

SPEECH

BY

THE CHANCELLOR,

PROF. JOHN PANCRAS MUKASA SSEBUWUFU

AT THE

17TH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF KYAMBOGO UNIVERSITY

SCHEDULED FOR

21st, 22nd AND 23rd SEPTEMBER 2021

- Hon Dr. J.C. Muyingo, Minister of State for Higher Education and Guest of Honour
- Honourable Ministers present
- Honorable Members of Parliament present
- Religious Leaders
- Chairperson and members of Kyambogo University Council
- The Vice Chancellor & Other Principal Officers of Kyambogo University
- The Vice Chancellors, Rectors and Principals of other Institutions
- Deans of Schools and Faculties, and Heads of Department
- Members of Staff of Kyambogo University
- Distinguished Guests
- Graduands
- Ladies and Gentlemen

I warmly welcome our Guest of Honour, Hon Dr JC Muyingo - the Minister of State for higher Education. We thank you for sparing time out of your busy schedule and be with us at the second session of the Kyambogo University graduation ceremony. In the same vein, I wish once again to extend our sincere thanks to His Excellency Yoweri Tibuhaburwa Kaguta Museveni - President of the Republic of Uganda and the University's Visitor, who virtually officiated at the first session of the ceremony and Mama Janet Kataaha Museveni - the First Lady of Uganda and Minister of Education and Sports who also graced the occasion. We appreciated their thought provoking speeches and took note of the good advice contained therein. I also wish to welcome our graduands who are the reason we are assembled here today; their parents, guardians and benefactors who may be watching the proceedings online or on television as well as the honourable ministers and distinguished guests. Thank you for joining us. May the Almighty God bless each of you and make this day a reminder of everything we should be grateful for.

Honourable Minister, ladies and gentlemen, today Kyambogo University is holding its 17th Graduation virtually, with very limited physical presence here at the main Campus. This is the first virtual graduation ceremony that Kyambogo University is having due to the Covid-19 pandemic which has disrupted most

the normal activities of the University. Allow me to thank His Excellency the President and his Covid-19 Taskforce for their tireless efforts to manage the pandemic.

This 17th Graduation ceremony is a milestone which we attribute to the good leadership, commitment and corporation among the University staff at all levels who have worked hard, moreover during this difficult period, so we can be here this day. I pay special tribute to the Vice Chancellor and his team for the monumental achievements, including the increase in the number of staff with the PhD degree to over 100 and counting, which he has enumerated in his speech. All this has been achieved as a result of hard work and brainpower at its best. This is commendable performance, deserving a big applause.

Honourable Minister, ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to note that in spite of the covid-19 pandemic, the University has continued to forge collaboration with national, International institutions and partners in its quest to develop new technologies and knowledge in the various disciplines through acquisition of new ideas and ways of doing things. This is a healthy development for a university to remain vibrant and up to date. I am reliably informed that the University has also strengthened the capacity of its staff to carry out high-level research, innovation and knowledge generation. This is in addition to

teaching and learning using new methodologies. His Excellency the President witnessed some of these innovations during the Science exhibition held during the 16th graduation ceremony in December 2019. The University is committed to do even more in research and innovation for the scientific and technological advancement of our country.

Mr. Minister, I wish to register my sincere thank you to the Government of Uganda through our mother Ministry of Education and Sports, for taking special interest in supporting public universities, and in particular Kyambogo University. Through the African Development Bank (ADB) Higher Education, Science and Technology (HEST) Projects, the University was able to construct new buildings and renovate some of the existing ones. The new laboratories and workshops were equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and machinery, which are critically important in quality teaching and research. We cannot produce hand-on graduates without good equipment and tools.

In the same token, I wish to extend my appreciation to the 4th University Council headed by my good friend Professor John Okedi, for their good work and for the excellent contributions, which went a long way to stabilize the University. This allowed the University to run smoothly, with minimal disruptions if any. I

also welcome the new and 5th Council under the stewardship of my other very good friend Dr. Mary Goretti Nakabugo, and all members, for their continued guidance and support to management as they strive to ensure the University realizes its mission and vision.

And to all members of Senate, top management and staff, under the leadership of the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Eli Katunguka, I sincerely thank you for your efforts and hard work in the development of the University. You have wisely used the available resources and structures to improve service delivery despite the occasional differences and challenges, which are always there in a normal higher education institution. No doubt it's your commitment to duty that has led to the realization of this first ever virtual graduation ceremony. I commend you for the excellent teamwork and urge you to keep it up as we strive to take Kyambogo University to greater heights. I congratulate all members of staff who achieved PhD and Masters degrees during the period under review.

To our Graduands, I extend hearty congratulations you on reaching this milestone and on arriving at this long awaited day, which I am sure you have been anxiously looking forward to for a long time. I am pleased to learn that you have been able to adjust

to the “new normal” as a new way of living with the inconvenience of coping with the precautionary measures the Government put in place to control the spread of the covid-19 causing virus so we could get on with our lives; go about our work and to some extent be able to socialize with our fellow human beings. We are aware that you were supposed to graduate in December 2020, but due to the disruptions and lockdowns brought about by the covid-19 pandemic, you had to wait till now. I thank you for the patience and understanding. These were circumstances beyond our control.

The completion of your degrees is indeed a very important achievement to you and all those who supported you and contributed to your education. I thank you for staying the course all the way from kindergarten to university. Many you started school with fell by the way side. And as you exit the gates of your alma matter, Kyambogo University to join the world of work, I wish you, on behalf of the University, success and the very best in all your future endeavors. Be good ambassadors for your University.

56

However, I want you to remember that learning has not ended here; it is a continuous process. Be life-long learners because as you probably know, there are many benefits to being a life-long

learner. As the world continues to discover and invent new things and new ways of doing things through innovation and technological advances, it is critically important that you keep upgrading yourselves through the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. I implore you to put your degrees to good use. Do not ever allow yourselves to degenerate into the mentality that acquiring a degree here means you have 'arrived'.

In a special way, I congratulate all graduands who are graduating with first class honours degrees. Thank you for this excellent performance and be proud of it. A special tribute to the topmost first class graduands and our partners that donated trophies and other mementos in recognition of their outstanding performance

To the parents, guardians and benefactors, without exaggeration, graduation is a sweet dream come true for you too; I sincerely thank you for your immense financial and material support to the graduands, which enabled them to pursue their studies to successful completion. I know it has not always been easy but without your contribution, it might not have been possible for them to complete their studies here. This is indeed a huge investment you made on their behalf and the return on your investment is the degrees and other awards they are receiving today.

I thank you and wish safe journey back and happy celebrations.

Knowledge and skills for service. May good Lord richly bless you.

For God and my country

PROF. JOHN PANCRAS MUKASA SSEBUWUFU
CHANCELLOR
KYAMBOGO UNIVERSITY