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**COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES
&
COLLEGE OF BASIC AND APPLIED SCIENCES
PROCEEDINGS OF CONGREGATION
NOVEMBER 13, 2015**

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ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

Friday, 13th November, 2015, 9.00 a.m.

Procession

(The Congregation is asked to stand)

National Anthem

Welcome/Declaration of Purpose:

Justice Dr. S. K. Date-Bah, Chairman, University Council

Vice-Chancellor's Address: Prof. Ernest Aryeetey, Vice-Chancellor

Guest Speaker's Address: Dr. Rosemary Keatley,
Managing Director, Medlab Ghana

Conferment of Degrees:

Presentation of graduands from College of Health Sciences

- PhD/MPhil/MSc/MPH/BSc/BPH

Presentation of graduands from College of Basic and Applied Sciences

- PhD/MPhil/MEng/Diploma (Statistics and Agriculture)

Valedictory Address: Ms. Henrietta Agyeiwaa Gyebi

Chairman of Council dissolves Congregation

University Anthem

(The Congregation is asked to remain seated until all officials and graduands have left the Hall.)

**OPENING ADDRESS DELIVERED BY CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL,
JUSTICE SAMUEL KOFI DATE-BAH**

Members of the University Council,
Vice-Chancellor,
Guest Speaker,
Members of the Advisory Board of the College of Health Sciences,
Members of the Advisory Board of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences,
Members of Convocation,
Staff and students,
Alumni,
Graduands,
Invited Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of His Excellency, Mr. Kofi Annan, Chancellor of the University, I welcome you warmly to this morning's ceremony. I also extend Mr. Annan's greetings and best wishes to all of you gathered here on this important occasion.

The congregation ceremonies that have been scheduled for this weekend are significant in two ways. First, this will be the second set of congregation ceremonies for the 2014/2015 cohort of students. The first set was in July 2015. This 2014/2015 cohort is the first to be graduated, since the University of Ghana adopted the Collegiate System of governance. Secondly, it will also be the first time the ceremonies are being held concurrently at different locations. This morning two separate ceremonies are being held at the same time in the Great Hall and in the R.S. Amegashie Auditorium at the University of Ghana Business School. I congratulate the University administration for pulling this off successfully.

I take the opportunity to wish the graduands who are being presented this year, the very best on this very important occasion. We share in your joy from the successful completion of your degrees and we are very proud of you.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am delighted to declare this morning's assembly duly constituted for the award of Degrees, Diplomas and

Certificates of the University of Ghana to successful graduands and also to receive a report from the Vice-Chancellor. It is customary for the Vice-Chancellor to give us his report at this forum on developments that have taken place in the University over the past academic year. I therefore invite the Vice-Chancellor to present his report to Congregation.

Thank you.

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S ADDRESS AT CONGREGATION: COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Your Lordship Justice Samuel Kofi Date-Bah, Chairman of University Council,
Members of University Council,
Pro-Vice Chancellors,
Registrar,
Provosts,
Guest Speaker,
Members of the College Advisory Boards,
Niime, Naamei, Nananom,
Members of Convocation,
Invited Guests,
Graduating Students,
Parents and Guardians,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

Welcome

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to today's congregation ceremony. This is the second set of ceremonies for students who completed their studies in the 2014/2015 academic year.

Six ceremonies are being held over two days with a total of 5085 students graduating from the four Colleges with degrees and diplomas. The graduands are made up of 4025 undergraduates, 964 graduate students and 96 Diploma students. For the first time two ceremonies will be held concurrently for the morning session and one for the afternoon session on each day. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the students, faculty and other employees who have worked to make this possible.

The State of the University:

Mr Chairman, I would like to report that the state of the University is very good. A number of recent developments should make us feel very good about our university.

Teaching and Learning

In the area of teaching and learning, I am happy to observe that many of the initiatives we put in place for strengthening our academic programmes, following the recommendations of the Visitation Panel, are beginning to yield positive

outcomes. Our class sizes have been reduced significantly to place not more than 300 students in a class in most cases. The facilities and equipment available to lecturers have seen steady improvements following significant investments made by the University using internally generated funds. Most lecture rooms and residential facilities for students have been rehabilitated and continue to be rehabilitated. The latest of such rehabilitation works is the ongoing complete overhaul of student residential facilities at our Korle Bu campus.

Earlier in the year, the University took over newly refurbished facilities under the Chinese Phase II project to support our distance education programmes. These included well equipped computer labs at the various regional learning centres that facilitate e-learning using video conferencing facilities. All students entering those programmes, beginning from the last academic year were provided with Android tablets loaded with the relevant course material to make learning easier.

Mr. Chairman, today as many as 65% of the men and women teaching our students have terminal degrees, namely a doctorate. This is up from 45% less than a decade ago. This is the result of steady staff development initiatives. Through our recently restructured PhD programmes more than 450 persons are currently registered for PhD programmes. With the anticipated growth in this area we will be in a strong position to build the capacity of our own staff as well as that of other institutions for careers in research and teaching.

As a result of the improvements taking place in our teaching and learning environment, our students continue to excel internationally. Ms. Gifty Tetteh, an alumna of this University, having graduated with a degree in Biomedical Engineering and currently studying for a PhD at University of Sheffield, received the International Biomechanics Prize for the Best Biomechanics Paper at the Medical Engineering Centre annual meeting in 2014 held at Imperial College, London.

The improvements in our teaching and learning environment have made it a lot easier for our students to find internship places with reputable institutions. Three of our recent Pharmacy graduates have participated in an internship programme at Merck Millipore's global headquarters in Darmstadt, Germany. More and more of our students are receiving international recognition for their work.

Ladies and gentlemen, the University continues to receive large numbers of applications for admission each year. However, due to the limited facilities and

human resources, the University was able to admit only a fraction of the potentially eligible undergraduate applicants.

For the 2015/2016 academic year, new enrolment figures show that 8,541 students registered, made up of 6,121 undergraduate students and 2,420 graduate students. The University's efforts to achieve gender parity in the admission of students have yielded some results in that, the percentage of females admitted to all programmes now stands at about 43%.

The University continued its policy of giving opportunity for university education to qualified applicants from Less Endowed Schools on concessionary basis. In addition, for the second year running, the University offered admission to talented sportsmen and women based on their sporting abilities, in line with the policy on the Admission of Student Athletes. Students admitted under the policy must first satisfy the general entry requirements of the University and also show proof of athletic ability. It is our expectation that these students will work hard to effectively combine participation in sports with academic work.

University of Ghana, as part of its internationalization policy, strives to attract international students to deepen cross-cultural experience on campus. For the 2015/2016 academic year, 2,967 undergraduate and 1,593 graduate international applications were received. Out of this number, 844 undergraduate and 310 graduate students of various nationalities were admitted into our programmes as regular or special admission students. Altogether, a total of 291 undergraduate and 90 graduate international students have registered.

Our international students come to us mainly from the sub-region but there are also students on exchange programmes from our partner institutions in Europe, United States of America, Canada and Asia. The University has engaged Recruitment Officers to assist the Office of International Programmes achieve international enrolment targets set by the University. The University has also begun implementation of some useful recommendations made by the University of Ghana Internationalization Review Committee, regarding improvement in student experience and mobility, teaching to international standards, attitudes and perceptions.

Financial Aid for Students

Ladies and gentlemen, the 2014/2015 academic year ended with a total donation

inflow from both local and foreign donors of GH¢639,912.09 towards financial aid for students. I am proud to note that the University contributed GH¢103,932.00 of this amount from its internally generated funds. Additionally, the University and General Electric, have signed a memorandum of understanding covering a US\$100,000 scholarship package for needy but brilliant students of University of Ghana. Under the agreement, one hundred students will have their tuition and residential fees fully paid until they complete their studies.

We salute all our donors and encourage other corporate sponsors and individuals to assist us to fund the education of students who would otherwise have to interrupt or terminate their studies.

Research, Innovation and Development

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, in the area of research, we have declared our intention of working to become a world-class research intensive university over the next decade. A number of initiatives have been undertaken to ensure that this vision does not remain a dream. The Office of Research, Innovation and Development has become our main vehicle for achieving our goal as it facilitates and coordinates the conduct of research in all units of the University.

The four centres of excellence established at the University have been allocated Gh1 million each as seed money to develop research areas in Climate Change Adaptation; Malaria Research; Food Production and Processing; and, Development Policy and Poverty Monitoring and Evaluation to address key developmental issues in Ghana and beyond. The University has earmarked US\$5 million for refurbishment of laboratories and the replacement of obsolete scientific equipment. Through the Chinese phase II ICT project, the University is now in a position to house large datasets for research and also do more computing research than before.

At the end of the review process for the 8th call for proposals for UG Research Grants, 31 grants with a total value of GHC 996,723 were awarded in the three grant categories.

39 applications for UG Conference Grants with a total value of GHC 187,990 were approved for funding in the 2014/2015 academic year. A total of GHC 284,538 was awarded as faculty development grants in the last academic year. Since the inception of this scheme in the 2008/2009 academic year, a total of GHC 1,083,250 has been awarded to 85 faculty members. Out of this number, 31 have

successfully obtained their PhDs or other terminal degrees, and returned to active teaching and research duties at the university. We are also exploring alternative faculty development schemes such as a UG postdoctoral research fellowship scheme.

Faculty and students of the University continue to benefit from a number of capacity building grants. Some of these are CAPREx, where faculty members spend up to 6 months at the University of Cambridge to work on a research topic with a Cambridge based collaborator; the Climate Impact Research Capacity and Leadership Enhancement (CIRCLE) Programme, which offers one-year fellowships to support early career researchers on the impact of climate change in Africa; the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan; and the ACU STARS (*Structured Training for African Researchers*) Project.

Others are the Trans-Disciplinary Training for Resource Efficiency and Climate Change Adaptation in Africa – Phase 2; ARISE (Africa Regional International Staff/Student Exchange); Food Security and Sustainable Human Wellbeing Project); P4HPT (Partnering for Health Professional Training in African Universities); CSAA (Inter-University Cooperation to Train Crop Scientists for Enhancing Agriculture in Africa) ; One Health (Enhancing Community of Practice in One Health for Infectious Diseases through Postgraduate Training).

Since the beginning of the 2014/2015 academic year, 37 research grant agreements with a combined total value of USD9,579,086 have been signed, while 76 research proposals have been submitted to various sponsors/funders with 24 proposals so far approved with a total value of \$21,221,754.

Earlier this year, we received the good news that Dr. Kwaku Kyeremeh, of the Department of Chemistry was a member of an international research team that collaborated in the discovery of Legonmycins, a set of new alkaloids from a novel Ghanaian microorganism which has great potential as future microbial and cancer fighting agents. Ghanaian participation in this break-through research was made possible by significant investment made by the University in modern science equipment.

Mr Chairman, I believe we can safely conclude that our investment in research is paying off.

Governance

Ladies and gentlemen, the collegiate system of governance adopted by the University is in its second year of operation and it is important that we all continue to work hard to ensure that the colleges meet their targets of increasing efficiency and reducing bureaucracy.

All the four colleges are making strides in the area of research productivity and visibility and continue to explore opportunities for fund-raising and to carry out ground breaking research with collaboration from local and international partners.

The first batch of undergraduate students was admitted directly into the four new Colleges at the beginning of the 2015/2016 academic year. The colleges are all working towards ensuring that their students have a positive student experience during their time here. It is expected that a thorough review of the collegiate system will take place after the system has been in operation for three years.

As part of our efforts to enhance governance at University of Ghana, the University has completed work on its new Human Resources (HR) and Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual. The manual has been drafted with the following objectives in mind:

- To provide a single reference manual on HR (employee) and Administrative Policies and Procedures aligned with University of Ghana's (UG's) Statutes, Schemes of Service, Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) and related policy documents;
- To serve as a single reference point on all HR and administrative issues;
- To ensure uniformity and consistency in decision making and action across the Colleges to which various activities and responsibilities are to be devolved.

University Management has been forced to put a temporary freeze on all employment until such time that University of Ghana receives financial clearance from Government to appointment new staff. In this regard, even though some employees retired at the end of the last academic year, no new appointments are being made that require payments by the government. This problem has become a major obstacle to the development of academic programmes.

Physical Developments at Legon

Ladies and gentlemen, a number of projects are currently underway at the

University, and I will touch briefly on some of the major ones.

University of Ghana Medical Centre

Work on the construction of a 600-bed Teaching Hospital for the University is proceeding steadily and the first phase is about 80% complete. The Hospital, when completed, will have state-of-the-art facilities for trauma and emergency services, heart surgery, medical imaging, and a heliport. It will eventually be expanded into a 1,300-bed facility to provide effective teaching, learning and patient care.

Future construction will cover a Cancer Centre and a Rehabilitation Building. This project is an integral part of the ‘Medical Village’ concept that is to enable the University produce world-class health educators, experts and researchers in all sub-specialties to make health delivery in Ghana independent, sustainable and progressive. When completed, the University of Ghana Medical Centre will place the University of Ghana as one of the most advanced medical training institutions in West Africa. As part of the project package about 80 Ghanaian personnel are to receive training at the Sheba Medical Centre in Israel. 20 Senior Specialists and Consultants have already started their training in Israel; nurses, administrators, biomedical engineers, and pharmacists will also receive training in the coming weeks. The Hospital is expected to start operating by the middle of 2016.

University of Ghana/Africa Integras Project

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to highlight some initiatives being pursued by the University towards the modernization and improved efficiency in service delivery at the University of Ghana. The University signed a US\$64 million landmark agreement with Africa Integras earlier this year, structured as a 25-year Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) Project. The project involves the construction of an expanded facility for the College of Humanities, a new building complex for the College of Education, a new dedicated facility for the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, as well as a new facility for the College of Health Sciences to be located near the new medical centre.

1,000 new student hostel beds will be provided under the project, to be divided between undergraduate and graduate students, mostly to serve the College of Health Sciences. This project will undoubtedly boost the University’s infrastructural development, propel its decentralization efforts and enhance immensely its capacity to attract and train more graduates. The Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency Kwesi Amissah-Arthur, performed the

ground-breaking for the commencement of work on Monday, September 14, 2015, with a planned completion date of September 2017. Presently, site preparation for all facilities is 100% complete.

Generator sets have been procured and installed at the various halls of residence to ensure that academic life continues even when there is a power outage on the campus. The University's effort was supported with significant contributions from our students. Generator sets have also been procured and installed at a number of other academic units on campus to stabilize electricity supply to the University campus. The University is at the same time looking at alternative ways of generating electricity.

Mr Chairman, we have recently completed work on all residential facilities for staff and are now continuing with the rehabilitation of all of our roads, including the development of pedestrian walkways along some of the major ones.

Reports from the Colleges

I will now turn my attention to some of the activities that took place in the four colleges during the year under review.

College of Basic and Applied Sciences (CBAS)

Donations

- On behalf of the Marie Curie Library of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Mrs. Ylenia Pinelli of the Embassy of Italy donated 20 different books to the Department of Materials Science and Engineering to augment the stock of collections of the Department at the Library of the School of Engineering Sciences.
- The West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement (WACCI) had donated a 4x4 Toyota Prado to the Forest and Horticultural Crops Research Centre (FOHCREC). WACCI and FOHCREC were partners in the Envirodome Vegetable Laboratory Innovation trials.
- CBAS had also donated a tractor it received from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) to FOHCREC.

Renovation

- The Constantine Leventis Computer laboratory at the School of Agriculture has been given a facelift to support teaching, learning and research.

CBAS Lecture Series

- The first two of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences (CBAS) Public Lecture Series were held on April 30, and September 30, 2015. The CBAS Lecture Series was established to provide an excellent forum for interaction and engagement between researchers, industry players and other stakeholders and enrich the knowledge base of students. It will also enhance the visibility of the College, provide an avenue for identifying solutions to industry related problems and to help build the investment portfolio for the College's endowment fund for Graduate Students.

College of Humanities

- *Establishment of a Centre for Asian Studies at the University of Ghana*
The College has received approval to host a Centre for Asian Studies at the University from the University Council. The centre will provide expertise and attention to Asian Studies and research.
- The School of Languages held its first international conference from 27th to 29th October 2015 on the theme “*Multilingualism in the African context: Resource or Challenge*”.
- The College has introduced an Annual International Research Conference. The maiden conference was held between June, 18-20, 2015 on the theme *Multidisciplinary Research and Transformation in Africa*.
- The College Research Board has approved the introduction of the Provost's Paper Awards Competition for doctoral students; early career and mid-career faculty in the College. The first awards were presented at the conference.
- The Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies facilitated and sponsored a Young Film Makers Festival from June 4 and 5 2015.
- The Institute of African Studies in collaboration with the New York University, Accra hosted a conference on the theme “*The Humanities and a 21st century Africa: Towards Alternative Modes of Human Development*” on 23rd and 24th April, 2015.

College of Education

This is the first time since the introduction of the Distance Education programme in the 2007/2008 academic year that students on the programme have been able to

graduate in the same year; and indeed just a few months after they complete their final examinations. This has been possible as a direct result of the decentralization that has come with the introduction of the collegiate system, and I take this opportunity to applaud the administration of the College of Education, and all the academic and administrative staff who have worked hard to achieve this feat.

- *Establishment of Academic Awards*

The College has taken steps toward instituting academic awards, as well as sourcing for sponsors for the awards. In line with this, Departments have been requested to submit lists of prospective prizes, and members of the Advisory Board have committed to assisting with the identification of sponsors.

- *Security at Regional Learning Centres*

The College is in the process of acquiring additional security services at the Regional Learning Centres to ensure the safety of the new ICT equipment that have been installed for the distance learning programme. With the embargo on employment, this has been a challenge for the college.

- *Double Intake of Distance Education Students*

The College started the double intake of students in September 2015. Students have been admitted to all the Regional Centres. Diploma to Degree and B.Sc. in Nursing students will, however, start in January 2016. The College had also suggested the adoption of the blended approach to course delivery which involves 50% face-to-face lecturing and 50% electronic teaching.

In the long term, the University envisages the development of regional campuses.

College of Health Sciences

The School of Biomedical and Allied Health Sciences (SBAHS) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Northumbria Healthcare Trust for a Students Exchange Programme. Flowing from this, six students from the Department of Occupational Therapy visited Northumbria University.

The College Advisory Board is working closely with Management to attracting funding support for the College. The collaboration has yielded an amount of GH¢350,970 so far to be used for urgent projects at the College. The donation will be used for the building, rehabilitation and equipping of laboratories in the School of Biomedical and Allied Health Sciences and the re-roofing of the School of Pharmacy Building.



**Members of Council, University Officials, Members of Convocation and Guest Speaker
in a group photograph**



**Prof. Yao Tettey,
Provost of College of Health Sciences**



**Mrs. Amma K. Kwaa, College Secretary,
College of Health Sciences**



Justice Dr. S. K. Date-Bah, Chairman of Council, delivering his Welcome Address



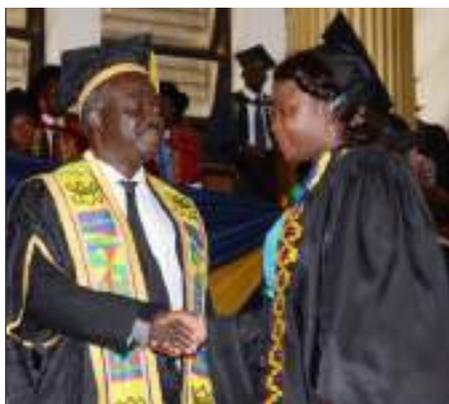
Prof. Ernest Aryeetey, Vice-Chancellor, addressing the gathering



Dr. Rosemary Keatley, delivering the Guest Speaker's Address



Ms. Henrietta Agyeiwaa Gyebi delivering the Valedictory Address



Snapshots of graduands receiving acknowledgments



Members of convocation seated at the ceremony



Graduands seated at the Congregation



Some parents, guardians and guests at the ceremony

Rankings

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and gentlemen, evidence of the fact that the state of University is very good may be found in the fact that in all major global rankings of universities, this university is the only one in West Africa that has shown consistent improvement over the last 5 years. It is one of only 16 universities in the whole of Africa ranked among the world's top 800 universities and the ninth in Africa by Times Higher Education in its recent global rankings published in September. Our high placement is largely attributable to our growing international image.

Well Wishes to Graduands

Now to our graduating students:

Seeing you all here, at the threshold of starting the next phase of your lives, brings back memories of my own graduation ceremonies from various educational institutions, many years ago, and reminds me of the excitement, the trepidation about what the future might hold, and the zeal I had to go out and change the world. No doubt, most of you gathered here are going through similar feelings and thoughts. Today's world offers young graduates so many opportunities, yet so many challenges; so many potential positive outcomes yet so many pitfalls along the way. I challenge you all to go out into the world, and do the very best you can wherever you find yourself. Work hard, dream big, plan ahead and be ethical and honest in all your dealings, and you will be well on the way towards success. The future may not be given, but you have a clean slate. Go out there, write on your slate in bold characters and make your mark! I wish you all the very best.

Thank you and God bless you.

**GUEST SPEAKER'S SPEECH DELIVERED BY
DR. ROSEMARY KEATLEY**

The Chairman and Members of Council of the University of Ghana,
The Vice-Chancellor,
Pro-Vice-Chancellors,
Provosts of Colleges,
The Registrar,
Deans and Directors,
The Chairmen and Members of the Advisory Boards of the College of Health Sciences and the College of Basic and Applied Sciences,
Members of the Board of Trustees of the College of Health Sciences,
Postgraduate Endowment Fund,
Members of Convocation,
Graduating Students,
Distinguished Invited Guests,
Nananom, Niime, Naamei,
Parents and Guardians,
Members of the Media,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am delighted to be with you today at the University of Ghana at Legon at this ceremony for graduating students who have successfully completed their courses of study over the past few years. I would like to thank the University for the honour done to me in asking me to serve on this occasion as the Guest Speaker.

The 2015 release by *The Times Higher Education World Rankings* names the University of Ghana as the best ranked university in Ghana and the 9th in Africa. This is a highly commendable achievement for which I would like to congratulate the University. The University of Ghana is striding towards the ideals for which it was established, and is making efforts to become a world-class, research-intensive university. In order to achieve this, the university has recently embarked on several initiatives. It has restructured its governance system, paving the way for the creation of four new Colleges, of Health Sciences, Basic and Applied Sciences, Education and Humanities, that now make up the University. I understand that this ceremony is a joint one being held for students of the two science-based colleges in the university, namely the College of Health Sciences and the College of Basic and Applied Sciences.

Today we must celebrate the hard work of students as well as that of Management, lecturers and administrators, who have groomed these graduands into becoming what they are today. I know the pride your teachers have in you. At Medlab I get compliments on the quality, knowledge and competence of my staff from the external auditors who conduct our accreditation visits. I feel the same pride and I know that this is thanks to the great ground work that your teachers have laid as well as my own humble efforts.

This day is also a moment to give thanks for the tremendous support of family, friends and benefactors who altogether, have made it possible for the students to make this remarkable journey through their schooling.

I would like to address the graduating class. This a time to celebrate your accomplishments, and to find inspiration for the life ahead. Commencement Day, as it is called in some parts of the world , truly marks for the graduating student, a moment where one door closes and another opens, as you enter into the world of work. For those of you with further degrees from the School of Graduate Studies, you have been through this transition before, and today marks yet another milestone in your academic career which will allow you to reposition yourselves as more mature persons and future leaders of whom much would be expected. Let me congratulate you all on your achievements as you conclude this important phase of your lives and start a new journey.

Let me share a few words and thoughts with you.

The focus of university training is not only the acquisition of knowledge, it is the development of analytical and problem-solving skills which will allow you to deal with the problems that you will encounter tomorrow. The end result of this training should be to acquire a resilience that should enable you to withstand the challenges that lie ahead . Certainly living a meaningful life is being able to have the versatility and creativity of mind to take appropriate control of your destiny and your environment.

It is important to remember that the degrees you are about to earn now and for which you are being celebrated today, are paper qualifications. Their real value will lie in how you apply the training you have received. To succeed in life, you also require the personal and societal values which, if well applied, will perfect you into becoming the all rounded well-groomed responsible individuals that the nation needs. I am talking about values such as honesty, team spirit, commitment,

resourcefulness, patriotism, respect for human dignity, patience, and humility. These values will eventually shape your attitude to life and empower you to become successful.

You must remember dear graduands, that you have been trained as a privileged elite, subsidised with the taxpayers' hard-earned money. This imposes an obligation on you and you must strive in all you do to be relevant and contribute to the progress of society. You have a responsibility to your communities, your country and to the world as a whole, no matter what your personal aspirations are. You must work hard with diligence and faithfulness in the service of your country. Whether you are in agriculture, public health or allied health sciences, you must not focus on selfish ideals, the quest for prestige, or aspirations of grandeur.

The challenge is to take these years of university education and the unique personal passions you have nurtured, to do something relevant and positive with them. The impact one person can make is enormous if you use your ingenuity, so do not decline postings to the rural or remote parts of the country. One British gap year student came to Ghana to work with street children. She later founded Afrikids and managed to persuade British Airways to donate coins collected from plane passengers. This became a huge fund to rehabilitate poor children in Ghana.

Your parents and guardians valued education so much that even when the means were very limited and competed with other equally important demands, it was your education that received priority. It was also with the help of people like your lecturers among many others, who dedicated themselves to teaching and other supporting services at this University that you have been able to make it this far. Some of you are here also because of help received from philanthropists who awarded you scholarships and other forms of support. It is therefore important to give your utmost, back to family, society, country and the world, and certainly, in the best way you can.

Almost all of you graduating today from the two colleges here, are professionals and many of you will be working in the health sector. As professionals you are expected to be highly skilled and well versed in the practice of your disciplines and to maintain your knowledge through continuous learning during your working life. Remain committed, responsible, and disciplined in the exercise of your duties, and observe professional ethics and the code of conduct of your profession.

Some of you will be working in public health and may find yourselves in the battle

against global epidemics. In a previous century, it was the technical ingenuity and fact-based investigation by a medical doctor which helped to defeat cholera in Victorian England. Dr John Snow witnessed thousands dying of cholera in London in 1853, and identified the handle of a water pump in his neighbourhood of Broad Street as contaminated. He convinced officials to remove the handle, and successfully proved that contaminated water was the main agent spreading cholera – a discovery that helped to define the way to contain and defeat the epidemic.

In 2014 it was Ebola that caught the headlines. We celebrated the bravery of the many healthcare workers in the affected African countries who risked their lives and their health in order to contain the epidemic. Let us not forget that the world faces and will face many other epidemics, such as the resurgence of Ebola, cholera and avian flu, which will require resourcefulness, ingenuity, teamwork, and self-sacrifice to subdue. The Nigerian technologists used the techniques developed in polio-tracing epidemiology to contain Ebola in their country. In this electronic age, we should be able to use GPS-based systems to trace affected individuals and monitor their movements.

It is important that you work with a complete sense of professionalism, meaning that you work hard and at the top of your profession, and you apply all the rules and regulations to make your output of the highest quality.

It was that sense of professionalism that led me to return to my native land of Ghana after my training overseas, and to run Medlab Ghana Limited ('Medlab' for short). When I returned to Ghana in 1994, I was a US Board-certified physician with 10 years' experience in the US medical sector, and also a qualified physician in the UK where I had achieved my medical degree at Cambridge University. My original intention was to practise in Ghana as a physician, but I soon realised that the practice of medicine in this country was seriously impeded by the lack of properly functioning laboratories. A study performed by the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) at the time indicated that 80% of the labs in Ghana were producing unreliable results.

Medlab was founded to address this need and has always pursued the very highest quality in medical diagnostics. This was recognised in 2008 when Medlab became accredited to ISO-15189, the recognised standard in the world for medical laboratories. Indeed Medlab was the first laboratory in Ghana to achieve this accreditation.

To achieve this success at Medlab, I have drawn on all my medical knowledge, and

at the same time it has required hard work, day-in day-out, a passion for excellence, and an unswerving commitment to maintain good service to our referring doctors and patients.

I have invested much time in ensuring that the foundations of Medlab are built on solid ground. This involves: continuous development of good laboratory practices, maintaining the highest quality standards, installing a laboratory information system, introducing the latest innovations in diagnostic techniques, and collaborating with centres of excellence, as shown by our recent merger with Synlab, the largest private medical laboratory group in Europe. These qualities have brought us successfully to the 20th anniversary of Medlab Ghana in 2015, and will sustain us for many years to come.

We have a strong commitment to medical education in our Corporate Social Responsibility programme. In that spirit, we donated a chemistry analyser to the School of Allied Health in recognition of their role in educating students who are now amongst our best workers, and, to aid in the training of the next generation.

Never be afraid to originate ideas. For a modern nation to succeed, it must be a knowledge-based economy. We need to develop the ability to manufacture innovative technology in Ghana. In the area of medical diagnostics, this could include production of reagents and X-ray equipment. I procured an X-ray system from a European provider and found out that my classmate in a large London Hospital had procured the same product at 30% below my cost. I approached the vendor and asked why poor Africans were to be charged more. I was informed that since we did not produce such systems, there was no competition to drive down prices!

Dear graduands, I would like to speak to you about entrepreneurship and the need for us to explore the vast unexplored potentials that we have in Ghana to build organisations. IFC, the private sector arm of the World Bank, has estimated that 50% of healthcare services in Africa are delivered by the private sector. Today in Ghana we have many privately run medical facilities and several schools of medicine, dentistry and public health that seek to render service to the nation. Help the private sector to help improve the health delivery system in the country. Do not miss this opportunity through a fear of job insecurity in the private sector.

The need for medical services and health professionals is increasing, and the public purse cannot meet all those demands. We must be ingenious and develop

innovative ways to meet those needs. Examples of these solutions are tele-medicine and mobile MRI scanners.

To become more knowledgeable your quest must not end here but must continue with further training and constant learning. A Master's Degree should not become an end in itself; it should be a reflection of your passion and curiosity. Some of you may also consider building a career in the world of academia in the universities that have nurtured you. You may therefore wish to give back to your alma mater in this and other ways.

In that spirit, Medlab has donated a prize for excellence in microbiology to be awarded to the top student at the College of Health Sciences. The prize includes a cash award and more importantly two books which we have selected. This year's winning student will receive a text book atlas as well as a copy of the book 'Guns, Germs and Steel' by Professor Jared Diamond of the University of California at Los Angeles. This thought-provoking book relates the discipline of applied technology and evolutionary biology to the study of human societies. It shows how the advances made by European societies in explosives and metal-working, as well as the immunities that they acquired to infectious diseases, allowed them to dominate the world until recently. Epidemics changed human history, an example is the Black Death (bubonic plague) which wiped out a quarter of the European population. There are interesting lessons in that for us in Ghana today.

I would like to end by congratulating each and every one of you who has gone through the University of Ghana. We know for a fact that your presence here is a testimony to your great efforts and a major milestone in each of your individual lives. It is all our sincere hope that you will prove to be worthy ambassadors of the University and that you will uphold the highest standards, the integrity and the values that the University has inculcated in you.

I wish you all the best as you journey into the world and pray that you will conquer the world.

Long live the College of Health Sciences and the College of Basic and Applied Sciences!

Long live the University of Ghana,

Long live Ghana.

Thank you for your attention.

**VALEDICTORY ADDRESS DELIVERED BY
MS. HENRIETTA AGYEIWAA GYEBI**

Chairman, University Council,
Vice Chancellor,
Pro-Vice Chancellors,
Registrar,
Deans and Directors,
College Secretaries,
Distinguished Guest Speaker,
Members of convocation,
Colleague graduates,
Parents and Guardians,
Ladies and gentlemen.

I am humbled and greatly privileged to present the valedictory speech at this graduation ceremony. I wish to congratulate my fellow graduates for the hard work and sleepless nights that have culminated in this colourful ceremony we are all witnessing. Some years ago, we made frantic efforts to enroll in the premier University with the ultimate goal of acquiring knowledge and skills to improve health service delivery in Ghana. It was a dream come true when we were eventually offered admission to pursue various degree programmes at the University of Ghana.

I remember vividly at the school level orientation to usher us into the university community, I stole a casual look at some of the yet-to-be known friends who had converged at the School of Public Health auditorium. I quickly judged from a few faces, that they had probably come to see their wards off. This assumption turned out to be false when these same faces were seen energetically struggling for seats at our first lectures. It then dawned on me how the desire for knowledge had motivated people from all walks of life back into school.

Our class was made up of the funny middle-aged and fairly more senior people who preferred to be seen as sweet sixteen's. They were armed with wise counsel yet humble enough to ask for help whenever necessary. There were the loud and opinionated young ones who assumed the mantle of modern-day Socrates and Plato with their winding explanations of dialogical pedagogies, and there were the seemingly shy and timid ones who hardly spoke up but proved their worth in all

endeavors. I am certain that my colleagues still remember the herculean tasks of establishing the existence of ghosts in Research Methods I and making meaning out of an avalanche of figures and formulae in the Biostatistics class.

The strain from the academic demands was aggravated by the famous “*dumsor*” which in some cases thwarted our preparations for quizzes and examinations. During periods of power outage we experienced seismic reactions in our spines especially when assignments were due for submission or course materials needed to be retrieved from the e-learning platform popularly called sakai.

In view of this, we wish to bring to the attention of Management the erratic power supply and its effect on studies and request that academic units and hostels are provided with generator sets to facilitate effective teaching and learning. Again, lack of adequate accommodation on campus cannot go into oblivion. While Management takes steps to expand the hostel and lecture facilities, we request that they are designed to be baby-friendly for those who may have the dual responsibilities of studying and nursing babies.

Despite these challenges, we want to commend the University and especially the School of Public Health for the tremendous effort in utilizing the e-learning platform (sakai) for teaching and learning. The inherent advantages cannot be overemphasized.

The years spent within the walls of University of Ghana, have been a time of personal discovery and fulfillment without a modicum of regret. There are countless fond memories which never fade. We came onto the University of Ghana campus with different backgrounds and life experiences and we are leaving this campus after our respective study periods as a collective unit; with the common goal of providing the needed professional support to strengthen the health delivery system. We recognize the fact that health system management requires collective efforts from all specialties and I am proudly quick to add, that the training programmes we have undergone in our colleges have imbibed in us skills, knowledge and virtues that are imperative for effective health service delivery. Our colleague post-graduates have attained in-depth knowledge and skills in their specialized areas and it is our prayer that as they join the upper echelons of management, they will bring their expertise to bear to propel the agenda of their organizations/institutions.

As we graduate today, we are armed to go and make an impact in the world, to

uphold the values we have acquired and always practice our profession in truth and integrity. This University has transformed us and therefore expects us to strive to achieve the best in all that we do. I do not seek to scare you but there will be more daunting moments ahead when we start practicing but I will urge you to be strong and steadfast because hard work pays. Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail”. We should make every effort to leave a trail that others will be proud to follow.

As health professionals and consumer scientists, our core duty is to save lives and promote healthy living of the citizenry for national development. This calls for continuous professional development to be abreast of emerging approaches to effective health care.

As we close this chapter and commence a new one, let us never forget the bridges crossed, networking and unique passions, let us also always remember the important role the University of Ghana has played in shaping our lives and contribute our widow’s mite in the quest of becoming a world-class research intensive university.

At this time I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who encouraged and supported us through this incredible educational journey, most especially to our spouses, parents and guardians, families, friends and mentors. We are equally most grateful to our lecturers, administrators and support staff who played diverse roles in making us successful graduates in 2015.

Once again, congratulations to the class of 2015. Ayekoo!!!!

**CLOSING REMARKS BY CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL,
JUSTICE SAMUEL KOFI DATE-BAH**

Members of the University Council,
Vice-Chancellor,
Guest Speaker,
Members of the Advisory Board of the College of Health Sciences,
Members of the Advisory Board of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences,
Members of Convocation,
Staff and Students,
Alumni,
Fresh Graduates,
Invited Guests,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

As we end today's function, I salute all who have worked hard to ensure a successful congregation ceremony. I refer especially to all those who have played various roles in the planning and organisation of today's function.

These new graduates have had to contend with the new four year system with its teething problems. They are the ones who did not give up but persevered to the end. They deserve all the laurels that they have acquired.

For the Lecturers and Administrators who have had to learn this new system alongside the students in order to get them to this point of their graduation, the University appreciates the efforts you have put into this enterprise.

To the Graduate Students who have been part of the changes taking place at the University of Ghana, the University of Ghana looks forward to receiving some of you back as faculty or administrators or other professionals to support the drive to become a research intensive university. We expect that those who do not make it back here will go out there and make an impact in other tertiary institutions in Ghana as well as the public and private sectors.

All parents, guardians, families and friends of the graduates who have travelled from both far and near to join the graduates in this celebration also deserve our thanks and appreciation for being with us today.

To our Guest Speaker for today, all invited guests, alumni and friends of the University we say we always appreciate your presence and participation in this event. I wish you a safe journey back.

To our new graduates and fresh Alumni, I congratulate you for your achievements and urge you all to be worthy ambassadors of your alma mater. I call upon you all constantly to remember the University's motto, '*integri procedamus*' or lets make progress with integrity.

I wish you all good success in your future endeavours.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen it is now my privilege and duty as Chairman of the Council of the University to declare today's congregation dissolved.

I thank you.

