



## **CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH AT THE ELEVENTH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF CAVENDISH UNIVERSITY UGANDA (CUU) ON 25 AUGUST 2022**

Dear graduands, parents and sponsors, I take this occasion to congratulate you for attaining this big achievement. I am fully aware of the rigorous process that students have to go through to reach the final stage of graduation. I know that nothing is ever simple and that our students to put in hard work, extra effort and untiring commitment to achieve this. I am also aware that not every student that enrolls for a programme of study in a university makes it to the graduation. Completion rates in universities continue to dwindle due to several factors such as financial limitations, academic pressures, social and emotional challenges especially during pandemic times like these and inability to cope with the speed and rigours of the intellectual formation process. I therefore applaud your resilience and commitment to success.

As a parent, I know how anxious the parents can be when their children are pursuing university education knowing that unlike secondary schools, there is less monitoring and fewer social regulations based on assumptions that university students are mature learners. Sometimes these assumptions are not correct and students easily fall prey to attractions of urban life where most universities are located. I therefore know your excitement as parents on seeing your children climb the academic hill to the very top. I congratulate you too.

I recognise the university leadership efforts to surpass its pre-pandemic performance at a time when many universities are still struggling to recover from the effects of Covid-19. I am aware that CUU has greatly surpassed its pre-pandemic staffing position with more staff having attained Doctoral Degrees thereby increasing the PhD ratio. I also know that the university received seven Technical Experts from Nigeria who are paid by the home Government. I am very proud of our Law students who scooped awards after winning different Moot Court competitions demonstrating the good quality of education being offered here.

I got to learn that the Vice Chancellor was elected to the Board of the Inter University Council of East Africa (IUCEA), which is a regional body coordinating universities; and to the Regional Research and Development Working Group of the East African Technology Commission (EASTECO). This is a sign of recognition of the contribution this university is making in the region. I congratulate Prof. John Mugisha, upon climbing to such heights. I know that he will become an effective ambassador of Cavendish University Uganda.

I thank the university for setting up a modern laboratory for physical sciences to support the programme of Higher Education Certificate and other science programmes. I am also proud of the fact that our current and former students are marketable and some are appointed into big offices of responsibility, a sign that the university education we offer is industry-relevant. We should continue to ensure that our curriculum intersects and engages with the social and economic challenges within the national, regional, continental and global contexts; and that our

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students will need a sufficient dose of global comparative socio-economic tools of analysis to be able to examine the current situation and take advantage of gaps in different countries where there is immediate need for solutions at the local, national and international levels.

For you my graduands, you are the reason we are having today's celebration. Some people travelled from very far and some of us flew in from distant countries. I want you to take this occasion seriously and to reward all of us by focusing on life success. I want you to understand that what differentiates the powerful from the powerless in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is mindset. The powerful have understood that they can create a lifestyle they desire. They are driven from within; they apply continuous learning and acquisition of relevant knowledge and skills to fill gaps and solve challenges of society while utilising the power of their mind.

Today's accomplishment is a sufficient sign that you can achieve more if you continue to work hard. You have no excuse to fail. I charge you to go out and change the world beginning with your families and communities. May God bless you.

H.E. Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan

Former President, Federal Republic of Nigeria

Chancellor, Cavendish University Uganda

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