



PROCEEDINGS OF 2014/2015 DeKUT AFRICAN LIBERATION CONFERENCES ON MAU MAU AND OTHER AFRICAN HEROES



“AFRICAN LIBERATION THROUGH THE
EYES OF EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY”

Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DeKUT)
NYERI-KENYA



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DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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INTRODUCTION

Dedan Kimathi University of Technology is named after the freedom fighter Dedan Wachiuri Kimathi; it is part of a memorial to all the freedom fighters and to Kenyan's liberation struggles. In the last five years, the DeKUT fraternity has worked to give value and meaning to this aspect of the university identity. In this regard since the inception of the University every February, marks the Kimathi week, which is a specific week selected to be around 18th February, the date Kimathi was executed. There have been various positive experiences arising from hosting the Kimathi Week.

1. The event has become one of the key activities in the University's academic calendar.
2. The neighbouring community has responded with lots of enthusiasm and pride to the activities organized during the week.
3. The National government through the Ministry of State for Culture and National Heritage also recognizes and appreciates the role that Dedan Kimathi University of Technology has played in filling this gap of the National history and heritage.

On its part, the Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DeKUT) Council approved the establishment of a Mau Mau Education Centre (MMEC) in 2012. It identified the objectives of the centre as:

- i. To provide a repository of records on Mau Mau history.
- ii. To provide a repository by way of a Museum for the Mau Mau artifacts.
- iii. To provide an avenue for development of education materials for the Mau Mau history.
- iv. To create a framework for collection of information and materials to serve research and scholarly interest for posterity.
- v. To provide a platform/forum for scholarly discourses on the Mau Mau with a view of providing a better understanding to the Mau Mau effort.

As a follow up to the Council's decision Prof. P. Ndirangu Kioni, the Vice Chancellor of DeKUT, appointed a Committee with specific terms of reference as follows.

- i. To gather information about Field Marshall Dedan Kimathi.
- ii. To create a framework for establishment of a repository of Mau Mau records/library as a component of the MMEC.
- iii. To initiate establishment of a Mau Mau museum for Mau Mau artifacts as component of the MMEC.
- iv. To identify other Black/African liberation heroes and heroines, who should be honoured with a statue at the "DeKUT Heroes Garden".

There has been a number of scholars, authors, and people keen on the history of the freedom fighters who at one time or another have expressed interest in sharing materials and knowledge with other Kenyans through the University. In 2009, the university organized a lecture where the former Chancellor, late Prof. Ali Mazrui was invited to give a lecture and during the talk, he devoted part of the time discussing the Mau Mau struggle in the context of the history of the black people and struggle for freedom in Africa, Americas and the rest of the world.

The trustees of the predecessor of Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DeKUT) had discussed and made initial arrangement towards the establishment of a hero's garden as part of a memorial to liberation heroes in line with the history of the institution. Currently the institution has grown into an intellectual hub; and also being a University named after Dedan Kimathi, it is expected internationally to be reference point when it comes to matters to do with Kenyan's independence struggle beginning from the 1940s, 50s and 60s and specifically on matters of the Mau Mau efforts.

The independence struggle is still an area of great international interest and even though this happened over fifty years ago, there are still scholars around the world-Europe, Britain, United States, South Africa and other parts of the world who still study and continue to write on the Mau Mau effort. Furthermore in Kenya, it is still a live issue and it generates lots of interest. The University also recognizes other institutions and groups working on African Liberation history and would wish to partner with them in one way or the other in promoting the history of our country and more in the “*memorialization*” of our heroes and heroines.

In this regard therefore the University intends to have the *African liberation conference* an annual event in the University calendar where scholars will be invited from not only Kenya but even from other parts of the world to come share their thoughts/research on: our African heroes/heroines-past and present; post colonial challenges facing Kenya and the African continent at large; and what strategies to have in place in order to be liberated from these. It intends to develop this into being a forum for great intellectual and academic intercourse.

The MMEC steering committee recognizes the fact that there are many challenges facing our country and Africa at large. This is even after having attained their independence from the colonial masters. It is some of challenges that as a country and a continent that we need to be delivered from, hence the approach whereby the conferences have been organized with various sub-themes such as:

- Heroes and heroines
- Education, environment and technology
- Legacy and heritage materials
- Gender and children
- Culture and religion
- Pan -Africanism and post- liberation challenges in Africa

All these sub-themes seek to address the pertinent issues be-deviling our society. As scholars we need to discuss these and come up with solutions in order to liberate our societies from all these bondages. This book of the *African Liberation conferences* proceedings is thus a “*premier edition*” of the many others that will be generated. It incorporates selected articles which were presented during the 1st and the 2nd African Liberation Conferences held in February 2014 and 2015. It has been divided into two parts: namely Part one-dealing with the liberation themes while Part two -deals with the other emerging developmental and societal themes. It is therefore meant to be a repository of the intellectual knowledge generated in the Conferences and workshops held and organized by MMEC.

Prof.Theuri M. M.
Chairman, Mau Mau Educational Centre (MMEC)

MAU MAU EDUCATION CENTRE (MMEC)

The University proposes to establish a Mau Mau Education Centre (MMEC). This stems from the fact that this University is rooted on the cry for freedom by our forefathers. The site on which the University currently stands is a constant reminder of the blood shed on this very soil during the freedom struggle, but today are workshops, laboratories and lecture rooms –this being a reminder of the need to shed off ignorance which has continued to enslave us many years even after having been freed from the colonial masters. Once completed, the centre will house various facilities that will aid in the realization of the mandate of the MMEC. It will also aid in “*memorializing*” our heroes and heroines –both past and present. This will serve to support the development of a common historical heritage for all Kenyans and Africa in general.

The centre is poised to grow into being a centre of excellence, both locally and internationally. It is envisaged that it will grow into being a referral focal point in as far as liberation histories in the Eastern African region are concerned and more so for the “*Mau Mau*” history in Kenya. It will provide a forum where great minds will congregate for academic intercourse thereby laying strategies on how to develop and position our country/region for global strategic competitiveness. It will anchor on two pillars:

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- Cultural/social- Providing an avenue whereby people of different cultural orientations will meet and share in their experiences. Besides, in the museum and the gallery -cultural and historical artefacts will be preserved for posterity.
- Scholarly-Providing an avenue where great minds will regularly meet for academic and scholarly discourses not only on the Mau Mau and other liberation activities but also other societal aspects.

While, our forefathers whom we greatly honour and memorialize fought for the liberation of our motherland, Kenya from the colonial masters-It is hoped that the MMEC will grow into being a centre of excellence and though diverse in its clientele, the centre endeavour to provide that unifying thread as these great minds assemble together to chart the way forward, deliberate on new ideas and /or approaches to bring liberation to mankind. It is our great desire that MMEC will grow into a reputable regional and international focal point.

May MMEC rise up from the ashes to be a Centre of repute! Indeed to be a melting point of ideas, strategies, innovations etc that will liberate us from the shackles of poverty and ignorance.

To realize the earlier on stated objectives, as earlier outlined by the Vice Chancellor, it is proposed that a fully-fledged state of the art centre will be erected with various facilities among them:-

- Offices,
- Conference rooms,
- Well equipped ICT unit,
- Seminar/committee rooms,
- Library and museum,
- A fully fledged cafeteria
- Gallery, recreation facilities and;
- A modern state of the art 500 -seater (*THE UHURU*) auditorium will be erected on the *DeKUT heroes' garden*.

With these facilities in place DeKUT, will be able to position herself strategically as a conference hub not only in the larger Mt. Kenya tourist circuit but nationally as well. It will be the place to be in terms of conferencing. This will be well augmented by the already established *DeKUT Wildlife Conservancy* within the University. As DeKUT soars into the horizon excelling in technological advances which we so dearly need as a country, so will MMEC excel in liberation studies as well as seeking to honour and memorialize the heroes and heroines of this great nation of Kenya now and in the future.

The Mau Mau Educational Centre will be housed within a section on a plot of approximately 120/60m set aside by the University management just adjacent the main gate, near the Resource Centre building and facing the proposed new University administration block. The architectural drawings and designs for the centre have already been done .The project now awaits the ground breaking ceremony followed by the actual implementation.

Welcome.



P. Mbuu
For the MMEC Secretariat



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