

OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



**VICE-CHANCELLOR'S OPENING REMARKS AT THE 22ND
BIENNIAL UTAG NATIONAL DELEGATES' CONGRESS**

ADDRESS BY:

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**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2025
HILL PALACE HOTEL, ABURI**

- *Hon. Haruna Iddrisu, Minister of Education and Keynote Speaker for the 22nd Biennial UTAG National Delegates Congress*
- *Prof. Abdulai Jinnapor, Director General, GTEC*
- *UTAG National and Local Executives*
- *Distinguished Speakers*
- *Specially Invited Guests*
- *Colleagues and Delegates of the Congress*
- *The Press*
- *Ladies and Gentlemen*

1.0 Preliminary Comments

I am grateful for the opportunity to join you for this all-important convening of great minds who are reshaping higher education in Ghana and beyond, and contributing to the development of human capital for transformative leadership. As a UTAG member myself, I recognize the invaluable role played by university teachers and their contribution to national and global development.

UTAG is undisputedly one of the most formidable, organized labour groups in the country, and as members of this prestigious association, it is imperative to have periodic engagements such as this biennial congress to reflect deeply on emerging issues bothering on the future on tertiary education in this transformative era.

In line with the above, today's congress therefore seeks to provide a unique platform for effective deliberation on strategies to adopt in order to stay abreast of the contemporary trends and best practices in pedagogy and funding for tertiary education.

In recent years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has dominated lots of conversations both at the national and international stage and as university teachers, it is not lost on us to consider how AI is influencing our work, from a broader perspective and how we can re-organize, re-tool and leverage on AI to ensure that we continue to give off our very best in the delivery of our mandate. This is why I find the theme for this congress; ***“Rethinking Higher Education Pedagogy and Funding in the Age of AI: Ethics, Equity, and Development Impact”*** not only timely, but extremely relevant.

2.0 Introduction

AI is reshaping what and how universities teach and how they are funded. For Ghana, grappling with constrained public finances, limited infrastructure, rapidly rising student numbers, and skills gaps linked to global labour-market shifts — AI presents both opportunities and risks.

AI-driven tools (from adaptive tutoring to large language models) are already changing teaching, assessment, research workflows, and administrative operations worldwide. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the African Union, and university networks have called for coordinated policy responses, to ensure that these technologies enlarge opportunities rather than amplify inequality or academic malpractices. Recently, there was a news headline that *Oxford University Gives Students Full Free ChatGPT Access*. The story said that “UK’s oldest university becomes the first to offer Open AI’s top technology for free”. All of its student and staff will be able to access and use ChatGPTedu, which is a version specifically built for educational institutions, and it includes more stringent rules on how data is used. We as educators need to be both

pragmatic and ethical in our response to the invasion of AI in our spaces.

For Ghana, the policy response is even more urgent - economic pressures constrain public spending on education while expectations for universities to deliver skills for a digital economy are rising. Designing pedagogy and financing that are ethical, equitable and development-oriented is therefore a national imperative and a practical challenge. There's the need for us to minimize operating in silos and leverage on our collective resources for the common good.

This congress seems to me as a response to that call, and is therefore designed to focus on specific pedagogical and financing challenges facing Ghanaian higher education and to explore practical strategies to redesign pedagogy and diversify funding, so that universities deliver development impact in this AI era.

3.0 Conference Proceedings

The Planning Committee for *the 22nd Biennial UTAG National Delegates Congress* has put together an all-encompassing

bouquet of proceedings including a keynote address to be delivered by the Hon. Haruna Iddrisu, Minister of Education on the “*The Role of Higher Education in National Development and the Future of AI Integration*”

Subsequent programmes will also feature expert-led sessions on insightful topics including;

- AI in Education: Guiding Responsible Innovation in Teaching and Research;
- Ethics and Inclusive Learning for All: Ensuring Academic Honesty, Transparency, and Integrity;
- Sustainable University Funding: Innovating Resilient Financial Models and
- Pedagogy for National Impact: Linking Learning, Research, and Skills Development.

Following the expiration of the tenure of the old National Executive Committee, a handing over ceremony will be held to officially commission the newly elected executives. There would also be networking opportunities for delegates to fraternize and make new contacts that will promote professional development as

well as collaboration in areas of teaching and research among others.

4.0 Conclusion and Expectations

As we open this important congress let us be reminded that the conversations we begin today are not simply about technology or finance, but about shaping a future where higher education serves as a true engine of inclusion, innovation, and national development.

The challenges before us are real — from limited resources to ethical dilemmas — but so are the opportunities to reimagine teaching, learning, and funding models that prepare our institutions and our graduates for a rapidly changing world.

I invite all of us to engage creatively, with a shared sense of responsibility, so that the insights shared here will not remain on paper but will translate into practical reforms that strengthen our universities and expand opportunity for generations to come.

Thank you for your attention, enjoy the rest of the proceedings.

Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo

Vice-Chancellor

September 30, 2025

