

DURING YADSTI'S 7TH ANNUAL SCIENCE CONFERENCE & EXHIBITIONS AT NATIONAL MUSEUMS OF KENYA ON 27TH MAY 2011.

Distinguished, lecturers, members of YADSTI present, students, our guests for today's occasion, ladies and gentlemen, I salute you all.

I am happy to join you in this rare occasion, the 7th Annual Science Conference and Exhibitions organized by the Youth Agency for Development of Science, Technology and Innovation (YADSTI) under the theme **"WATER: An Invaluable Natural Resource."** This event brings together young people to the fore front in discussing pertinent issues affecting our nation. Today you have taken several steps ahead in telling this country what to expect when you are released to actively participate in nation building. It gives me great pleasure to stand before you as your D.V.C in charge of student affairs. YADSTI is an organization of students from all campuses in the University Nairobi and the first of its kind to successfully venture into scientific issues, especially conferences and research.

As you are all aware, water is life. The 3rd UN World Water Development Report of 2009 recognizes that water contributes to poverty alleviation in many ways - through sanitation services, water supply, affordable food and enhanced resilience of poor communities to disease, climate shocks, and environmental degradation.

Today's event ladies and gentlemen comes at its very ripe time when our country has been through hell of drought and floods in recent past. Kenya has lost close to 400 citizens and a lot of livestock during the previous drought. That notwithstanding the government has used millions of money in relief food. This of course has great impact on the Kenyan economy. The importance of this event today will be felt by every Kenyan citizen if what has been discussed here will be put to action. Water and food are one of the basic requirements for life, and this makes the conference a life saving one.

Experience over last few years has shown that Kenya gets alternating periods of drought and floods, which both take life. I want to believe that this conference is a solution searching tool put forward by the young people. The findings of this conference should not only go to the university files but also reach all the concerned stakeholders for implementation. My colleagues have given you what can be done, this is a challenge to YADSTI as a leading science organization to move ahead and get the stake holders together to drill this message to them.

The desert, does not know what drought or floods are with immense resources that if well managed, we can raise the standards of living of every Kenyan citizen. Once again the ball is on our court, the energies and vigor of young blood will bring this change. There is no doubt that YADSTI you have made the first step of this journey. Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) is one of the key pillars in realization of the Kenya vision 2030. It is a key driver for economic growth and transformation of any nation or society. As stated by UNESCO and the African Union in 2009, that a deliberate investment in STI is one of the most crucial priorities for any country to realize its short term, medium term and long term development objectives.

STI need to underpin every one of the UN millennium development goals, and is the only option for effective response to the complex challenges of poverty alleviation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and response to other challenges facing human kind today. The Kenyan scientist will have an opportunity to lead the world in developing new forms of STI that effectively contributes to such varied problems as recurrent droughts causing vast starvation and fatalities, or recurrent floods leading to numerous deaths and destruction of property, provision of clean water in most parts of the country, and many more.

I wish to challenge all of us here today to think and embrace innovation in our daily activities. Inside us lie immense potential that can be used to turn things around for the better, and STI is the only tool that can easily and effectively achieve this.

May I take this opportunity now to thank all of you for seeing it wise to sacrifice other activities you had so as to attend this event. I can only assure you that the benefits of investing your time in this cannot be gainsaid.

I am particularly grateful to our speakers for kindly accepting our invitation to come and share with us what they know in their various areas. It is said that knowledge is not the domain of one man. The greatest scientist who ever lived, Sir Isaac Newton once said that, "If I can see far, it is because I have stood in the shoulders of giants." To us, you are giants by virtue of your skills and experience out there in the market. Once again, thank you all. And now it is my pleasure to declare this conference officially closed.

Finally, I wish to congratulate YADSTI for consistently holding this annual event every year since it was established 7 years ago.

Thank you all and God bless.