

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL CHAIR'S SPEECH DURING THE CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA'S 39TH GRADUATION ON 27TH
NOVEMBER, 2020**

- i. Your Eminence John Cardinal Njue, Pro-Chancellor of The Catholic University of Eastern Africa*
- ii. Your Excellency Most Rev. Bert van Megen, Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya and South Sudan*
- iii. Very Rev. Prof. Stephen Mbugua Ngari, Vice Chancellor of The Catholic University of Eastern Africa*
- iv. Your Lordships, Bishop Members of the University Council*
- v. Distinguished Members of the University Council,*
- vi. Distinguished Guests,*
- vii. Parents, Guardians, Sponsors and Graduands,*
- viii. Faculty and Students of CUEA,*
- ix. Ladies and Gentlemen*

1. Allow me to welcome you all to The Catholic University of Eastern Africa's 39th Graduation Ceremony His Excellency, Most Rev. Bert Van Megen, the Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya and South Sudan we are honored that you chose to join us today as Chief Guest, as we celebrate this noble ceremony. Congratulations to you our graduands on your momentous achievement today. And to the parents, guardians and sponsors of our graduands, thank you for trusting CUEA to educate your sons and daughters, *asanteni sana.*

2. Your Excellencies, our Chief Guest, ladies and gentlemen, even before the COVID-19 pandemic hit us, universities globally were already facing self-sustainability challenges. Universities all over the world have been forced to rethink their strategies with an inclination to self-sustainability. CUEA was not an exception. Therefore, we have continued to re-engineer ourselves in order to meet the educational and financial needs for growth and development.
3. The COVID-19 pandemic has made our task of transforming CUEA harder. However, this has not altered our drive to do so. During Kenya's on-site learning suspension in all education institutions as a result of the pandemic, CUEA's academic and administrative staff worked day and night to make sure that learning continues online with one of the primary goals being to make sure that, those who are to graduate this year do so.
4. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed ails the world has been facing over the years. These ails include inequalities, susceptibility to disease and need for justice and peace. In his Social Encyclical, 'Fratelli tutti' His Holiness Pope Francis reflects on the manipulation and deformation of concepts such as democracy, freedom, justice; the loss of the meaning of the social community and history; selfishness and indifference toward the common good; the prevalence of a market logic based on profit and the culture of waste; unemployment, racism and poverty. These problems, which were already with us before COVID-19, have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

5. For instance, inequality has been showcased here in Kenya by how many children have been unable to report back to school after Kenya's Government allowed education institutions to resume on-site learning in phases. I wish to challenge you to go out there and use the knowledge and skills you have acquired in CUEA to make the world a better place one day at a time. In addition, as you do so, make sure that you embrace the values of CUEA, which will make you an ethical leader.
6. Fight the temptations to get into get-rich-quick schemes and practices that you will find everywhere you turn. Become your brother's and sister's keeper and when you find yourself in a difficult or self-compromising situation ask yourself, what would Jesus our Lord do if He was in my shoes? As His Holiness said, education is the hope of mankind; you the educated are our hope. And always know that as you leave CUEA to face the world, you are always in our prayers.
7. Once again, I congratulate you our graduands, on your graduation today and as you are granted the power to; read, write or teach, always remember to do so in the glory of God.

God bless you and God bless our University.

**HIS EXCELLENCY RT. REV. MAURICE MUHATIA MAKUMBA
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL CHAIRMAN**