

SPEECH BY

PROF. T.C.I RYAN, CHAIRMAN – UNIVERSITY COUNCIL ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIRST GRADUATION CEREMONY OF STRATHMORE UNIVERSITY

The Chancellor - Delegate, the Vice-Chancellor, all honourable guests, faculty, staff and students: It is with much pleasure that I open this graduation ceremony by welcoming you on behalf of the Trustees and the University Council and by congratulating all those who are to receive degrees, diplomas and other awards. Many of you are here with relatives whom I also welcome and congratulate since it is their success in bringing you this far that we are celebrating.

You are all aware that Strathmore strives to be not just another university. When you go out to seek employment I do not expect your prospective employer to ask what is the quality of your degree but where did you obtain it. That is the experience in most other parts of the world where there are numerous universities and therefore employers are always seeking something more than a first-class honours. In many cases second-class honours from particular institutions in preferred.

This brings me to a critical characteristic that we have been trying to embed in Strathmore and, let me say, Kianda. I am not her talking of building but rather spirit.

Anyone passing through should bear what I call the Strathmore Brand. You have already noticed that ethics and social consciousness are critical pieces of what you encountered on the way to your degree. We would hope that you will now go out, as those who passed before you through those institutions whether from accountancy, secondary school, secretarial or IT. And like them you will be measured by your professional and social colleagues on whether you drift with the environment or are demanding on yourself to maintain quality.

The founder of Opus Dei, whose spirit we are trying turn to concrete performance, said when he was at a ceremony in the University of Navarre in Spain, that the most important work was not necessarily that of the professors. If we look at the care of the buildings, at the care of the grounds, at the care in the preparation of lectures and so many other areas that go to make up the environment of Strathmore University you can understand what I mean by the Strathmore Brand. It is a trade mark which you must carry with pride and with it a commitment to serve. In this way you will make it easy for those coming after you to obtain employment or, better still to create jobs for those less fortunate. Strathmore has always sought to be on the frontier most likely to serve the nation whether pioneering multi-racial education or informal sector commerce. Even the work with prisoners and in the slums echoes this spirit.

I cannot close without mentioning the fact that Strathmore and what I have called the Strathmore Brand includes an area that has been largely pioneered by Kianda which has upgraded the status of women's education in the

country and has brought to the top the dignity of the women's role in society.

I wish you all the best in your future careers and would like now to pass you back to the Master of Ceremonies.

Thank You.