

Varsity launched the African Centre for the study of the United States of America (ACSUSA)

On Friday, November 10, 2022, The University of Nairobi launched the African Centre for the study of the United States of America at the UoN Towers, Chandaria Auditorium.

The launch event was witnessed by Deputy Mayor of Denver City, members of the Diplomatic corps, representative of the US Embassy to Kenya, The Vice-Chair of Parliamentary Service Commission and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly among others.

“The establishment of the African Centre for the Study of the United States of America will significantly enhance Nairobi and the University’s position as a diplomatic hub by facilitating academic discourse on some of the most critical global issues of our time and drawing a bridge between people and policy makers,” noted Dr. Patrick Maluki, Chair Department of Diplomacy and International Studies,” as he delivered his opening remarks.

“The centre will also convene Africa-U.S. dialogues in different sectors, movements, policy, businesses, corporations, governments and sub-regional structures such as the Southern African Development Community, the Economic Community of West African States, the East African Community, the African Union and other regional political and economic blocs.”

On her part, the Deputy Mayor of Denver, Her Lordship Happy Haynes who expressed her joy of being in Nairobi and seeing the launch of this African Centre. She largely elaborated on the relationship between Nairobi and Denver as the sister cities. She noted, ‘Nairobi and Denver have been sister cities since 1975; she invited more ideas of collaboration.’

On her part, the Vice-Chair, Parliamentary Service Commission, Dr. Naomi Shabaan applauded the University for maintaining its lead role in Kenya and highlighted some of the partnership areas that the University has worked with Parliament, ‘The University of Nairobi has for more than five (5) decades been a pivotal part of the higher education system in the country. As a center of scholarly excellence, Nairobi city is proud to be part of the University of Nairobi's legacy. We recognize that no society can truly develop without the firm foundation of a strong higher education institution like the University of Nairobi.’

She congratulated the Department of Diplomacy and International Studies in the establishment of this African center which will serve as an intellectual base for the study of the U.S. The county government of Nairobi has had numerous engagements with US representatives both from the private sector and the public sector. It is crucial to reflect on our engagement and what this has meant for the people of Nairobi. The office of the Nairobi Governor looks forward to collaborating in studies, projects, and programs as we work on further strengthening our engagement with the people of the United States.

Prof. Maria Nzomo gave the history of the Institute of the Diplomacy and International Relations and highlighted the quick growth and popularity that the institute gained over the years, "This is not the first centre of excellence that the Department has established. There is a centre for the study of Anti-terrorism that was launched in 2018, on the same breath, this Centre will become a space for sober thinking, evidence-based knowledge and accurate and credible information.

The President, Sister Cities International, Ms Lorna Johnson was quick to mention that for the success of this centre, the relations need to be symbiotic; as the Africans study the United States of America, then Africa should showcase the lots it has to offer.

She challenged the definition of global citizenship as more diverse; meaning women, different races, and within Africa, an inclusion of different ethnicities.

Christopher Machin, The US Embassy representative said that, 'He discovered that people learn more about their country when they perceive it from a foreigner's lens.'

As she was moving a vote of thanks, Hon. Gladys Boss Sholei congratulated her alma mater, the University of Nairobi on the establishment of this centre. She mentioned her history with the institution and the importance of the University to the role of Governance.