

## **THE VICE CHANCELLOR**

It is with great sense of fulfilment and pride as Vice-Chancellor that I congratulate the College of Health Sciences as it launches its 1st International Scientific Conference. The College of Health Sciences is the oldest and largest University Medical training institution in Kenya. It trains the full spectrum of health care providers at basic and post graduate/specialist levels. It has rich academic and research programmes and vibrant crop of postgraduate students and research scientists. This conference is an affirmation that the CHS has matured and has what it takes to stand up and be counted as a “change” driver/partner in health care research and service provision. During this conference, in addition to the hard scientific presentations, other factors/environments that influence delivery of optimum health care such as level and quality of education, national constitution and health financing will also be openly discussed. The discussions will be primed by a guest lecture and guided by a panel of experts. These discussions will capture the opinions and contributions of the health researchers and practitioners in areas that have in the past been wholly the domain of politicians. This approach will enhance ownership of government policies and guidelines by the key stakeholders and hence facilitate/smoothen their implementation.

All the above activities should be used /applied to influence positive policy change and improve practice standards/strategies and consequently drive technology change. This premier scientific conference therefore provides that opportunity and environment for Kenyan scientists and international scientific community to exchange knowledge and experiences in an organized scientific discourse for the overall benefit of humanity. I take pride that in addition to being the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nairobi, I am also an alumni of the College of Health Sciences having not only served as an academic member of staff, but also as the Principal of the College among other administrative positions. It is therefore satisfying to note that the College of Health Sciences is taking the lead in enhancing the visibility and credibility of the University of Nairobi in line with its Vision, Mission, Core Values and Quality Policy Statement. The University of Nairobi focuses on creation, preservation, integration, transmission and utilization of knowledge for the benefit of the Kenyan people and humanity.

The University of Nairobi encourages public-private partnership with other academic institutions, research institutions and philanthropic institutions sharing similar ideals. It therefore has rich international linkages and collaborations with the College of Health Sciences initiating many of the health related projects. Some notable collaborating institutions include the University of Washington (Seattle), University of Manitoba, University of Illinois, University of Chicago, University of Karolinska, University of Leuven.

The College of Health Sciences is the home to the internationally acclaimed HIV-vaccine research centre, the Kenya AIDS Vaccine Initiative (KAVI), an affiliate of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) leading the development of vaccine of the killer disease and hence providing hope to millions of people globally. Presentations at this conference will give insight as to how “near” we are to getting a HIV vaccine.

**PROF GEORGE A.O. MAGOHA**

**VICE- CHANCELLOR AND PROFESSOR OF SURGERY**

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**