding in everything we do), integrity (honesty, transparency, and accountability, ethical practices) and teamwork (working together to achieve our collective goals). The entire University, including you and me, must embrace and espouse these attributes all the time.

Our dear first years, you are about to embark on a journey that will shape your future and open doors to endless possibilities. Today marks the beginning of a new chapter in your lives, a chapter that will undoubtedly be filled with challenges, growth, and countless memorable moments.

As you step foot into our University College, I encourage you to embrace the opportunities that come your way. Turkana University College is not just a place of learning; it is a community that fosters growth, friendship, and personal development. Our dedicated and passionate staff are here to guide you, not only academically but also in discovering your passions and talents.

You may be feeling a mixture of excitement and nervousness; that is perfectly normal. Remember that you are not alone in this journey. Our continuing students, who once stood in your shoes, are here to offer their support, wisdom, and friendship. They understand the challenges you may face, and they are eager to help you navigate through them. However, beware that one or two may be wolves in sheep skins out to lead you astray.

As you settle into your new routines, I encourage you to embrace diversity and inclusivity. Our institution thrives on the unique experiences and perspectives that each of you brings to the table. You have the power to learn from one another, to challenge preconceived notions, and to build a community that celebrates differences.

At TUC, we believe in integration, national cohesion, and national values as espoused in Kenya's 2010 constitution. We are all Kenyans regardless of our ethnicity, culture, religion and political affiliation. Let us live peacefully with the local Community and respect its rich culture.

While academic excellence is undoubtedly important, I urge you to also prioritize your well-being. Take time to engage in extracurricular activities, explore your interests, and build meaningful relationships. Remember that education is not confined to the four walls of a classroom; it extends to the friendships you form, the experiences you have, the networks you develop and the lessons you learn outside of textbooks or scientific papers that you read.

Leave a legacy at TUC that you will be proud of. Leave it in sports, music, drama, spiritual leadership, student politics, academics, counselling, outreach, innovations and many other spheres. There is one legacy that I beseech each one of you to leave behind for your generation and the generations to come. Plant and nurture trees! In this way, you will contribute to the Government's programme of "Jaza Miti" which aims at planting 15 billion trees by 2032.

Our dear First Years, you are an investment to your parents, guardians, and the Kenyan society at large have. You must pay off by completing your studies within schedule and making your contribution to the welfare of the society. Therefore, avoid behaviour and habits that can destroy your dreams and those of your loved ones and the society at large. Habits like drug abuse, overindulgence in alcohol, risky sexual behaviour and incessant betting are a menace. They lead to serious physical, social and mental health challenges. Go to church, mosque, see a counsellor, get medical assistance or do any other thing that builds you up.

Allow me to reiterate the Government policy on the New Funding model for universities which TUC is faithfully implementing. We are admitting the New First Year Government Sponsored students (placed by KUCCPS) without demanding payment of tuition fees under the New Funding Model until the Higher Education Fund (comprising the Universities Fund and HELB) finalizes the categorisation of the students. Let us encourage all the KUCCPS placed students who are still at home because they have not raised tuition fees to report to the University. All the KUCCPS placed students who have not applied for scholarships and loans in their student portals will be helped to make the applications by our admissions office.

As you are aware, nobody polices you in the university. You are free to do what you want within the confines of the University regulations and the Kenya laws. Use the freedom wisely and in your best interest.

Student leadership is critical in the running of the University. Work closely with the Turkana University College Students Organization (TUCSO) leadership to resolve grievances that may arise in the course of your stay. The leaders are the bridge between students and management. Let us embrace dialogue and tolerance.

Finally, I want to reiterate that your time here is limited. Make the most of every moment, cherish the friendships you make, and seize every opportunity that comes your way. Let us embrace the unknown, for it is said that it is within the unknown that we truly discover ourselves and our potential.

Once again, I extend my warmest welcome to each and every one of you. May your time at this institution be filled with growth, joy, and success. Welcome to our family, dear first-year students!

God bless you abundantly.

Prof. George N. Chemining'wa, PhD
Principal