

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY PROFESSOR KWASI KWAFO ADARKWA, VICE-
CHANCELLOR OF KNUST AT THE FIRST JOINT SERVICE OF THE STUDENTS'
CHAPLAINCY COUNCIL IN THE SECOND SEMESTER OF THE 2009/2010
ACADEMIC YEAR ON SUNDAY, 24TH JANUARY, 2010 AT 7.00AM AT THE ROYAL
PARADE GROUNDS ON THE THEME “PREPARE TO THY GOD” (AMOS 4:12)**

Salutation

Dear Christian Friends

Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to have the opportunity once again to address you at this special gathering. It is, indeed, a unique opportunity and we give thanks to the Almighty God for His unflinching grace and protection throughout the Christmas and New Year festivities. Many were our fears and anxieties when we were entering into the Christmas festivities but God has, once again, shown all of us mercy and we are here today without any blemish to begin our second semester activities. We can only remain grateful for this grace and mercy. The earthquake scare that hit our nation recently following the devastating one in Haiti as well as several other warning signals of the end times which have come to pass should serve as warning signals for us as Christians to straighten our paths. We must, indeed, be prepared to meet our God any time from now. Since this is the first time I am meeting you officially this year, I wish you all, a very fruitful and happy belated New Year.

As you may be aware, my administration has devoted a lot of attention to our Joint Services; and we have always made it a point to attend without fail. It was, therefore, unfortunate that other official assignments had taken me away from the country when the last Joint Service was held. I was briefed on my return by the Pro Vice-Chancellor about how the Service was very well organised and the intercessory prayer session for the Royal Parade Grounds as grounds for worship.

As you may have noticed, this semester marks the final semester in this University for about 6,000 undergraduate students. It is, therefore, incumbent upon you to approach your studies with all seriousness. Work harder this time round so you would be able to maintain or even improve upon your CWAs. Declare this semester a “no trail semester” so that you would not be saddled with the unfortunate incident of having to come back after vacation to re-write any trailed paper. I suspect you should be far advanced in your respective project works at this time. If you have not yet done so, then let me remind you that you have a lot of catching up to do. Be reminded that, a lot of businesses have sprung up from the project works of students and it was purely based on this vision that we introduced the Business Incubator Project on campus so that students with viable venture ideas can turn them into businesses. As a result, please attach all seriousness to your project work as it could serve as your future business and proceed according to the guidance of your supervisors.

Dear Christian friends, as has been the tradition of these services, the Vice-Chancellor is offered the opportunity to address students on issues of mutual interest and I would want to use this opportunity to address you on some few issues that I think are of significance to our mutual enterprise of teaching and learning on this campus.

The Royal Parade Grounds

As you may have noticed, the Royal Parade Grounds is now taking a new look for the better. Plans are afoot to complete the remaining works in the next few days following which a formal inauguration ceremony will be held next week; precisely on Thursday, 28th February, 2010. When the project takes its final shape, I think we would all be happy and put to rest, the several rumours that characterised the beginning of the project. I have noticed that some of you have even started using some of the facilities at the grounds such as the ATM machines and the wireless internet service. Guidelines have now been developed to guide the use of this facility.

College of Science Complex

The College of Science complex which was funded by the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) is finally nearing completion. The small outstanding civil works is expected to be completed so that the project will be put to use this semester. The contractor working on the project has promised to hand over the project on 6th March, 2010 because of some sentimental reasons. However, in view of our recent experiences, it is realistic to expect that the handing over will take place towards the end of March, 2010. The project has 11 Laboratories, a students' common room, seven 150-capacity Lecture Theatres, 10 Computer Laboratories, 73 lecturers' offices, 4 general offices, one 300-capacity lecture theatre, and 4 General Offices; among other facilities. With this, we will see the end of the congestion in the College of Science and ease up a lot of space in the Chemistry Building and the Social Sciences Block. This means that several Departments in the Faculty of Social Sciences would now be better accommodated after the migration of the Departments of Computer Science and Mathematics to the new College of Science complex.

Paa Joe Stadium

Our favourite Paa Joe Stadium has also seen some modest facelift following the completion of preparatory works for the laying of tartan tracks. We are reliably informed that the contractor is now clearing the tartan materials at the Tema Port. If everything works out well, it is expected that the contractor will hand over the stadium before the end of March, 2010. We are in touch with MTN which is planning a grand commissioning of the refurbished stadium. Just as the Royal Parade Grounds, we will also evolved guidelines for the use of the new Paa Joe Stadium.

Security Barracks

In order to boost security on campus so that you can conduct your affairs in a freer environment, we have finished with the recruitment and training of fifty additional security personnel and very

soon, they would be more visible on campus. We have also recently purchased one double cabin pick-up vehicle for the Security in order to facilitate their routine patrols on campus.

A lot of you may not be aware but let me inform you that, the University has gone very far with the construction of a new four-storey Residential Block of 16 flats for our Security Services and barring any last minute hitches, the project will be completed in June, this year. The building, which is the first phase of the resettlement of Security Services from their current location, commenced some months ago and has reached the roofing stage.

You may have also noticed that, the campus is now a little more well lit; especially, the road from the Faculty area to the Hall Six residential area and Gaza. Appeals made to some corporate organisations and individuals to help us with the provision of street lights on campus have yielded some modest dividends. Dupaul Company Limited has graciously donated eighty treated poles to the University and the Office of the Registrar and the Director of Works are coordinating delivery of these poles. The SRC is also procuring additional poles to complement these efforts. When all this is through, it is expected that security on campus; especially, in the night would be very much improved but let me remind you once again that, security is best ensured when one is cautious.

Examinations Complex

As you would recall, during the last semester's examinations, some of you wrote your examinations in the yet to be completed examination complex following several challenges we were faced with the use of the Old Laundry and the Great Hall. The four-storey examination complex has facilities for 120 lecturers' offices, and eight 250-capacity examination halls among other facilities. In order to aid access to the building for our colleagues who are physically challenged, the complex would have two elevators to ease access to the top floors and a close circuit television (CCTV) facility would also be installed to enhance security within and outside the building; especially during examinations. Barring any last minute hitches, the first phase of the two-phased project would be completed this year so that we can put it to full use during the

end of the second semester examinations. It is expected that the conduct of examinations would be very much enhanced following the completion of the entire project.

College of Art and Social Sciences Building

You would all recall that the contract for work on this building was determined last semester because of non-performance and it has been re-awarded. The new contractor entered site towards the end of last semester and work is progressing steadily. If everything goes well, this structure should be completed on schedule and we intend to provide more resources from our 2010 GETFund allocation to enable us complete this project soonest.

Several other projects are also progressing steadily. Projects such as the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development (BIRD)'s Training Centre, and the Business School complex among others, are at various levels of completion. In the near future, it is our hope that all these projects will be completed and put to use.

Fire Outbreaks on Campus

A few days ago, we had a fire outbreak at the Non-Residential facility near the Chemistry Building. The fire started at the Computer Centre and in the process, it destroyed the server and about 30 work stations together with their associated furniture, carpets and curtains. Some slight structural damage also occurred to the walls. Work will soon start on the rehabilitation and with the assistance of GRASAG, work will soon be completed to enhance academic work.

Reports I have received on fire occurrences indicate that, majority of such incidents are as a result of carelessness. If we are a little more careful, we can avoid, or reduce to the barest minimum, these rampant fire outbreaks. We have also had cause to complain about the use of faulty and unapproved electrical appliances by students. Several students use heaters to boil water and also do several other things but occasionally leave them unattended to. I have instructed the Hall authorities to take precautionary measures to ensure that fire outbreaks do not occur in the Halls.

New Dean of Students

I would want to use this opportunity to officially introduce to you, your new Dean of Students. In the scheme of affairs of the University, the Dean of Students of the University is to provide welfare and support services. The Office has, through its various activities and programmes, been assisting students to be responsible members of the University community. The Dean of Students acts as the *locos parentis* to all students of the University and takes on the functions and responsibilities of a parent for students. Generally, the Dean of Students is responsible for the planning, co-ordinating and implementing a variety of programmes, activities and services which are designed to assist and support students in achieving academic and personal success while they remain junior members in *statu pupillari*.

Following the retirement of Prof Merlin Mensah, the University had to appoint another person to take over the administration of the Dean of Students' Office and we have no other person than Dr. Kofi Owusu-Daaku of the Department of Theoretical and Applied Biology as our new Dean of Students. I would like to sincerely thank Prof Merlin Mensah for his invaluable contribution to the wellbeing of students of this campus. He was so passionate about the welfare of students that, sometimes we thought he was being too lenient but as the parent of students, he had to do that to ensure the best for students. It is my hope that you will give Dr. Owusu-Daaku your continued support for the smooth running of this office. Dr. Owusu-Daaku, congratulations and I wish you a successful tenure of office.

Conclusion

The semester has just begun with the end of registration last Friday but let me remind you that, time and tide waits for no man. Therefore, what you ought to do today must be done today for tomorrow will also come with its own challenges and problems.

It is also expected that, this semester you will conduct elections for a new executive members for the Student Representative Council (SRC). Over the years, we have had several problems with

the conduct of elections by students some of which even ended up at the law courts. Let fairness prevail so that in the end, we can all celebrate and welcome our new SRC executive members.

On this note, I wish you all the best in the semester and God bless you.

Thank you.