

VICE CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH ON THE 11TH GRADUATION OF CAVENDISH UNIVERSITY UGANDA

Distinguished guests, parents, sponsors, staff, students and graduands, you are all warmly welcome to the eleventh graduation ceremony of Cavendish University Uganda (CUU). This is our **first physical graduation** since the onslaught of the Covid-19 pandemic towards the close of 2019. But unlike the pre-pandemic physical graduation ceremonies, this will be blended because the pandemic has taught us that we can serve both the physically present and the distant guests and students.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, the pandemic was a *litmus paper test* for identifying progressive and innovative academic institutions from old-style, non-creative ones as the latter literally shut down while the former quickly deployed technology and continued to engage and effectively teach their students online. CUU, having installed an effective learning platform in 2017 was among the few universities that seamlessly transitioned their learners to continue studying online.

While several institutions are still struggling to cope with effects of Covid-19, we as CUU decided to challenge ourselves to not just recover from the impact of the pandemic but to exceed our level of performance at the time of the pandemic outbreak. Hence, our theme for this year is: "Surpassing Pre-Pandemic Performance Through Scholarship, Innovation and Growth". We are still in the third quarter of the year but we have so far lived to the expectations of our theme:

Twice, our Law students have won the national Moot Court competitions. Our lecturers are publishing with leading journals and winning research grants. Actually today, we are launching two journals: Cavendish Journal of Social Sciences and Management (CJSSM) and Cavendish Law Journal (CLJ).

For thought leadership, some of our senior staff have been recognised in various fora and others appointed to Boards of important national and regional bodies. CCUU is now represented in the Board of Inter-University Council for East Africa and on the Regional Research Working Group of East African Technology Commission. We are seeing improved teaching and learning that is juxtaposed with a wide variety of student and staff experiences. We have improved our internal processes such as assessment mechanisms, the turn-around time for marking and grading, student admission procedures, lecturer class attendance, and learner academic support through student peer-tutoring and establishment of academic consultation clinics.

I thank the staff and students of CUU for hard work, unwavering commitment, resilience and innovation that enabled us to surpass our performance. By the same token, I appreciate the oversight role and guidance provided by the NCHE as well as the support provided by our stakeholders especially Maarifa Education – our sponsors. We would be limping without all this support and collaboration.

I would like to remind the graduands of the CUU 2022 class that it is your duty as a generation to shape your world. We have equipped you with the required knowledge, skills and competences and exposed you to a rigorous academic process enriched with sufficient in-class and out-of-class experiences. With those, I am very confident that you will confront this world with courage and optimism; and change it for the better. *I recommend you to the world of industry and Public Service for immediate recruitment to various positions. I know that you will perform.* I wish you God's choicest blessings in all your endeavours. **SUCCESS BEGINS AT CAVENDISH.**

Prof. John Francis Mugisha

Vice Chancellor