

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY PROF. D. A. OHENE ADU, DEAN – FACULTY OF FINE ART
ON BEHALF OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AT THE 2010 STARS CONFERENCE OF THE
US PEACE CORPS IN GHANA ON FRIDAY, 4TH JUNE, 2010.**

Mr Chairman

Peace Corps Volunteers

Students

Invited Guests

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen

I would like to prelude my short address by conveying the sincere apologies of the Vice-Chancellor of this University, Prof. Adarkwa for his inability to be here with you in person. This year being his last year in office as the Vice-Chancellor of the University, he wished to be here with you in person but unfortunately, other University assignment has taken him to the United States. He sends his sincere apologies and best wishes for a successful Conference.

Mr Chairman, I would like to take advantage of this moment to appreciate the great effort of all Peace Corps Volunteers who despite our seemingly unfriendly Ghanaian environment which is beset with tropical diseases such as malaria and guinea worm; amongst others, accept appointments to certain remote areas in the country to help in teaching and learning of certain strategic subjects. This is most gratifying in the sense that, even some of our own Ghanaian youth on the mandated national service do not want to accept postings to such deprived areas of our country where their services are mostly needed and I personally would like to thank all Volunteers for their fellow feeling and sense of service to the Ghanaian community and humanity in general. In fact, the country has benefited immensely from such volunteer activities, especially, in the education and health sectors of our economy and we are grateful for that.

Throughout the years I have related with the Peace Corps Volunteers, I have been made aware that, Peace Corps Volunteers have primarily been working as teachers in subjects such as Mathematics, Science, Information Communication Technology (ICT), Art, etc in Senior High Schools, Schools for the Deaf as well as in our Junior High Schools. They have in addition been offering expert services in

areas of health, agriculture, entrepreneurship and small business development, water and sanitation as well as in matters bordering on the environment.

Ladies and gentlemen, you will bear with me that, since the maiden Conference which was organised here on the campus of KNUST in 2006, the Students Taking Action Reaching for Success (STARS) Conferences have afforded Ghanaian students from second cycle institutions, the opportunity to interact with teachers from different cultural backgrounds as well as enjoy lectures in HIV/AIDS, Information Communication Technology, youth leadership, science and technology, etc. It is my hope that students who have had the opportunity of partaking in this Conference would make good use of the skills and attitudes acquired during this Conference and serve as role models to their colleagues and thereby make a remarkable impact in their respective schools and societies. As youth from a relatively deprived community, these teachers I believe have been able to influence you positively to be optimistic about your abilities to make it in life even in this our unique environment.

It may interest you to know that, globalisation and technological advancement has brought about the unfortunate phenomenon of a divided world with sharp differences between the rich and the poor. At present, there are serious problems of human existence such as food insecurity, high levels of maternal and infant mortality and environmental degradation in the developing world such as Ghana. In order for us to better our fortunes and achieve the heights that have been achieved by our compatriots, we need to build on the strengths of our education which is viewed the world over as an agent for human and social development. The quality of human resource base of any country is crucial if that country is to experience accelerated development and achieve competitive advantage. It is in fact one of the major critical success factors of every nation.

I, therefore, take this opportunity to urge all our youth gathered here to be very serious with their studies as a means of achieving success in life. It does not matter the environment one comes from. So far as one has the opportunity to get educated, one stands the chance of shaking off the shackles of ignorance and its attendant negative effects. One is bound to positively affect one's society better when one attains education and this is the reason why we must do all in our part to give the youth of our county, quality education.

I would like to conclude my short address by thanking all the organisers and participants of this year's STARS Conference. In my opinion, every effort or resource spent in making sure that this Conference was successful is a direct investment into the future of Ghana and I do really appreciate all your indefatigable efforts in this regard.

Once again, we are most grateful to the United States Peace Corps Volunteers for organising these workshops to develop the potential of Ghanaian youth in deprived communities and thereby assisting such students to become effective future leaders of Ghana. God bless you all.