



**JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA  
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**CITATION ON  
THE RIGHT. HON. RAILA AMOLO ODINGA E.G.H.,  
ON  
HIS CONFERMENT OF  
THE HONORARY DOCTOR OF SCIENCES  
(*HONORIS CAUSA*)  
OF  
JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA  
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
ON  
14<sup>th</sup> December, 2018**



**THE RIGHT. HON RAILA AMOLO ODINGA E.G.H.,**

## **The Rt. Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga**

The Rt. Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga, was born at Maseno Mission Hospital, in Maseno, Kisumu District, on 7<sup>TH</sup> January 1945 to the late Mary Ajuma Odinga and the late Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, the first Vice President of the Republic of Kenya.

Raila began his primary education at Kisumu Union Primary School, and later joined Maranda High School in Bondo District for his secondary education. In 1962, he joined the Herder Institute, where he completed his high school education before joining the Technical University of Magdeburg in the then East Germany. There he graduated with a Master of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1970.

He returned to Kenya where he was appointed a Lecturer at the University of Nairobi in 1970. He would later join the Kenya Bureau of Standards, where he rose to the position of Deputy Managing Director in 1978. Raila then ventured into entrepreneurship when he established the Standard Processing Equipment Construction & Erection Limited (SPECTRE) in 1971, later renamed East African Spectre, the only company that manufactured liquid petroleum gas cylinders in East and Central Africa.

He became actively involved in political activism to champion democratic ideals during the KANU regime of the 1980s. His unrelenting quest for protection of human rights, social justice and better governance earned him house arrest following the failed coup attempt of 1982 and was subsequently detained without trial for six years. On February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1988, he was released shortly but re-arrested and detained on account of his relentless activism until June 21<sup>st</sup> 1991 when he was released again. Raila would soon flee to Norway in an effort to avoid another detention.

Between 1991 and 1996 he was Deputy Director of elections in the original Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD). In 1992 he contested and won the Langata parliamentary seat. As the MP for a constituency that also houses the largest urban-poor in Nairobi, Raila Odinga initiated several poverty alleviation and education projects, including Kibera slum upgrading and the Raila Education Centre.

Raila was also elected leader of the National Development Party (NDP) between 1997 and 2002. In 2002 NDP merged with KANU to form the New KANU and Raila Odinga was elected the Secretary General of the party. He was also appointed the Minister for Energy in 2001 and served until 2002. Later that year, Raila founded the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and was elected the party leader, a position he occupied until the party merged with other parties to form the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), which went on to win the December 2002 General elections and thereby dislodging KANU, which had been in power since 1963. Raila was appointed the Minister for Roads, Public Works and Housing, a job he performed efficiently.

Guided by the values and principles of social democracy and the humanness of the African traditional societies, Raila Odinga has been particularly concerned about the oppressed, the poor, inequity in the distribution of public resources and the voiceless majority.

The tribulations did not deter nor break Raila's spirit and commitment to the search for justice and the opening up of the democratic space. Instead he emerged from each period of harassment with renewed commitment and with an open hand to his tormentors urging them to move closer to the ideals he stood for and for which they vilified and victimized him. He did not shy away from speaking the truth and he urged others to do the same. He led by example.

Raila Odinga has been at the Centre of all major political events that set in motion the wheels of irreversible change towards a more open and participatory political system in Kenya. From the struggles of the 1980s for the second political liberation that led to the restoration of multiparty democracy in Kenya in 1991, to the peaceful transition of power from incumbent independence political party to the opposition in 2002, Raila Odinga has been the definitive political mobiliser, team builder and peace maker.

The Rt. Hon Raila Amolo Odinga has consistently struggled for a new constitutional order that would radically change the nature of governance in this country. In particular, he believed and still believes in the sharing of power as a way of ensuring checks and balances in the management of public affairs. It is on this basis that he advocated for a devolved governance structure that would ensure social equity and one in which all would share both the

responsibilities and benefits of nationhood without excluding any segment of the society.

## **The Ingenious Scientist, Environmentalist and Humanist**

The Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga, the former Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya in the Grand Coalition Government and Minister for Energy in President Moi's Government as well as Minister for Public Works, Roads and Housing in President Kibaki's Government can be accredited with various infrastructural developments in Kenya and major Housing Projects in terms of policies, processes and implementation. This visionary thinking or paradigm shift can now be witnessed in the face of Kenya from Nairobi to Namanga road, Malaba-Kisumu-Nairobi-Mombasa road, the Northern Corridor, Thika Superhighway and to almost all tarmacked roads in Nyanza, Rift Valley, Western, Coast, Eastern and other regions in Kenya for which he deserves accolades. This narrative can be further explained with specific infrastructural imprint in the country. The Rt. Hon former PM has maintained that because of changing climatic patterns, more land is increasingly producing less food or none at all while growing economies are looking for more oil to power their growth.

Raila said this realization is driving Kenya to explore more in the field of green energy and was the driving force behind the recently signed Paris-Nairobi Initiative on Clean Energy for Africa. Other path finding and trail blazing acts include the establishment of SPECTRE. In this entrepreneurial exercise, Raila reduced the reliance on wood fuel among the citizenry and by extension helping in conserving the environment. Raila warned "Our survival depends on doing away with illusions and pretenses and face the danger knocking at our door. If we start the blame game of who was responsible and who is responsible, we will all be victims tomorrow."

While industrializing the country, Raila has pursued several programmes to help increase access to clean energy. These include a shift from hydro to geothermal power, development of clean coal technology and the Kerosene Free Kenya Programme. It was futuristic of former President Moi to have appointed Raila the Energy Minister (2001-2002). Geothermal power and clean energy usage has continued to rise.

On coal, Raila said China, Europe, and the US have several coal plants and noted that clean coal projects are acceptable internationally. “We need to know the kind of systems they are putting up in Lamu”. Raila loves the environment. He is one person who walks the talk and does what he believes in. Sometimes it takes others much longer to catch up with him.

On climate change and biodiversity loss, Raila Odinga called on African countries to come up with projects that would qualify for funds agreed on during the Climate Change negotiations in Copenhagen. He implored African countries to explore projects in geothermal, solar and wind power generation and submit them for possible funding under the climate change deals. This has become a reality.

During the recent launch of the new terminal at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport on 4th March 2018, the Rt. Hon. Raila played a leading role in both imagining and initiating the project dubbed Green field. He said “I gladly attended the Launching of Our New Airport Terminal a few days ago. It is for this reason I fully support the Launch of the Standard Gauge Rail (SGR). It is difficult to support long-term grand infrastructure projects unless you believe in what your nation should be decades and centuries down the line”.

In keeping with his endearment to the less fortunate members of the society, Raila is persuaded that empowering *Jua Kali* (informal sector) is our surest route to industrialization, with at least one industrial park per Ward within each county. That transport is to be key and this has led to the Northern Corridor, Lake Victoria Ring Road among many within the country.

During the Launch of Nairobi Commuter Train on December 9<sup>th</sup> 2013, Raila remarked that “An efficient public transport that can carry even Cabinet Secretaries, Governors, and Senators to and from work must be a priority all over the Country. We must start planning for further expansion with an eye on the future needs of our cities and our country decades from now”.

On planning of the Nairobi City, Raila opined that “If we do not invest in making Nairobi a liveable city, where the cost of living, working and doing business are low, we will soon be talking of Nairobi that once was the hub of the region but no longer is”. He looked at Kenya as a politician, as a planner, as an engineer and more so as a scientist

in a wholesome clean and enabling environment where the wild game and water towers are protected. Those who disagreed are now bewildered as the Mara River volume goes down threatening one of the wonders of the world – the Wildebeest Migration.

When the writing of the Kenyan political history is finally complete, one name will be emblazoned in bold: Raila Amolo Odinga. It goes without saying that the Rt. Honourable Raila Amolo Odinga, has earned recognition both at home and on the global arena for his immense contributions towards the expansion of the democratic space not only in his home country of Kenya but also throughout Africa and beyond. Indeed, the charismatic opposition leader has remained the constant face of democratic promotion within the contemporary African context that has witnessed the emergence of more tolerant regimes over the years.

## **Raila the Panafricanist**

The Rt. Hon Raila Amolo Odinga's recent appointment by the African Union Commission as African Union Special Envoy for infrastructure development elevates him to a continental statesman. He joins the league of former presidents and senior leaders in the continent and this places him among eminent Pan African leaders.

While recognizing the role the Rt. Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga will play in his new docket, H.E the President Uhuru Kenyatta said that the new appointment will help the Government achieve the Big Four agenda in terms of infrastructure and development of the country. The head of state said, "Raila will work closely with my government to ensure he allocates more resources to Kenya to fast track infrastructural development so as to make Vision 2030 a reality. We have made history as a country and with the handshake deal in place, Kenya stands to achieve more," he added.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, owing to his immense contributions in promoting industry and infrastructure, settlement, science, environmental conservation and his international contribution, on behalf of the University Senate, it is my privilege and honour to present **The Rt. Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga** for the conferment of Doctor of Sciences (**Honoris Causa**) of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology.



**Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology**

**P.O. Box 210-40601**

**BONDO-KENYA**

**TEL: 057-2501804**

**Email: [vc@jooust.ac.ke](mailto:vc@jooust.ac.ke)**

**University website: [www.jooust.ac.ke](http://www.jooust.ac.ke)**