

1. SALUTATION

Council of Convocation
Members of Convocation
Colleagues

2. INTRODUCTION

Strictly in line with Statute 26(a) of the Statutes of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, promulgated on October 29, 2004, we have assembled here this afternoon to receive a report from me as the Vice-Chancellor on the state of the University and its future plans. The Statute mentioned in the foregoing stipulates that,

“The Council of Convocation shall, in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor convene regular meetings of Convocation at least twice a year. At one of the meetings, the Vice-Chancellor shall present a report on the state of the University and its future plans”.

Consequently, I intend to prosecute the assignment in two major components relating to the provisions of the Statute. In other words, I will give you an indication of our hindsight as well as our foresight. However, considering that I only recently presented my Vision for the University during my Investiture, I will mention some aspects of it as they relate to certain thematic areas in outline form.

Significant gains have been made over the past and there is need to consolidate them while making good the shortcomings associated with earlier initiatives. It is in this connection that the following reports will be studied thoroughly:

- Review of Collegiate System;
- Conduct of Postgraduate Studies at KNUST; and
- ICT Policy for KNUST.

Recommendations from these reports will be studied carefully with the view to isolating for implementation, those that are likely to enhance efficiency and advance the course of the University. Considering that our Corporate Strategic Plan (PLAN2K14) is yet to be reviewed, we will be guided by its precepts as we make strides and look into the future with optimism. It will form the basis for anticipating change and managing it.

1. INVESTITURE OF VICE-CHANCELLOR AND APPOINTMENT OF PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR

You would all recall that on 14th October, 2007, I was invested as the 8th Vice-Chancellor of this great University. At the same ceremony, the Registrar and Director of Works and Physical Development were also inducted to their various offices. During the ceremony which was conducted by the Chancellor and witnessed by several stakeholders, I made it clear that my vision is *“to provide effective leadership to further develop the University into a world class centre of excellence for teaching and research”*. In addition, I indicated that *“I intend to work very closely with the Colleges, the entire staff and other stakeholders of the University to make KNUST a leading institution of higher learning in Africa and one of the best in the world”*.

Following my appointment and vacation of the position of Pro Vice- Chancellor, the University's Council Chairman, in accordance with Statute 13(e) and on the recommendations of the Vice-Chancellor appointed Prof. S. A. Osei, the Provost of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources to act as Pro Vice-Chancellor over the October 1st to December 31st, 2006 period. As you would recollect, elections were held on November 31st, 2006 for a new Pro Vice-Chancellor. Prof. W. O. Ellis, the Head of Department of Biochemistry and Biotechnology was accordingly elected and appointed Pro Vice-Chancellor for the period January 1st, 2007 to December 31st, 2008. Prof. S. A. Osei, thank you very much and congratulations to Prof. W. O. Ellis.

4. STUDENT AND STAFF STATISTICS

Our current student population is 22,560 which is made up of 70% (15,921) males and 30% (6,639) females. Out of the total, 96% (21,776) are Ghanaians with the remaining 4% (784) being international students. Students from Less Endowed Senior Secondary Schools make up 5% (1,100) of our total student population. There is, therefore, scope for us to admit more female students, more international students as well' as those from Less Endowed schools but this academic year, we expect only marginal increases in student admissions not exceeding 10% overall.

Our total staff strength is 3,277 with 79% (2,593) males and 21% (684) females. The Senior Staff population is 821, and 1,671 belong to the Junior Staff category with only 24% (785) being Senior Members. Out of the Senior Members, 635 (80%) are lecturers with the remaining 120 (20%) being non-teaching staff. The ratio of lecturers or teaching staff to students is a worrying development which must be tackled with all the urgency required. You can see that the ratio of junior and senior staff to senior members as well as the ratio of lecturers to students is worrying for an academic institution whose core business is teaching and research. This partly explains the recent policy directive that we can no longer employ junior and senior staff except in very critical areas including replacement on account of death, vacation of post and dismissal. On the other hand, we need to attract and retain more academic senior members to enhance the conduct of our core business.

Over the period under review, we lost a total of 15 members of staff: one Senior Member, six Senior Staff and eight Junior Staff. Eight students also died during the period. May their souls rest in the peace of our Lord.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PLANNING UNIT (QAPU)

This Unit continues to play the key role of monitoring, facilitating and assuring quality in the pursuance of the University's core business. In addition to managing student and staff data, this Unit marked over 55,000 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) for academic staff as part of the 2006/2007 first semester examinations. Interestingly, about 90% of the scripts were marked during the examination period and this facilitated the processing of the first semester examination results. In addition, a sample of 210 academic staff were assessed during the first semester of the 2006/2007 academic year and the data are being processed.

I am happy to report to Convocation that, the Unit has won another TALIF project amounting to \$199,855 under which the University will benefit in the following ways:

- Two Identity Card printers will be purchased for the University;

- A number of security cameras will be installed at vantage points on campus;
- Modern security gadgets will be purchased for security personnel to enhance their operations;
- New lighting systems will be installed at vantage points;
- Security personnel will be trained on modern techniques of combating crime;
- The QAPU and Security Services will be resourced; and
- Portals will be created for policy makers at KNUST.

The goal of the project is to enhance quality teaching and learning through the creation of a conducive environment devoid of crime.

The QAPU has also developed some criteria for assessing the performance of Departments to enable them to be ranked so that performing Departments can be given recognition and distressed Departments assisted. Presently, the criteria are being fine-tuned for discussion, approval and implementation soonest. The performance of academic Departments will be monitored to determine those whose performance levels would improve or decline. The Unit is also putting finishing touches to an instrument which will be used to assess the performance of non-teaching senior members of staff.

Again, I am happy to report to Convocation that the University's Corporate Strategic Plan is being implemented and monitored. Quarterly reports on the Plan are submitted to the University Council. All the Colleges have virtually finished preparing their Strategic Plans but what is left is the formal launching of these Plans. However, the College of Art and Social Sciences recently launched its Plan. In addition, the Action Plans for the various Colleges have been prepared. The Colleges have been given a format for reporting quarterly to the Strategic Plan Implementation Oversight Committee (SPOIC). The QAPU is in the process of collating their first quarter report for year 2007.

6. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

You would have noticed that there is very little activity on most of our construction sites for on-going projects on campus and in Sunyani. The reason is simple; we are yet to make good our indebtedness to the Contractors. As soon as the GET Fund Appropriation Bill is passed and the disbursement formula is approved by Parliament, and we are informed of our allocation for the year, we will make good our obligations to the Contractors so works can commence in earnest. In the interim, we are using part of our internally generated funds to substantially complete the School of Business complex.

Indeed, as I have explained in our earlier meetings, if we receive about ₵50billion as anticipated, we will be able to complete and put to use, the following projects based on criteria stated elsewhere:

- a. New Central Lecture Theatre;
- b. College of Engineering Lecture Theatre;

- c. College of Architecture and Planning Block;
- d. Faculty of Law Library;
- e. Staff Club and Tennis Court;
- f. Conference Room and Guest House near the Swimming Pool;
- and
- g. Technology Secondary School Administration Block.

In addition to the above, we are also hopeful that we may be able to access additional funds from the supplementary budget to support some of our on-going projects. Our intention is to -complete as many of the on-going projects as possible because there are several other needs to be considered including extension of the Administration Block, Offices for the nearly 80 lecturers and new Departments which do not have offices, bungalows for lecturers, an examination hall, hall of residence, extension of our Main Library, a new ICT Centre and an auditorium for students' activities; amongst others. We intend to hire a fund raiser to help us mobilise resources to commence work on some of these projects.

On a related development, over the past few months, there has been an upsurge in the demand for land for hostel and commercial development on campus. In order for the University to better co-ordinate all these activities and additional future ones, we have requested the Department of Planning to evolve a physical development plan to guide the growth and development of the University with a long term perspective in mind. The draft plan has been presented and discussed and we await submission of the final Plan.

7. LABORATORY EQUIPMENT

You will all agree with me that most of our laboratories in our Departments are currently in very poor conditions. This is posing serious challenges to these Departments in their effort to provide quality teaching and research. In an effort to overcome this, assistance has been provided to the College of Engineering to equip their laboratories to the tune of \$ 3 million. Efforts are currently underway to assist the College of Science to equip 27 laboratories under similar funding arrangements. These measures are all being undertaken to improve the state of our laboratories so as to enhance teaching, learning and research in our Colleges.

8. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

I believe that we all appreciate how critical finance is for the smooth governance and development of the University. Our expenditure returns for January 2007 indicate that we spent a total of nearly ₵23.8billion made up of the following: ₵16.4billion for personal emoluments, ₵3.2billion for administration expenses, ₵3.2billion for service activity expenses and ₵982million for investment activity expenses. On the income side, the most reliable source is the one that comes from government and it is used to pay personal emoluments. The other sources of income are rather unpredictable. Unfortunately, the on-going reforms in the public sector have also exerted their impact on our finances, including the prompt payment of salaries.

As we are all aware, Universities are funded by endowments, government grants (Subvention) and fees. In our part of the world, endowments are yet to catch up and therefore, we have to rely primarily on grants and fees which are either paid by government (in the case of government sponsored students) or from fee-paying students. In the 2006/2007 academic year, we received about \$7.7million from all our fee-paying students; about \$3.8million equivalent from Ghanaian fee paying students and \$3.9million from international students.

These amounts were used for various purposes including investments- in capital projects, sponsorship for members of staff to attend conferences, payment of allowances, etc. For the next academic year, there will be the need to further increase the number of fee-paying students.

These days, the University experiences a lot of delays in receiving salaries for its members of staff as well as other funds to support administration and service activity expenses. Most Departments may therefore, face challenges in guaranteeing quality teaching, learning and research. Indeed, it has been suggested that subsequent regular admissions be pegged to the equivalent number of students for which government provides funding, with the rest of the placements assigned to fee-paying students. This way, we can also be assured of a steady flow of resources to enhance the performance of our core business.

In view of the occasional delays in receiving our subvention and the fact that we necessarily have to borrow for short periods to enable us pay salaries promptly, in the past, we have accumulated an overdraft of about ₵6billion which we are currently servicing but need to retire soonest. In our circumstance, it may not be advisable to further borrow ₵16.5billion monthly, even if for short periods, to pay salaries because at a lending rate of about 19%, an interest on ₵24billion will build up very quickly and if we are not careful, we could build up a huge debt profile over a short period. This, therefore, explains why there is now a shift in policy to wait for the receipt of funds from government before the payment of salaries.

Currently, it is unclear what the effect of the- migration of our payroll to the Controller and Accountant General's Department would be, but some delays in the payment of salaries could occur. It may, therefore, be advisable for faculty members to have some personal reserves to cover themselves during the periods that payment of salaries are delayed.

Over the longer term, we may have to build up some strategic reserves from which we can pre-finance the payment of salaries but this can only be done after we have settled all our indebtedness to the banks and other stakeholders.

9. STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

In the area of strategic investments for our landed properties, I am happy to inform Convocation that, preliminary feasibility study for a proposed hotel on our Ridge property in Accra has been completed and the report distributed among various financial institutions including Horne Finance Company, National Investment Bank, ECOBANK, CAL Bank and TiesoGroup of Companies. It is intended that the project would be funded by a consortium of Banks including those mentioned in the foregoing. In the same vein, we have commenced discussions with HFC and CAL Bank about the development of our Nhyiaso properties. Convocation will be informed about progress as the developments unfold.

There is also a school of thought which seems to suggest that the Ridge property in Accra should be developed as a block of offices with two floors to be taken up by the Faculty of Distance Learning as the Accra Campus. This option is also attractive and, therefore, I have submitted it to the group undertaking the feasibility studies. I have also held extensive discussions with the Country Director of the International Finance Corporation about possible assistance with the development of our Ridge property in Accra. Unfortunately, their assistance may be limited to the conduct of feasibility studies and project preparation. In the

weeks ahead of us, we will also be engaging HFC on how best they can assist us develop our Nhyiaso properties under the framework of our recently signed MOU.

10. SECURITY ON CAMPUS

In spite of the improvements in the organisation and management of our Security Services in recent years, a lot still needs to be done. Day in and day out, we read reports of how students and staff are accosted by taxi drivers and all manner of people. I have been particularly concerned about the plight of our female students who cannot even walk around freely or move from one part of campus to the other either for a group or study discussion.

The location of the University with 19 surrounding communities and numerous entries and exit footpaths makes a comprehensive management of the situation, an elusive one. We have invited specialists from the National Security Council to help us address the situation and some of the options available are outlined as follows:

- a. The current numerical strength of nearly 266 persons in our Security Services is woefully inadequate considering their large area of operation. Hence, it has been decided that another batch of 100 persons will be recruited and trained to complement the existing number.
- b. We are going to pursue a vigorous training programme for our security staff. We will ensure that during the semester breaks, such training programmes take place on topics relevant to their work as a way of building up their confidence and capacity.
- c. Some stakeholders have been contacted to assist with the provision of street lights along all the heavily trafficked roads on campus. Our earlier approach of replacing bulbs on street lights on an ad hoc basis does not appear to be sustainable.
- d. We will ensure that all major entry and exit points into and out of the University are manned by security personnel with radio communication equipment.
- e. We have taken advantage of the invitation from the Honourable Minister of Youth and Employment to apply for 50 Community Protection Assistants under the youth employment programme to assist us better protect life and property on campus.
- f. We have started re-negotiating with the Ghana Police Service to see if the staff strength at the KNUST Police Station can be increased by about five persons but this, it is understood, is subject to the University providing suitable accommodation.
- g. The University has won a TALIF proposal to procure some security equipment including Close Circuit Television (CCTV) which will be used on a pilot basis in certain strategic locations.
- h. We intend to revive the foot patrols as well as patrols on bicycles and motor cycles.
- i. We have also procured five additional minibuses to complement the shuttle vehicles so that movement by students can be facilitated on campus. It would, therefore, be appreciated if the shuttle buses are patronised instead of taxis. We need to work

together with the SRC and get tough with the taxis since they have been identified to be connected with most of the heinous activities which have taken place on our campus this semester.

- j. Very soon, we will all be required to wear identity cards during working hours as a security measure.

11. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

ICT is gradually beginning to play a central role in most of the University's activities. Access to students and faculty has also increased but there are a number of problems militating against its further widespread usage, some of which problems we are tackling head on.

- a. Digital Village - Nearly 60 out of the 200 computers are out of order and procurement procedures are well advanced to replace them together with uninterrupted power supply systems and a few printers.
- b. Other ICT related investments including dedicated standalone generators, clustered and rack servers, as well as cluster of uninterrupted power supply systems have been ordered to enable the University enhance access to all students.
- c. In association with UCOM, the University has successfully deployed a campus-wide wireless internet connectivity III addition to what the NOC piloted within the immediate environs of the GUSS and SRC hostels. Only lecturers living along Asougya Road and a few along Buruboro Road currently enjoy any of these wireless connections. Our target is to ensure full wireless connectivity for the whole campus through a mesh. At the moment, free pilot wi-fi hotspots have been deployed at the Great Hall, the Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences as well as the SRC and GUSS Hostels. My vision is to ensure that all Senior Members on campus are connected by the end of this year using the Power Line Communication Technology.
- d. The NOC is currently working to connect the Security, Maintenance and Transport Units to the KNUST network through the Motorola subscriber module. Other units to be connected include the School of Medical Sciences at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, Horticulture and Animal Science Departments. It is understood that the connection to the School of Medical Sciences at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital is nearing completion.
- e. The Draft ICT Policy for the University has been prepared and it is currently being discussed.
- f. Eight Junior Systems Programmers have been employed to support the development and application of ICT at the Colleges and Central Administration. They will also assist with the development of Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP), intranet and extranet. Currently, the VOIP communication has been established between the NOC and the ICT centre but there is need to deploy it over the entire campus to save on telephone bills.

- g. Network security issues are emerging and therefore, the NOC is working to ensure that malware (viruses, spy ware, spam, worms, Trojans, etc) are dealt with. The issue of authentication is also being worked on to ensure that, unauthorised users do not get access to facilities on the KNUST system.
- h. In view of the increased usage of ICT on campus, we will have to seriously consider upgrading the bandwidth from the current 5Mbps to 10Mbps.
- i. The development of Management Information System (MIS) for the University is being considered as well as the use of networks and communication portals. To this end, we need to computerise the University's core business - teaching and learning and other administrative processes to enhance ICT services on campus. This will involve the following Information Systems: Academic Records, Finance, Library Management, Human Resources Management and an e-learning system. A proper student and faculty e-mail system and other web-based systems will be deployed.

What is exciting about all these is that, a University web-based portal is currently being built to integrate all possible and existing running on- line systems in the University. The portal will be used on both the University's fibre optic intranet and internet systems. The portal is expected to link the University to industry and also showcase the research done so far by various Departments. Information on academic work and other resources are also to be shared via the portal which has a help desk incorporated into it. The help desk will make use of KNUST's VOIP services.

12. UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Since my assumption of Office as Vice-Chancellor, the KNUST Hospital has been one of my major concerns and I have so far had two meetings with the staff, with a third one planned before the end of March, 2007. As you are aware, our Hospital is only a 100-bed General Hospital set up to cater for the health needs of students, university staff and dependants. It also renders services to the 19 communities surrounding the University and beyond.

The Hospital now operates a 24-hour service, an Accident and Emergency Unit as well as a Dental Clinic. The Theatre and Dispensary/Pharmacy Blocks are now being re-constructed at an estimated amount of nearly ₦1.5billion funded wholly by the University Hospital and the University.

Whereas the range of services on offer and the clientele at the Hospital have increased substantially over the past three years, its staff strength has not kept pace at all with these increases. Currently, there are only 5 permanent and 5 locum Doctors, 3 Pharmacists and 10 Technicians, 8 Laboratory Technologists and related staff, 59 nurses and 14 Nurse Assistants. There are only three part time specialists/consultants with a fourth consultant surgeon on contract.

When the above figures are pitched against the average monthly OPD attendance of nearly 8,000, the ageing staff and their limited numbers as well as the 24-hour services offered; we can appreciate the nature and scope of problems at the Hospital. These factors may, in part, account for an erosion in the level of service offered at the Hospital, but we have instituted a number of measures to enhance service delivery at the Hospital, including the following:

- a) Effective April 2nd 2007, student's health care services will be decentralised to the Students Clinic located at 3 Ayeduase Road. The Clinic will operate between 0730 and 1800 hours daily.
- b) Aggressive recruitment of professional staff of all categories has commenced in earnest with the University making significant concessions to allow the employment of critical staff.
- c) In-service training of staff, particularly nurses, through local short courses.
- d) Engagement of para-medical staff such as nurse aids and part time students from the College of Health Sciences to complement staff at the Hospital.
- e) Improvement in theatre and other facilities to facilitate accreditation from Medical and Dental Council as a way of attracting House Officers to do their training at the University Hospital.

I would like to officially inform Convocation about our successful work- study programme introduced at the University Hospital. Under this scheme, students from the College of Health Sciences; that is, School of Medical Sciences, Department of Nursing, Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences as well as the Department of Medical Laboratory Technology can now work at the University Hospital for 10 hours a week to earn additional income to support themselves. So far, we have had to cap the number of students on the scheme at 60 because of obvious financial constraints.

As a lot of us are aware, tremendous efforts have been made to enhance the physical appearance of our Hospital. Thus far, the male and female wards have been refurbished and fitted with air-conditioners. The maternity and children's wards have also been renovated at very high costs. I would like to appeal to all those who may have boycotted the University Hospital for some time now to return since there have been substantial improvements in the level of services offered. We do not need to pay higher prices for the same services offered elsewhere.

Drug refund should not be a problem any longer since in February and March 2007, we have spent ₵700million to clear the backlog up to December 2006. It is the Administration's intention to clear all outstanding drug refunds before the full implementation of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). This way, we will ensure a smooth switch over to the NHIS. I hope that by now, most of us have received our NHIS registration cards to enable us access quality health care.

The University Hospital is providing facilities to enable all students pay their health insurance premiums. Alternatively, any health insurance from any scheme in Ghana will be accepted by the Hospital. We intend to meet the SRC to clear all outstanding issues in this regard.

For the information of members of Convocation, specialist consultant services available at our Hospital include surgical, obstetrics and gynaecology, paediatrics and dental. An eye

clinic will be established before the end of the year and it will be manned by a specialist consultant.

While awaiting the recommendations of the Committee appointed to examine procedures at the Hospital, the staff have been challenged to offer the best of services at the Hospital. On my part, I will constantly monitor the situation and revert to you at the appropriate time regarding what progress is being made.

13. KNUST TEACHING HOSPITAL

It is also understood that the GET Fund has earmarked €6 billion for us to commence work on the KNUST Teaching Hospital project this year. Clearly, we will not be able to complete the entire project this year but with the earmarked amount, we will be able to tackle the Out Patients' Department. The Director of Works and Physical Development has now been directed to commence the detailed documentation and procurement procedures while awaiting the formal announcement from GET Fund.

14. REVISED CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION

You would all recall that we currently operate the most lenient criteria for promotion in all the public Universities in Ghana. The current publication requirements are one, two and three for promotion to Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor respectively. These requirements were set in the early 1980s when conditions in the country were so harsh that it was virtually impossible to carry out any research and publish results of same.

Since then, a lot of developments have taken place and these days, it is not uncommon to have applicants for promotion to say, Senior Lecturer, submitting four peer-reviewed and published journal papers instead of the stipulated one paper. Those seeking promotion to the other grades also almost always submit more than the specified minimum.

In addition to the above, we have in recent times received very disparaging and uncomplimentary remarks from our external assessors who virtually ridicule our requirements for promotion and indicate that they are inferior to their standards; including assessors from the public Universities in Ghana.

Considering that we, as a University, are gradually becoming an internationally acclaimed institution, it is appropriate that we review our criteria for promotion for both teaching and non-teaching staff. I have provided enough prompting to the University's Appointments and Promotions Committee that I would want this matter to be considered soonest so that our University can take its place of pride in the world comity of Universities.

Colleagues, I would like to assure all of you that the review process will be conducted strictly in line with Schedule B1.3, Subsection C(vi) of our Statutes.

15. EXTERNAL RELATIONS/INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES

Through the instrumentality of our Chancellor and the Chairman of the University Council, the KNUST signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Beijing Institute of Technology, Beijing - China on 17th October, 2006 during a visit to China. The MOU will facilitate collaboration in teaching, training and related outreach activities in areas such as Information Science/Technology, Materials Engineering, Mechanical Engineering,

Computer Science and Engineering, Management and Economics, as well as Chemical Engineering.

An eight-member delegation from Minnesota State University (MSU), Mankato, also paid a three-day working visit to the KNUST from 23rd to 26th October, 2006 to explore possible areas of co-operation. At the end of the visit, an MOU was signed with the objective of a long-term educational collaboration in fields which are compatible with the orientation and aspirations of KNUST and MSU, and which are relevant to the industrial, scientific, social and cultural interests and needs of Ghana and the USA. The collaboration's central focus is on student exchange, but would also include faculty/staff exchange and other types of co-operative projects such as joint research projects, cultural! commercial missions as well as internships. The delegation made a donation of a quantity of books to the Department of Nursing at the end of their visit. One professor from Minnesota State University has already visited the College of Engineering under this MOU.

The following MOUs were also recently signed:

- MOU between the KNUST and the Techiman Municipal Assembly as well as the Techiman Traditional Council Under the agreement, the Assembly and KNUST have acknowledged the desire to establish formal co-operative programmes beneficial to both parties. It is also to promote joint projects aimed at solving the problems of the Municipality;
- An MOU between the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) and the KNUST has been signed and under this agreement, KNUST is to facilitate the recruitment of our graduates by the arrangement of interviews and other activities on campus as part of the selection process. Further, KNUST will provide technical assistance in engineering to AGI either on the basis of consultancy of sponsored research and provide continuing education for AGI members in areas where KNUST has the capacity;
- Linkage agreement between KNUST and the West Virginia University for the exchange of students, collaboration of faculty in areas of teaching, research and service, development and implementation of joint seminars and conferences, exchange of scholarly materials, etc;
- MOU between KNUST College of Art and Social Sciences and the Ghana Tourist Board (GTB) to support the tourist-oriented disciplines to produce quality graduates, engage in joint research in providing Tourist Guide, involve the Department of Publishing Studies in the design, printing and publication of documents of GTB, etc;
- The College of Art and Social Sciences (CASS) and the Management Development and Productivity Institute (MDPI) signed an MOU on December 19, 2006. Under the MOU, the MDPI and the College have agreed upon initiatives which include, collaborative research, putting research materials, documents and equipment of either party at each other's disposal, and organising joint conferences, Seminars, lectures and colloquia of common interest;

- MOU between HFC Bank and KNUST under which the HFC has agreed among other things to put together, a financial package to assist us in the construction of a Commercial Centre on the University Campus, consider and evaluate the possibility of, investing in the commercialisation of selected Production Units of KNUST, and be a partner of a Consortium to be assembled by KNUST to develop the Nhyiaso and Ridge properties;
- MOU between the University of Guelph, Canada and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Previously, the Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources and the Faculty of Forest Resource Technology of the CANR were partners in the Tier-I project, Initiatives for Conservation in Northern Communities: Entrepreneurship Resources and Training; and
- A Chair in Banking and Finance has been established at the KNUST School of Business. The Chair, known as the “Ghana Association of Bankers Chair of Banking and Finance”, was established with an endowment of \$20,000.00. The first occupant of the Chair was also formally inducted into office.

We need to be reminded that the number of MOUs signed by our University is important but equally more important is the need to ensure that they are active and do not easily elapse as were the cases with some MOUs a few years ago. The Dean of International Programmes Office will monitor the various MOUs and provide me with a report on those that have either elapsed or are not active. Convocation will, at an appropriate time, be informed about progress of work on all the MOUs.

On the local scene, we have strived to maintain good neighbourliness with all the 19 surrounding communities. Soon after assuming office, I visited each of these communities with members of management in administration. The visits went extremely well and members of these communities now seem to understand our situation a little better.

16. STAFF HOUSING

We have used part of our internally generated funds to re-roof one of the long terrace-type housing units at Hall Six and we will endeavour to tackle the other two remaining blocks as soon as funds become available. These blocks need complete re-wiring and new joinery to make them safe for human habitation. We intend to use part of the same funds to rehabilitate the 24 Senior Member bungalows that are currently vacant. You would also recall that we have a long list of about 50 senior members who pre-financed rehabilitation works and have to be reimbursed various amounts totalling about ₵200million. Meanwhile, the total rent accruals are only about ₵89million per month. In line with this, we will introduce a more realistic rent regime at the appropriate time when salaries are adjusted.

The situation around the D-Line near the KNUST Police Station is even more precarious. We need to do something quickly otherwise we will lose all our investments but while this is being done, some of our colleagues cannot continue to pay monthly rents averaging between ₵6,000 and ₵38,000. Such rents in this day and age are simply not realistic and sustainable. The Director of Works and Physical Development has been challenged to evolve a well sought out scheme for the development of the Hall Six and D-Line staff housing area.

17. KNUST BASIC SCHOOLS

I wish to apprise members on Government's policy regarding basic schools in all public Universities, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Ghana Police Service, Armed Forces, Atomic Energy Commission, etc. Government has decided that since the running of these schools do not form part of the core business of the concerned institutions, it would no longer finance their activities. The withdrawal of Government funding has, therefore, changed the circumstances of these schools. The University is, therefore, required to foot all running costs at our basic schools including the payment of salaries of both teaching and administrative staff. For that matter, it has become necessary for parents to pay realistic fees. It is also worth mentioning that, it has come to the notice of the University Administration that academic standards are falling at the JSS. This has compelled some parents, especially, members of Convocation to transfer their wards from our schools to other private schools. Measures are being put in place to recruit the full complement of teachers for the schools as well as tackling other causes of the poor performance.

I must say that the payment of realistic fees did not go down well with FUSSAG and TEWU members but we are currently discussing the way forward with them. Negotiations stalled for a long time because in some cases, some of the members of these associations have two, three or in some cases, four wards in our schools and had real difficulties in paying the expenses given their salary levels. A final review of the fees has just been completed and we trust that they will now be acceptable to all stakeholders. Council of Convocation has also shown keen interest in the matter and are tackling other related issues. It is my belief that, very soon we will be able to restore the schools to their position among the best in the Region and the products will also secure admission to their desired senior secondary schools.

18. MAIN ENTRY AND EXIT GATES

The major entry and exit points to and from the University do not befit our status. Consequently, new designs have been done, costed and placed on tender. Commencing with the Ahinsan Gate, these gates will be gradually reconstructed so that we announce to all visitors the fact that they are now entering or leaving the University campus.

19. CAMPUS ROADS

Roads in the University are gradually deteriorating on account of increased traffic levels and years of neglect. The Roads Unit continued with their routine maintenance activities but major links such as the Ayeduase Road and the Bosomtwe Link are being rehabilitated by the Department of Urban Roads and Ghana Highway Authority respectively for a total of over ₵30billion. The contracts are managed solely by these agencies and therefore, we do not seem to have any control over the contractors. It is however, hoped that they will be completed on schedule to help ease vehicular movement on campus.

Council of Convocation has met with the Contractor rehabilitating the Ayeduase road and are satisfied with the explanations of the delays but have prevailed upon him to complete the works as soon as possible. A new road running from Ayeduase New Site Junction through Agricultural Mechanisation to Hall Six, the Hostel Area to link the Accra Road is to be done for us by the Ghana Highway Authority, As usual, some delays are to be expected. Using a similar arrangement, we have begun discussions with the Department of Feeder Roads to explore the possibility of rehabilitating driveways along Buroburo Road for us.

Most of the drains in the Hall Six Area need reconstruction and, in addition, the potholes on roads in the area need to be patched. The latter activity will be done before the rains set in. We also need to mobilise resources to rehabilitate the road running in front of the Botanic Gardens and roads within the Hall Six Area. It is gradually becoming unsafe for both pedestrians and motorists.

20. ELECTRICITY

Members would recall that the University has started replacing the old underground cables on campus, with the view to improving power supply in view of the fact that a greater percentage of our activities require electricity. As of now, we are left with the link between Ridge Road and the Old Laundry substations; a distance of 2km. We have been granted permit by the National Procurement Board to buy the cable from the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) for the completion of the project. The cables are extremely expensive but we will find money to procure them very quickly.

To minimise the effects of the power rationing by the ECG, each Hall of residence has been provided with a power generating set to light some parts of the Halls during power outages. Being mindful of the various ongoing infrastructural developments on campus, coupled with the increasing population, it has become necessary to increase the number of transformers on campus to augment the existing ones. For that matter, we have started the process of procuring four new transformers for installation at the following areas: Faculty of Law, Hall Seven, College of Art and Social Sciences' new site as well as the Old Laundry area.

Lastly, work is also progressing on the Bulk Supply Station near Boadi and it is our hope that upon completion of the project, hopefully, in July, 2007, power supply to the University and its immediate environs would be improved considerably. However, we need to considerably reduce our electricity consumption which currently stands at €2billion monthly.

21. SEWAGE PLANT

After several years of negotiations and hard work, I am happy to inform Convocation that at long last, the Sewage Plant has been refurbished at a cost of £600,000 and it is currently operating. It was commissioned on February 28, 2007. We are extremely happy that we no more discharge directly into the Wewe Stream and that the treated matter can be reused as fertilizer. We have now been able to address most of the earlier concerns raised by the Environmental Protection Agency. The daily inflows to the plant are relatively higher than anticipated. Current daily inflows of 1,250m³ have been recorded primarily because of the explosion in student numbers.

Over the longer term, consideration will have to be given to siting a second waste treatment plant on campus; possibly in the vicinity of the cluster of hostels to the east of Hall Six.

22. WATER CONSUMPTION

For some unexplained reason, we have not been able to control water consumption on campus in a manner which will meaningfully reflect on the tariffs we pay; even during the semester breaks. We are currently billed an average of nearly 20 million gallons monthly for water consumption. As you would expect, part of the water is lost due to leakage and part is actually consumed by all of us. Apart from the leakage, we need to conserve water as well as explore other alternative sources to the Ghana Water Company Limited's (GWCL) water

supply. We have been informed by our experts here on campus that we have high ground water supply potential. Consequently, we will continue with our on-going efforts to explore ground water resources on campus through boreholes. The Water Consultant has been advised to co-ordinate all on-going efforts by various Halls and Colleges to drill boreholes to augment the GWCL supply. We cannot afford any further delay; the University of Ghana has already gone ahead of KNUST in this regard.

Currently, the GWCL has constructed six boreholes at different locations on campus sponsored by the University, out of which three are in use. These six boreholes were funded by the Government of Ghana for the GWCL to mitigate the water supply problem in the Kumasi area. KNUST was given two at the discretion of the Regional GWCL in view of the on- going dialogue on water supply at KNUST. The recent drilling of two boreholes near the Swimming Pool and at the Junior Staff Quarters (E- Line) near the Police Station was contracted by the GWCL.

23. UNIVERSITY VILLAGE NEAR APPIADU

In line with my vision, negotiations have been completed for the acquisition of 50 acres of land near Appiadu to be used for private housing development for senior members, senior staff and junior staff. The negotiated prices are ₵40million for a 100" X 100" plot while an 80" X 100" will also cost c30million. We are currently designing the layout and are also discussing with CAL Bank to organise some financing for the acquisition of these plots. The plots will be allocated strictly on first-come, first-served basis because interest expressed so far has been very high with nearly 550 members of staff expressing interest in the scheme.

24. "GHANA@50" EXHIBITION

A five-day exhibition was held over the March 5th to 9th, 2007 period as our contribution to the celebration of Ghana@50 and also, to showcase our contribution to Ghana's socio-economic development. The theme of the exhibition was "KNUST - The Heart of Industry". All, our six Colleges displayed various items which were admired by all visitors to the stands including students, members of the University community and other stakeholders.

At the College of Health Sciences stand, for example, visitors had an opportunity to undergo a complete check-up including body mass index, pressure, blood grouping, sickling status and other similar tests. The College of Engineering also exhibited a Nurse-call system, electrophoresis supply units, solar lantern, oil extractor, hammer mill, etc.

I was particularly impressed about what was on display at the College of Science stand. Our brilliant students had displayed several innovative programmes for central time tabling, conduct of elections, introduction of bar codes for various products, etc, etc. The College of Art and Social Sciences was very well organised and displayed the capability of the College. The jewellery, metal products, ceramics, textiles and textile products, batik tie and dye, leather and cane products were simply attractive.

Animal products, bedside lamps decorated with feathers, flower pots, tree products, python skins, etc were all on display at the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources' stand while various physical models of buildings and future communities, pre cast concrete elements and future outlook of various communities were on display at the College of Architecture and Planning stand.

Apart from the exhibition, the University in conjunction with the World Bank also hosted the "Ghana@50 Development Dialogue Series" on the theme 'Achieving Middle Income Country Status: Ghana's Potential and Challenges" on 5th March, 2007. This was delivered by the President of the World Bank in the Great Hall and it was transmitted live on JOY FM. The Centre for Cultural and African Studies of the University also organised the "Ghana@50 Choralfest". This programme brought together Choirs, Singing Groups, Jazz and Cultural Groups totalling 16 from the communities around the University and within to perform on 9th March, 2007. The University Choir and Agya Koo Nimo also put up a splendid performance as part of the celebrations dubbed "Whispers". It was a night of Hymns, gospel songs, patriotic songs and drama. It took place on 11th March, 2007.

In view of the rather short notice, Technology Consultancy Centre, the co-ordinators of the exhibition did very well. Congratulations, TCC and Centre for Cultural and African Studies; and we will call on you again. Partly as a result of our experience, I intend to put together a Standing Committee on Exhibitions for the University and every College is encouraged to prepare some materials to be displayed by this group in future.

I would also like to place on record that the Ashanti Region's parade for the 50th anniversary celebration of Ghana's independence was held at the Paa Joe Stadium on 6th March, 2007.

25. DISTANCE LEARNING

We started our Distance Learning programme in 2004 to deliver both on-going and new programmes of study from all the Colleges of the University in the distance learning mode through the use of a wide range of technologies.

The Faculty of Distance Learning envisioned to significantly increase equitable access to relevant, affordable, cost effective and flexible tertiary education and training by making available, a wide variety of demand driven undergraduate, graduate and continuing professional education programmes anytime, anywhere through the use of a wide range of technologies.

The Faculty also aims to facilitate the establishment of a number of Learning Centres throughout the country. These centres will provide learning support to learners living in different parts of the country, reducing travel expenses while maximising educational development in the country. One of such off-campus Distance Learning Centres has already been established in Accra and there are plans to establish another one at Sunyani.

Presently, the Faculty is offering programmes via distance education from the College of Architecture and Planning, College of Engineering and the College of Science. It also offers RMIT/AVU Degree and Diploma programmes in Computer Science. In all, there are 304 students registered on all the various distance learning programmes. Very soon, it will offer and coordinate additional undergraduate and graduate programmes from other Colleges. The Centre hopes to mount additional programmes in B.Sc. (Electrical Engineering) as well as the Commonwealth of Learning MBA and MPA degrees effective the 2007/2008 academic year. Indeed, the University signed the agreement to this effect on March 16, 2007. The Centre is primarily funded from students' fees and TALIF.

Considering our constraints with on-campus admissions, the Faculty of Distance Learning offers tremendous advantages for us to increase student intake through our off-campus programmes. Indeed, this was one of the cornerstones of my vision and very soon, Academic Board will be considering the name of this Faculty as well as its status within the University.

26. STUDENTS' FINANCIAL SERVICES OFFICE

I am happy to inform Convocation that a Students Financial Services Office has been established in the Registrar's Offices with the objective of securing funds for disbursement to needy students. Working in a very collaborative manner, criteria have been evolved to help determine who the needy students are and who qualifies for funds mobilised by the Office. Currently, there are 167 students on various scholarship schemes in the University. So far, about 420 students have applied for funding to enable them to pursue their various programmes of study in the University.

Using a c50million start-up money provided by the Trust Bank, a bank account has been established into which such future donations meant for similar purposes will be channelled. In addition, similar funds provided earlier on by our stakeholders will also be deposited into this account and used for the same purpose. We intend to secure more funds from investment so that the interest can be skimmed off to meet students' needs. This, we believe, is the only way of sustaining this initiative. So far, the Office has mobilised c528,455,724 out of which c446,455,722 has been disbursed to 167 needy students mentioned earlier on.

It is also expected that the Office and the various Units or Offices providing work-study opportunities for students would ensure that the scheme benefits really needy students. Over the long term, the Office will be expected to liaise closely with industry, financial institutions and other stakeholders to secure more reliable and sustainable sources of funds for our needy students.

27. BOOKSHOP

Most University bookshops are well stocked with new and used books, stationery of various kinds, souvenirs, magazines, journals and other materials required for academic work. Consequently, they are able to perform the role expected of them; that is, meeting the books, stationery and other needs of students, faculty and stakeholders.

Unfortunately, our Bookshop has not been able to perform this role with admiration in the past. In addition to employing some members of staff who are paid by the University, it has not been able to make substantial profits. Based on the lengthy debates and consultations, the erstwhile Management Committee recommended that the University should divest its interest in the Bookshop; a recommendation I fully endorse. Consequently, the Committee invited bids from three short-listed firms. The bids have been analysed and one of the three firms will be given a franchise to run the University Bookshop on sound commercial basis. While the prices will be competitive, the new company will employ its own staff, including students who will be working there on part-time basis, pay its rent and all other utility charges as well as pay part of its profits to the University annually. As you would see, this will be far more beneficial than the current situation where the University is pretending to run the Bookshop but in reality, it is not. In the days ahead, we will seek Council's approval to bring this proposal to fruition.

28. ALUMNI AFFAIRS

As I indicated in my Investiture Address, our Alumni are very important in our strive to move the University forward and hence, the need to work very closely with them. I, therefore, participated in most of their activities including attending Branch meetings and the Akuse Congress. Over the February 5th to 10th, 2007 period, I travelled with the National Executive of the Alumni Association to Sunyani, Wa, Bolgatanga and Tamale to rekindle activities of the various branches as well as mobilise resources for the commencement of the construction of the Alumni Hostel on campus. We were well received in each of these places and I took advantage of the opportunity to inform them about the status of their University, our future plans and the role that they can play.

While the impact of this tour is yet to be felt, I am of the considered view that, it was extremely useful. I, therefore, intend to continue working closely with Alumni to the benefit of our Alma Mater. I will participate in the tour of the other regional capitals.

I would also like to use this opportunity to appeal to members of Convocation to begin taking active interest in the affairs of the Alumni Association. This year, the Fun Games will be held on campus in June and I expect most of you to participate in them. We on campus constitute the highest concentration of KNUST Alumni anywhere in the world and hence, we have a wonderful opportunity to influence the affairs of our association to the benefit of our Alma Mater. Let us all resolve to participate in activities organised by our Association.

As a sign of our preparedness to work with the Association, we will, in consultation with the National Executive, invite distinguished Alumni as Guest Speakers at our Congregations starting with the 2006/2007 Congregation to be held in May, 2007.

29. VISITORS TO THE UNIVERSITY

Several prominent personalities paid visits to the University during the period under review. They included a nine-member Parliamentary Select Committee on Education, the Nigerian High Commissioner to Ghana, the German Ambassador to Ghana, Ashanti Regional Director of the Electricity Company of Ghana, the Ashanti Regional Director of the Department of Urban Roads and the Municipal Chief Executive of Techiman Municipal Assembly as well as the Omanhene of Techiman Traditional area. Others included the Mayor of Kumasi, Omanhene of the Wenchi Traditional Area, Council of the Ghana Institution of Surveyors and the Country Director of the World Bank Resident Mission in Accra.

The rest are a delegation of Presbyterian Ministers, His Excellency Mr. Horst Kohler, President of the Federal Republic of Germany, who paid a day's visit to KNUST as part of his official visit to Ghana during which time he presented a seminar on "The Brain Drain and its Effects on Ghana and Africa" in the Great Hall Conference Room. He was accompanied by other dignitaries including His Excellency, Mr. Grant Ohemeng Kesse, Ghana's Ambassador to Germany and Dr. Kwame Addo Kuffuor, Minister of Defence. Follow up discussions have been held with the German Ambassador in Accra and it is anticipated that some benefits will inure to the University.

The President of the World Bank Group, Mr. Paul Wolfowitz also delivered a public lecture on the theme 'Achieving Middle Income Country Status for Ghana: Potentials and Challenges Lessons from International Experience'. This lecture, which took place on 5th March 2007, was very well patronised by members of the University community and other stakeholders.

An immediate effect of this is the complete refurbishment and restocking of the Development Information Centre at our Library.

In addition to the above, several other personalities visited the Vice- Chancellor and the University with the view to explore possible areas of collaboration or the possibility of the agencies represented by the Visitors providing some assistance to the University. On my part, I have also followed up on some of these visits and indications are that the University will benefit from such link arrangements.

30. NEGOTIATIONS FOR ENHANCED REMUNERATION

Under the aegis of the Standing Joint Negotiation Committee (SJNC) of the Public Universities, our local UTAG leaders have continued to participate in negotiations for enhanced remuneration for members. One outcome of the work of the Committee is that, in consultation with the Government, it has been agreed that a target of ₪12.5million per month should be the first point of the salary scale of lecturers over a five-year period ending in 2008. For several technical difficulties, the bulk of this amount cannot be considered as basic salary. Instead, payment should, therefore, be made in basic salary together with other allowances.

Between 2004 and 2006, the SJNC has achieved a lot for us. Please allow me to recount some of these achievements. In 2004, the Government accepted and paid a consolidation of 30% fixed overtime into the basic salary together with a 15% increase in new basic salary. To keep to the benchmarks set along our road map, in 2005, the SJNC was able to negotiate an across board 24.5% increase in salary levels over the previous year for lecturers. This comprised 15% increase in basic salary and 12.5% increase in professional allowance to 62.5%. Again, in 2006, there was a 15% increase in basic salary as well as a 12.5% increase in professional allowance to 75%. In' addition, there was an introduction of a Special Book Allowance of \$1,260 as well as an existing facility of \$700. On the whole, this amounted to a total of 35.45% increase over salary levels in 2005 for a Professor and 42.80% increase for a lecturer.

A number of scenarios have been outlined for the next two years to enable us remain on our road map but the most attractive is the one that will allow us to remain on course; that is, to achieve a target of ₪12.5million for 2008. This will mean a 62% increase in basic salary and a 25% increase in professional allowance to 100%. Indeed, this should be the starting point for a newly appointed lecturer. This will constitute the basis of our discussions, through the SJNC, with Government this year. At this point, I would like us to acknowledge the good work done so far by our UTAG leadership.

31. CONCLUSION

Colleagues, as you may have realised from the above address, there are several on-going initiatives and efforts to improve the conditions under which we work and students study in the University. You all have a part to play by constantly reminding the Administration and Council of Convocation about what you consider to be either wrong, unfair, or even unacceptable. In this connection, I would like to remind you about a very simple Chinese proverb that says "...it is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness". If you do not light the candle, the only - choice will be to curse the darkness but I would like all of you to

join me light the candle so that KNUST would have light on its path and lamp onto its feet.
For members of Convocation, cursing the darkness should really never be an option.

Long live KNUST and God bless us all.

Thank you.

PROFESSOR KWASI KWAFO ADARKWA
VICE-CHANCELLOR, KNUST
27TH MARCH, 2007