

## VICE CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH ON THE 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION AND INSTALLATION OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> CHANCELLOR OF CAVENDISH UNIVERSITY UGANDA

- The Chancellor of Cavendish University Uganda (CUU) and former President of the United Republic of Federal Republic of Nigeria,
- The Chief Guest of Today's function [[representing President Yoweri Museveni](#)]
- Wife to the Chancellor and former First Lady of the United Republic of Nigeria, Mama Patience Jonathan
- The team that came with the Chancellor from Nigeria
- The Chancellor of BSU, the Rt Rev Dr. Fred Sheldon Mwesigwa (also Bishop of Ankole Diocese),
- Hon. Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament present,
- The Chairman of University Council of CUU, Prof. Olubayi
- The University Special Guest today, Prof. Pamela Mbabazi (Chairperson Uganda NPA)
- The Commencement Speaker of today, Hon Dr. Ham-Mukasa Mulira (former Minister of ICT),
- Members of University Advisory Council of CUU,
- Excellences, Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Members of Diplomatic Corps,
- Senior Government officials,
- Distinguished guests, graduands, parents, sponsors, families and friends,
- Members of staff and students of CUU
- My wife (who is my better half), Mrs Khellen Musiime Mugisha
- Ladies and Gentlemen

This is the second scientific and virtual graduation ceremony we are holding because of the lockdown necessitated by the need to curb the spread of the Novel Coronavirus.

Last year, our first ever Scientific and Virtual graduation was presided over by the previous Chancellor, H.E. Benjamin Mkapa, who was former President of the United Republic of Tanzania. He died in July 2020 after a short illness. I request that we observe a moment of silence in his honour. ([May his soul rest in eternal peace](#)).

Following his sudden demise, we wished to find another eminent son of Africa with an equally impeccable record and Pan-African values to replace him. It took us with the help of the UAC some time but eventually we found one. Today, we present H.E. Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, the former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as our new Chancellor.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the Chief Guest, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, the purpose of holding a scientific and virtual graduation is to enable our deserving students to obtain their academic papers in time so they can secure jobs, obtain promotions at the workplace or pursue further education and make their contribution to the world. Today, CUU will add to the world's workforce a total of 620 graduates who are well trained, competent and intellectually grounded to participate in crafting workable solutions to the social and development challenges confronting humanity today and in the future.

Last year, our theme was: "Research and Innovation as tools to achieve Growth and Development". As usual, we lived to the expectations of our theme. Mr. Chancellor, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to account as follows:

1. When Covid-19 forced education institutions to shut down, we transited our students to online study with ease; and they did not lose time due to the Covid-19 pandemic;

2. we were the first university in Uganda to conduct a scientific and virtual graduation and so became instrumental in guiding others;
3. we were among the first three Higher Education Institutions to obtain NCHE approval for ODeL;
4. we were among the few approved to conduct online and hybrid examinations;
5. we introduced technology-enabled open book examinations in the country;
6. we were probably the only private university that maintained its full-time staff on a monthly pay during the lockdown period;
7. our debating students carried on with online students' debate competitions virtually and reached international level;
8. our LLB students continued with virtual Moot Court competitions and also reached finals at the international level;
9. we organized the first online education conference for universities to help in managing online teaching and learning. We thank the several universities that participated in it;
10. our staff made several presentations to different professional groups on teaching and learning and advised on public health actions needed during the Covid-19 pandemic;
11. we were selected for the second year in a row as the Gold Award winners in the Best Private University category in a voting exercise conducted by the Consumer Choice Awards;
12. because of the aforesaid achievements, I was again voted to the Uganda Vice Chancellors' Forum Leadership as Vice Chairman. A few months ago, I was appointed to the UNCHE to represent the Vice Chancellors of all Private Universities in Uganda.

The theme we chose for this year is: **technology-enabled learning, innovation and growth**. Technology and innovation are the tools with which this world will be made better and its challenges solved sustainably. As a university, we have used technology to deploy global best practices in teaching and learning to enable our learners get what their colleagues in the world's best universities get.

Now let me speak directly to the graduands: this is your generation's world to shape. You are graduating amidst a pandemic that has shaken up the status quo in ways that are unprecedented. The countries of the world – both rich and poor – are worried. You have seen that those you expected to be in charge do not have all the answers; and some are not even asking the right questions.

Therefore, if this world is to get better, it is going to be up to you. You have to think and act faster than the generations before you; to run where they walked and to make discoveries and innovations at a younger age than those who did it before you. Innovation should no longer be seen as a preserve of the few, deemed to be intellectually gifted in a special way.

Every one of you must put your brains to work either individually or in teams to find solutions to the problems afflicting our world and add value to human life by crafting newer, faster and more efficient ways of production and service delivery.

This year, we designed a new Mission Statement: *to transform and inspire students to reach their full potential in employment, entrepreneurship and ethical leadership*. The added aspect is ethical leadership. To succeed in ethical leadership, you must ground yourselves in values that last: responsibility, honesty, hard work, fairness, generosity, excellence, patriotism and Pan Africanism for those of you with an African heritage. As *Jim Hayhurst* said: *true success is the attainment of purpose without compromising core values*. We have taught you never to celebrate good grades if you cheated exams; or profits if you evaded taxes; or promotion if you bribed your way into office. Fortunately, CUU students have demonstrated unwavering integrity based on our culture of excellence, ethics and professionalism. For this, I am most proud to recommend you to the world of industry and Public Service for immediate engagement. I know you will not disappoint.

Finally, as you lead, ensure to transform yourselves into generational thinkers. The biggest enemy of progress is short term thinking. If you are below 30, think of what you will sell to earn income when you are 70. A generational thinker takes a long-term view and sows seeds into the future. Generational thinkers plan and act in a way that ensures those coming after them will find it easier and better; so that they solve problems of the future instead of the present. This requires strategic thinking, life-long learning and planned action for which you have been given appropriate tools. Continue to observe SOPs for Covid-19 and help to remind those around you to do the same.

I wish you God's choicest blessings in all your endeavours. **SUCCESS BEGINS AT CAVENDISH. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.**

**Prof. John Francis Mugisha (PhD, FAIPH)**  
**Vice Chancellor**