

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL, AGYEWODIN ADU GYAMFI AMPEM, ON THE OCCASION OF THE SPECIAL CONGREGATION OF THE UNIVERSITY TO AWARD AN HONORARY DOCTOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE TO HIS EXCELLENCY, MR. KOFI ATTA ANNAN, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, ON MONDAY, 24TH AUGUST, 1998, AT THE GREAT HALL

Representative of the President, Dr. Mrs. Mary Grant, our very distinguished guest, Mr. Kofi Atta Annan, The Honourable Minister of Education, Mrs. Christine Amoako-Nuamah, Honourable Members of Council of State, Honourable Ministers of State, Your Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps, Otumfuo Asantehene's Representative, Nananom, Members of the University Council, Members of Convocation, Staff and Students of the University, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and privilege for me to welcome all of you to this Special Congregation which has been convened to honour an illustrious son of Ghana and Africa.

Such occasions are rare. The University of Science and Technology could not have done better than honouring one of its own former students with the Doctor of Science Degree.

Congregations of this kind symbolise the culmination of one's academic, professional and dedicated service endeavours to humanity. It is the sublimation of one's hopes and aspirations. Unalloyed service to this country and the international community has characterised Mr. Kofi Annan's career as a Public Servant par excellence.

Your Excellency the President, Your Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, at this point, I would like to touch on one vital aim of University education - the search for truth. Truth as a phenomenon is as old as man. It has defied a concise definition over the years by philosophers. I do not claim, therefore, to know its definition; that will be presumptuous on my part. But as we all know, and as stated by Donne over three hundred and fifty years ago, "Truth stands" and we should be able to defend it, even at the peril of our lives, though it can be elusive. Truth is linked up with a critical and analytical mind, which is one of the aims of this Institution. It is devoid of all emotions.

Of late there have been newspaper comments on the delayed appointment of a substantive Vice-Chancellor for this University - a post which has been vacant since November, 1997. Though some of these discussions may have been made in good faith, they appear to be politicising the issue. It is sad to note that some people have even introduced elements of ethnic and other considerations into these discussions on the appointment of the Chief Executive of this University. There may be delays on the part of the University Council, but Council also considers it has a duty - nay responsibility - to make the right choice.

Perhaps many people are not aware that the comments made in some of the newspapers find their way on the Internet. Such embarrassing comments will definitely affect the image of the University. I would like to assure all of you that Council shall never depart from the noble ideas of truth, honesty and integrity. The canons of fairplay and justice shall also be adopted in choosing the new vice-chancellor when the Council meets at the end of August, 1998. The University of Science and Technology has a reputation to maintain which has taken about thirty-seven years to cultivate and nothing shall be done to detract from it. The young University Council, therefore, needs the support and encouragement of all members of staff.

Your Excellency, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, once again, I welcome you to this unique Congregation. Thank you for your rapt attention.

God bless.

ADDRESS BY THE ACTING VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROF. A. K. TUAH, ON THE OCCASION OF THE AWARD OF AN HONORARY DOCTOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE TO HIS EXCELLENCY MR. KOFI ANNAN, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION AT A SPECIAL CONGREGATION ON MONDAY 24TH AUGUST, 1998, AT THE GREAT HALL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI.

Representative of The President, The Honourable Minister of Education, Ministers of State, Representative of Otumfuo the Asantehene, Nananom, Your Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps, Members of the University Council,

Members of Convocation, Staff and Students of the University, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today marks an important landmark in the annals of the University of Science and Technology. It is my pleasant duty as the host and Acting Vice-Chancellor to welcome all of you to this ceremony.

To those who have been attending our congregation ceremonies in the past, it may appear rather odd that we should have decided upon a day like this to call a meeting of congregation. We have invited you here to witness the award of an honorary Doctor of Science Degree to a distinguished son of Ghana, His Excellency MR. KOFI ANNAN, Secretary-General of the United Nations Organisation. As you are no doubt aware, His Excellency Mr. Annan's schedule of duties is very tight. He has been travelling all over the world in connection with his official duties. Even though the decision to honour him was taken last year, it has not been possible to get confirmation of his acceptance to attend the special congregation until now. I feel proud and greatly honoured to be involved in the conferment of the Doctor of Science Degree (*honoris causa*) on the world's topmost "Scribe" and the highest Civil Servant of the World body. It is with a sense of humility that I stand here to extend a hearty welcome once again to all of you. We appreciate that you have spared your precious time at your disposal to grace the occasion with your presence in unusually large numbers.

Today's event is one of which all those associated with this University should justly feel proud. It is not without significance that the University of Science and Technology has decided to honour our eminent compatriot, His Excellency Kofi Annan. The foundations of those undergraduate studies were laid in this very institution some forty years ago. This is perhaps a unique coincidence that may never occur again in the immediate future.

The occasion also provides a very strong opportunity for all of us to ponder over some of the problems facing our educational system in seeing clearly and try to find solutions to them or improve upon them. The major problem is that of funding. The Government continues to provide financial support through the taxpayer's money for the recurrent and development expenditure. The University is grateful to the Government of Ghana for these subventions. On our part, this University is dedicated to the prudent and productive utilisation of every cedi that the Government spends on this Institution. Higher education, especially in science and technology, is an expensive business but the rewards

are enormous and beneficial not only to the individual but also to the nation as a whole.

We may recapitulate some of the objectives which the founders of this University had in their minds' eye when it was established. The University was charged with the responsibility of training scientists, technologists, engineers and industrialists to spearhead the socio-economic development of the country. So far, the University has justified the huge investments made by Government by turning out high level manpower. Graduates of the University are found in responsible positions not only in Ghana but also all over the world.

Ghanaians are aware that education is the key to national development. That is why the Government continues to make huge investments in education in spite of the financial constraints as a result of competing demands on the nation's scarce resources by other equally important sectors of the economy. The rise of Mr. Kofi Annan, the first African, South of the Sahara to the very high position of Secretary-General of the United Nations is a testimony to the quality of education in Ghana. It is significant to note that the first black man to occupy the Presidency of the United Nations General Assembly was the late Mr. Alex Quayson-Sackey, also a Ghanaian.

But a lot more needs to be done. As we prepare to usher in the 21st century barely two years ahead of us, we need men and women who can face the impending challenges with courage and confidence to take over from our ageing mothers and fathers.

As I have mentioned earlier on, it is obvious that the Government alone cannot provide all the resources needed to keep the University going. All stakeholders concerned about the future of higher education in this country should accept the big challenge of supplementing Government's efforts. On this note, may I take this opportunity to reiterate my appeal to business houses, financial institutions, benevolent organisations and capable individuals to invest in the provision, not only of student hostels but also residential accommodation for staff. In my report to congregation early this year, I mentioned that some estate developers had approached the University for land for the construction of student hostels. A technical committee has been appointed to work an agreement, acceptable to the University and the investors.

Residential accommodation for staff is also one major problem facing the University. Some of our young lecturers do not have their own accommodation.

Some of them live outside Kumasi and travel many miles to teach at the University. Surely, it is too risky and wearisome for such members of staff to travel long distances to teach and return daily. Such lecturers will definitely fall into the lap of any organisation willing to offer better conditions of service. The University has not shirked its contractual obligations with regard to housing members of staff. It continues to rent private houses for staff to supplement our bungalows. Because of inadequate resources, only a few houses can be hired for staff.

At this juncture, I would like to appeal to the Alumni both at home and abroad, to come to the aid of our *Alma Mater*. We should consider what we can do for our *Alma Mater* and not what we can receive from her. Perhaps we may take a cue from the shining example of Mr. Sam Jonah, Chief Executive of the Ashanti Goldfields Company Limited, Obuasi, through whose ingenuity and initiative he was able to mobilise funds for the construction of a residential accommodation for his *Alma Mater*, Adisadel College, Cape Coast. I hope you will accept the challenge and live up to expectation.

I do not want to bore you with a long address. Since this is a special congregation, I deliberately have left out reports from the Faculties and Research units, but have concentrated on one major area of great concern to the University administration - Residential accommodation. The message is unambiguous. The U.S.T. needs the resources and the inspiration to unleash its full energies to propel the wheels of socio-economic development of the country faster so as to improve the quality of lives of the people.

God bless.

Thank you.

CITATION

KOFI ATTA ANNAN DOCTOR OF SCIENCE (DSc) HONORIS CAUSA

KOFI ATTA ANNAN, Seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations, your unflinching commitment to economic development and social justice has finally reached its apotheosis with your well-deserved elevation to the highest position of primus in the International Civil Service. Your Alma Mater today honours

you for the honour you have brought to yourself, to University of Science and Technology, to Ghana and to the entire continent of Africa.

“Ex Africa semper aliquid novi” - goes the pithy aphorism of the ancient Roman poet - Pliny the Elder, and which was quoted by the late Alex Quayson-Sackey, another Ghanaian diplomat of no mean dimension when he became the first African to preside over the United Nations General Assembly. The Latin words of Pliny still reverberate in our ears, more appropriate now than ever before and as we assemble here today not only to intone a felicitous hymnal to your home-coming but also to share with the rest of mankind your profession of faith in development and in freedom for all men.

As the first Secretary-General ever to emerge from the ranks of the United Nations Organization, you bring to the position a wealth of experience and expertise crystallized by more than three decades of service with the World Organization. You have served in Addis Ababa, Cairo, Geneva, Ismailia and at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in various capacities, especially in the areas of management, administration, budget, finance and above all, peace-keeping.

Until your appointment as Secretary-General, your most outstanding contribution to the United Nations was in the area of peace-keeping where you excelled in sensitive and delicate diplomatic negotiations and supervision. Your peace-keeping career began in 1992 when you were appointed Assistant Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. This was followed a year later in March, 1993, with your appointment as Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations, a position you held with assiduity, diligence and zeal until your recent elevation to the high office of Secretary-General.

Outside your official duties at the United Nations, you were also involved for several years in the areas of education and the welfare and protection of the United Nations' international staff.

Your service to humanity has transcended the immediate confines of the United Nations. You have also been of service to your motherland. During a two-year break from United Nations service from 1974 to 1976, you served as the Managing Director of the Ghana Tourist Development Company, serving concurrently on its Board and on the Ghana Tourist Control Board.

Kofi Atta Annan, University of Science and Technology honours you today for distinguished service to the international community through your prominent role in international diplomacy; for your distinguished service to humanity through your outstanding role in Bosnia and Somalia in peace-keeping duties as United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations; and for your outstanding pioneering role worthy of emulation as the first International Civil Servant to have risen through the ranks of the United Nations bureaucracy to head the World Organisation and the first sub-Saharan African to become the Secretary-General of the United Nations. We also honour you for your exceptional managerial ability and administrative acumen, which measure up to all the tested canons of international assessment. Please step forward, as it were, on those Homeric meadows of asphodels immortalized by the Poets and receive with pride and satisfaction this University's Degree of Doctor of Science (DSc) Honoris Causa.

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S STATEMENT
TO THE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI,
ON 24TH AUGUST, 1998**

Dear young friends, Members of the Faculty, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to be addressing all of you in this distinguished seat of learning. And I am delighted to be back in the Garden City of Ghana; this city that through the Kum tree and the legend of the copper sword embodies the very essence of history and heritage and, at the same time, fertility and future growth.

The two wonderful years (1958 - 59) I spent studying at this university were formative ones.

As vice-president of the Ghana National Students' Association, I had an early taste of negotiating. Running with the track team taught me the importance of a sound body. And the great friends I made here helped me understand the importance of never losing touch with the place we come from.

You may know that I also went to universities in the United States and Europe. As a young man whose country had gained independence only a few years earlier, I learned much from my time at Macalaster College, MIT and the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva. But today, more than four decades after Ghana's independence, there are young Americans who are

learning just as much from Ghana.

Last year, an American local newspaper, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, ran a series of articles about African American teenagers visiting Ghana to discover, as the saying goes, their roots. They spent a great deal of time in Kumasi. One of them remarked that here, some of the children don't even have pencils and paper; whereas back home in Milwaukee, she went on, children don't take advantage of opportunities to get an education.

What impressed all of the African Americans was hearing young people here say that to them, there was no excuse not to do well in school.

You see, your fellow citizens have given you a reputation to live up to. You must not let them down.

Your contemporaries in other continents have formed a strong idea of your abilities. Do not let their belief in you wither on the vine. For I would venture that this is no longer the age where Africans learn from Americans; nor the age where the so-called third world learns from the so-called first world, the south learns from the north, the east from the west. No, this is the age where we recognize that there is only one world - ours; and that in that world, we all learn from each other.

The role of any institution of learning is to prepare us for what is to come; and I know that the time you have spent here will have prepared you admirably. The global outlook which this University will have instilled in you is indispensable in today's world.

Issues before the United Nations, such as the environment, drugs, pandemics, sustainable development, are issues that cut across all frontiers. This is the message we are trying to send to the world. Yet too many people still think in local terms, constrained by national boundaries.

We all need to be more sensitive to the concerns of others, to think in much broader terms that carry us beyond narrow confines. And to do that, we need the power of education, of communication, of information.

The challenges of our age are problems without passports; to address them we need blueprints without borders. The world, and the United Nations, needs the inventiveness of young people like you to help provide them.

And we need to speak up for the rights of all humankind, not just our own. To recognize that when one person's rights are diminished, it diminishes us all.

We were all taught at an early age that life is not fair. Life itself has since demonstrated to each and every one of us that, indeed, it is not. The young people who visited you from Milwaukee gave expression to that fact. Yet we continue every day to discover new reasons to be disappointed, dismayed and distraught at the injustices this would inflict on those less fortunate than ourselves. So we should. And so we must continue to feel, however great our frustration, however absent the immediate remedy.

I am sure all of us have seen a beggar cross the street and thought, there but for the grace of God go I. All of us must have known, or at least heard of, someone dying of AIDS and wondered, why them and not me? All of us have read about - and many of us have known personally - people who suffered persecution for their beliefs; and we have asked ourselves, would I have had the courage to speak up like that?

Young friends, there is a way of translating that anxiety into action; there is a way to stop it from sinking into despair and defeat, and to direct it instead into caring, commitment and courage. And that is to answer the call to public service: the cause of service to humankind.

It has been said that the true measure of success in a human life is what we give back to our fellow men and women. Our strongest role models - whether they are the heroes of legends or the man or woman next door - personify this quality beyond any other. But you will possess that quality on one condition: that you have the courage to believe that what you do makes a difference. The year of 1961, when I left university to go out into the world, was also the year my predecessor Dag Hammarskjöld died.

Let me share with you his last words to the staff of the UN at headquarters in New York - in fact, his last public words anywhere before his plane crashed during a mission to the Congo a week later.

This is what he said: "Dejection and despair lead to defeatism - and defeat. It is false pride to boast to the world about the importance of one's work, but it is false humility, and finally just as destructive, not to recognize - and recognize with gratitude - that one's work has a sense. Let us avoid the second fallacy as carefully as the first, and let us work in the conviction that our work has a meaning beyond the narrow and individual one and has meant something for

man[kind]."

Those words present us with a challenge, but they also provide us with a source of strength. I cannot advise you about your choices for the future. That is a job for those closest to you, and above all, for your own hearts and minds.

But I can encourage you. In this changing world of new challenges we need, more than ever before, dedicated and talented individuals to enter public service. More than ever before, we need people like you sitting here today to make the choice of service to humankind.

It is an easy choice to make. Some of you may be put off by the perceived weakness of the public institutions of our day: some of you may be tempted by the immediate gains offered by the private sector.

To the first, I would say: joining a winning team is an easy option. It is precisely when an institution, a cause, is struggling to find its way that it needs the support of the best and most courageous people.

To the second, I would say: the reward of working in the service of humanity goes far beyond material gain; it is the reward of knowing that one person - you - can truly make a difference.

When we think of intervention today, we think of armies, alliances and organizations. But intervention can mean many things. Yes, a military alliance can intervene when instability threatens a region. Yes, a community can intervene when its own ranks are threatened by intolerance.

But there is also such a thing as individual intervention. You may think to yourself, what difference can one person make in the face of giant corporations, ecological threats and organized conflicts?

Yet there have always been, and always will be, those who make a difference one by one. Look at Nelson Mandela, who went from prisoner to president because of his unbending integrity, bravery and beliefs. Look at Aung San Suu Kyi, who remains a lodestar of democratic values after years under house arrest in Burma. Look at Jody Williams, the woman from Vermont who with thousands of other ordinary citizens around the world helped spur 128 Governments to negotiate and sign the Treaty banning anti-personnel mines. Look at Raoul Wallenberg, who as a Swedish diplomat in Budapest, saved the lives of tens of thousands of Hungarian-Jews during World War II.

The last example is especially moving for me, both as Secretary-General of the United Nations and in my personal capacity; for Raoul is my wife's uncle.

Raoul's life and achievements highlighted the vital role of the individual amidst conflict and suffering. His intervention gave hope to victims, encouraged them to fight and resist, to hang on and bear witness. It aroused our collective consciousness. The mystery remains, however: why were and are there so few Raouls?

These individuals' lives should be an inspiration for others to act; for future generations to act; for all of us to act. As Edmund Burke wrote: "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

It matters less whether you choose to go into the service of your government, local or federal, or an organization, non-governmental or inter-governmental.

It matters not if you work in a refugee camp here in Africa or an environmental programme halfway across the world. What matters is that you choose to devote your life to the service of a better world for your fellow men and women.

Build on your courage, act on your innocence; explore new frontiers where older, wiser, more cautious people might not. Failure is part of success; if you don't fail now and then, it probably means you are not pushing hard enough. And remember that courage does not mean lack of fear, for only the foolish are fearless; it means doing things in spite of your fear. Confront those fears; take risks for what you believe, for it is only then that you will find what you are capable of.

You will discover that if your intentions are good, the worst your opponents can do to you is really not that bad. Because it is often those who believe their mission to be the most important, who are most likely to make it succeed; and it is ultimately those brave enough to believe they can make a difference, who become the ones who do. So go on, and make your difference in this world. The very best of luck to you all.

DR. KOFI ATTA ANNAN