



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**ADDRESS BY MR. ELIUD OWALO, FIHRM, CABINET SECRETARY,
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL
ECONOMY ON THE OCCASION OF THE KENYA INSTITUTE OF MASS
COMMUNICATION (KIMC) GRADUATION CEREMONY ON
WEDNESDAY, 29TH NOVEMBER, 2023 AT THE GRADUATION SQUARE,
SOUTH B CAMPUS, NAIROBI**

1. The Chairperson of the Council, Members of the KIMC Council present, The Management, Staff, Parents and Guardians, Distinguished guests, Graduands, Ladies and Gentlemen. **Good Afternoon.**
2. It is with great pleasure that I stand before you to celebrate the achievements of each and every one of the graduands here today. I am pleased to be part of the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication graduation ceremony for the class of 2023.
3. A graduation ceremony is always a special occasion for graduands, parents, guardians, faculty and other people who may have been involved in one way or the other in the life of the student's academic journey.

Today is a day of triumph, a day when we collectively recognize the dedication, hard work, and perseverance that have brought you to this momentous occasion. Class of 2023, give yourself a round of applause for reaching this significant milestone.

4. As we gather here, we reflect not only on the academic journey you have completed but also on the profound transformation you've undergone during your time at the Kenya Institute of Mass Communications. You entered these halls as individuals with dreams, aspirations, and a thirst for knowledge. Today, you emerge as professionals equipped with the skills and wisdom to navigate the dynamic landscape of mass communication.

5. In the realm of mass communication, we are not mere observers; we are architects of information, shapers of narratives, and guardians of truth. You, as graduates, now bear the responsibility of wielding the power of communication with integrity and purpose. The world eagerly awaits the stories you will tell, the information you will disseminate, and the impact you will make.

6. In an era where information flows at a rapid pace, with the ability to impact public sentiment with a single viral message, your role as communicators becomes increasingly important. With the tools and knowledge you've acquired, you have the ability to shape public opinion, challenge negative societal norms, and foster positive change.

7. However, with the evolving nature of technology that has become a hallmark of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, it is important that you maintain the student posture of being open to continuous learning. Even as you pursue your profession, stay curious, and adapt to emerging trends and technologies. Your education here has equipped you with a strong foundation, but remember, the journey of learning never truly ends.

8. Technology has changed the way we share information, tell stories, and connect with the world. Social media, online platforms, and digital tools have become integral to the dissemination of news, entertainment, and diverse perspectives.

9. As graduates of Kenya Institute of Mass Communications, you are not just passive witnesses to these technological advancements but more critically, architects of a bold digital future with the power to reshape the African narrative. With this power comes great responsibility to use technology ethically and responsibly.

10. In a world of fake news, misinformation and disinformation, applying the highest standards of journalist integrity becomes important. Fact-checking, source verification, and maintaining a commitment to truth have become even more critical. As communicators, it is your duty to be vigilant guardians of accuracy and authenticity.

11. As you pursue your careers, embrace the opportunities that technology presents for storytelling and audience engagement. Experiment with new mediums, harness the power of virtual reality, and explore innovative ways to connect with your audience. The digital realm is a canvas waiting for your creative expression, and your ability to leverage technology will set you apart in the competitive world of mass communication.

12. On our part, the Government's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) has prioritized the Digital Superhighway and Creative Economy, with a specific focus on equipping the youth with digital skills for digitally-enabled jobs and digital entrepreneurship.

13. Recognizing the crucial role of reliable internet connectivity across the country, the Ministry of Information, Communication, and Digital Economy (MICDE) is taking the lead in laying 100,000 kilometers of fiber optic cable within the next 5 years.

14. Additionally, there is a concerted effort to establish 25,000 WiFi hotspots nationwide, with a particular emphasis on public spaces such as markets and bus termini. Furthermore, the government is collaborating with Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions (TVETs) to set up 1450 digital hubs, including initiatives like the Jitume Kazi Labs Initiative and Ajira Digital program. These efforts are designed to empower our youth with the digital skills needed to seize the abundant opportunities in the digital landscape.

15. The establishment of Jitume digital centers aligns with the commitments made by H. E. the President, Dr. William RUTO, and Team Kenya Kwanza in charters signed with the people of Kenya during consultative forums held in every county ahead of last year's 9th August General Elections.

16. In tandem with these initiatives, the government is actively promoting E-commerce through a comprehensive E-commerce Strategy, complemented by the implementation of a National Addressing System. This strategic approach aims to support digital entrepreneurship, particularly among our tech-savvy youth. As part of this strategy, there is an ongoing collaboration with the private sector to facilitate the availability of affordable smartphones, a move aimed at transitioning our youth from learners to instant earners.

17. In summary, our commitment is clear: to bridge the digital divide, empower the youth with essential digital skills, and create an enabling environment for digital entrepreneurship. Through these initiatives, we are not only connecting the nation but also propelling our youth towards economic empowerment and self-reliance.

18. In conclusion, as you embark on this exciting journey of forging your careers, carry with you not only the traditional values of journalistic integrity and effective communication but also an increasing awareness of the technological forces shaping our world.

19. Be it investigative journalism, filmmaking, advertising, public relations, or any other field within mass communication, embrace the digital tools at your disposal, use them responsibly, and continue to be agents of positive change.

20. Once again, congratulations.

21. May your future endeavours be filled with fulfilment and success as you make a positive impact in the world of mass communications!

22. Asanteni sana!

