

**Speech by Dr. Peter M. Ngatia, Director for Training at the 31<sup>st</sup> Amref Health Africa Graduation Ceremony, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017, Amref International Training Centre, Nairobi, Kenya**

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Good morning graduates, family and friends, honored guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I am pleased to welcome you all to this 31<sup>st</sup> Graduation Ceremony of the AMREF International Training Centre. A very special welcome to our Chief Guest, Hon. Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Dr. Fred Matiang'i. Thank you very much Sir, for finding the time in your very busy schedule to grace this graduation.

I wish to congratulate the graduates on your achievement. Today you have the 'good feel factor' that comes from knowing that you have done your best. We are all gathered here today to join you in the celebration of your academic achievements. Your hard work and that of your teachers, and the wonderful support and encouragement of your families and friends have contributed immensely to this journey of success!

You leave here and enter into the workforce well prepared and equipped with knowledge and skills in your respective fields of study. You are ready to face the myriad of challenges that today afflict our health systems. You will be the vanguards of the Kenyan health system and by extent, the African health systems.

Always remember:

- Today's achievements may fade away or even be forgotten
- The applause may become a distant memory
- And, your impressive certificates and awards may gather dust on the wall or in a drawer.

But, you will always be remembered for:

- Caring enough
- Helping someone
- And, making someone feel appreciated

Even when the pressure builds, always listen to your inner good self. Be true to yourself and do not be swayed by the need to conform! Go hold hands and sing "solidarity forever!" with those you have been prepared to serve. NOT with your professional colleagues!

Every end is the beginning of something new, and hopefully, more exciting. I wish to encourage you to see this graduation as the beginning of your journey in 'life-long learning'. And, I am pleased- indeed, excited, to inform you that

the AMREF International University is now a reality. It will be at your service, to administer to your academic needs.

Finally, I wish to recognize the many individuals, donors, government institutions and corporates who have worked with the AMREF International Training Center, the predecessor of the AMREF International University. We are indebted to:

- Ministries of Health (MOH) in our over 30 implementing countries;
- County governments of Kenya for being our implementing partners; City county of Nairobi, Makueni, Kajiado, Kisii county, Kiambu, Murang'a, Nyeri, Busia, Kakamega, Kisumu, Nandi, Nakuru and Machakos among others;
- Health professions regulatory bodies and associations; NCK, KAPTLD, KMLTTB, NNAK, MAK, SSNMA etc.;
- Our Training partners; Moi University, University of Nairobi, USIU, Kenya Methodist University, Maasai Mara University, UCLA, KMTCs, Kijabe School of Nursing, Mathari Nyeri, Nazareth school of Nursing;
- Our Amref Northern offices; USA, Netherlands, Austria, Canada, Germany, Italy, France;
- Hospitals; KNH, Meridian Equator, Nairobi west , Kajiado county hospital, Nairobi south hospital, Aga khan University Hospital, Mbagathi county hospital, Kijabe hospital, etc.;
- The Donor partners; UNFPA, UE, DFID, Safaricom foundation, MSH, American academy of pediatrics, J & J, JICA, Philips , G.E, Post Code Loteri, CPHD, Brookside, Danone Nutricia;
- Other development partners; Pan African Medical Journal, Silver springs hotel, Maanzoni lodge, Simba lodge, KCB leadership center, Kenya School of Monetary Studies, Radisson Blue Hotel, EKA hotel, Student associations, AITC Alumni etc.

We say, "Thank you very much!" Many thanks to you all, for being here today- I wish you Happy Holidays, and a Merry Christmas!