

CITATION ON

DR. MANILAL PREMCHAND CHANDARIA, OBE, EBS

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF KENYA

Dr. Manu P. Chandaria, who we are about to present to you for the award of the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science (*Honoris Causa*), was born on 1st March, 1929 to parents of Indian descent who had earlier moved to Kenya in 1915 from Saurashtra, Gujarat. He grew up in the Ngara area of Nairobi in a house that was home to three other families. His father was a business man who owned a provisions shop along Biashara Street in Nairobi, where the young Chandaria sharpened his entrepreneurial skills. Although his father did not have much formal education, he was determined to give him the best education available. Dr. Chandaria would later concede that though he was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth, at least their house never lacked a spoon.

The young Chandaria began education in Kenya attending various schools in Nairobi and Mombasa, after which he proceeded to India for his undergraduate studies. He attended Jamnagar India University, Bombay, from where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree. He then proceeded to the University of Oklahoma and obtained Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Engineering in 1950 and 1951 respectively. He would later return to Kenya to find a thriving family business and thus a platform from which he applied his swift business acumen to establish a multinational conglomerate from the provisional store that he had left behind.

He led the family business to venture into the lucrative aluminium and steel industry when he and his father-in-law acquired saucepan manufacturer, Kenya Aluminium. This was the humble beginning of the present giant Comcraft Group of Companies which has a workforce of over 40,000, and has presence and manufacturing facilities in forty five (45) countries, sixteen (16) of which are in Africa including Kenya, Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia.

Dr. Chandaria is the Chairman of Comcraft Group as well as Bank of India Advisory Committee in Nairobi amongst others. He also sits on the Board of many successful industries like Mabati Rolling Mills Ltd, Kaluworks Ltd, Kenindia Assurance Co. Ltd, University of Nairobi Enterprises and Services (UNES) Ltd just to mention a few.

He is a committed *Jain*, in whose principles he, together with his family, set up the Chandaria Foundation, which has an office in every country that Comcraft operates in. His charitable and social works include being the founding Chairman and member of the Management Committee – Asian Foundation; Chairman of Chandaria Foundation; Trustee of the Heart Foundation and Goodwill Ambassador of the World Wildlife Fund for Nature.

Dr Chandaria influence stems from inspirational and renowned philanthropists like John D. Rockefeller and Henry Ford whose ideals he has practically demonstrated locally and regionally. In so doing, he has become a leading benefactor of numerous schools, universities and health facilities in Kenya and across East Africa working with more than 25 organizations. Dr Chandaria is widely respected as a role model, and he is arguably East Africa's most venerable business leader.

Aware that economic growth of a country is indispensable to industrial development, Dr. Chandaria has established manufacturing industries that offer not only job opportunities to ordinary citizens of the world, but also advance technological and industrial growth in Kenya. For instance, Mabati Rolling Mills has put durable iron sheets on the roofs of rural citizens who had hitherto relied on the dwindling supplies of grass to thatch their roofs, while the Kaluworks Ltd has afforded Kenyan people with an array of household products.

Dr. Chandaria pays a lot of attention to the development and integration of up to date technology in the various companies and organizations that he leads. At the same time, he takes a keen interest in the wellbeing of the people that work in these organizations. While he has steered his companies and organizations to greater heights of success, he has also supported and mentored many business initiatives and groups to levels of sustainability and success.

Guided by the values and principles of social equity and the humanness of the traditional societies, Dr. Chandaria has been particularly concerned about the suffering of the poor and unequal access of public resources and services to the disadvantaged in our communities. His unrelenting support for programmes and activities that alleviate the suffering of people and his outstanding success in business has made immense contribution to human development. He has been recognized and awarded both locally and internationally, for instance, in December 2001, he was awarded the 2001 Korea Trade Day Award by the Korean Minister for Commerce, Industry and Energy in recognition of his business support as best trading partner with Korea in that the year; Between 2000 and 2002 Dr Chandaria was unanimously recognized as the most respected Chief Executive Officer in East Africa by the Price Waterhouse Coopers and the Nation Media Group survey; In 2003, he was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) by her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; In December of the same year, he was honoured and awarded the elder of the Burning Spear (EBS) by the then President of Kenya, His Excellency Hon. Mwai Kibaki; In August 2006, he was made a fellow of the Cambridge Association of Managers; In January 2008, he was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award in Delhi, India; and in early January, 2013 the then President of the Republic of Kenya, His Excellency Hon. Mwai Kibaki appointed Dr. Chandaria the first Chancellor of The Technical University of Kenya.

Dr Chandaria has been at the centre of all major industrial developments in Kenya. The Kenya Association of Manufacturers has immensely benefitted from his networks both locally and internationally. Dr Chandaria has been the definitive mobiliser and team builder among the nation's investors and industrialists. His love and respect for professionalism and academia is manifest in the heavy investment in innovation and entrepreneurship among young people by supporting business incubation centres and industrial parks in institutions of higher learning across the country. He has demonstrated passion for the infusion of innovation, integration of technology and entrepreneurship spirit in the conduct business.

Here, then, is a global nationalist whose vision has and continues to contribute enormously to the development of education, industrial entrepreneurship, economic, and social welfare of this great country, Kenya.

The application of research to spur innovation and the use of technology to create wealth are cornerstone pillars of the vision of The Technical University of Kenya. As a community of

academics and especially The Technical University of Kenya we are proud to be associated with the qualities and achievement of Dr. Chandaria. I am therefore greatly honoured and privileged to present Dr. Manilal Premchand Chandaria, the Chancellor of The Technical University of Kenya, to be conferred upon, the Degree of Doctor of Science (**Honoris Causa**) of The Technical University of Kenya.

Ladies and Gentlemen, DR. MANILAL PREMCHAND CHANDARIA