

VICE CHANCELLOR'S GRADUATION
SPEECH



THE 27th GRADUATION SPEECH

BY

Prof. Paul Katamba

Vice Chancellor, Bugema University

November 7, 2021

VICE CHANCELLOR MESSAGE FOR 2021 GRADUATION

Our Chief Guest **Hon Dr J. C. Muyingo Minister of state for Higher
Education,**

Honorable Minister of Parliament- who is this? Title not clear

The R.D.C. Luweero District,

The LC5 Chairperson, Luweero District,

The area Member of Parliament, HonSekitoleko

Your Excellences representing the various High Commissions and Embassies,

Officials from the Buganda Kingdom,

Police Commissioners from Luweero,

The LC3 chairperson,

The LC1 chairman,

The Chancellor Dr. Daniel Matte,

Board of Trustees members,

Dear University Council Members,

Our Consecration Speaker **Pastor Dr. Maka Moses Ndimukika, Executive Secretary, Uganda Union of SDA.**

Baccalaureate Speaker **Prof. Vicent Injety, President of the Adventist University of Africa,**

The Commencement Speaker and Guest of Honour **Dr. Geoffrey Mbwana, Vice President of the General Conference of the SDA Church,**

The Representatives from Inter University Council for East Africa,

The Representatives from National Council of Higher Education,

The Representative from the Higher Education Loan Board,

Uganda Union Officers,

North Buganda field officers

Pastors,

Community members,

The President, Officers and members of the Alumni Association,

Graduation Class Patron and Matron,

Graduation Class President and Officers,

Dear Graduands 2021,

Invited Guests,

Parents of Graduands,

Sponsors and family members of the graduands,

Dear Faculty and Staff Members,

Dear Students,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I take the podium on behalf of Bugema University fraternity which includes the administrators, faculty, staff and my beloved students to welcome you all to the main campus for the 27th graduation ceremony celebrations. This campus always welcomes visitors with its beautiful ambiance, security filled with the presences of angels who protect all who drives in. I do hope that you will be blessed by an angel before you leave this place after the ceremony.

As protocol demands, I would like to thank all of you for accepting our invitation to come and be with us on this day. Sundays are filled with important activities which could have redirected your attention from this place. Welcome again.

I would like to take this privilege to welcome and thank our Consecration Speaker, **Pastor Dr Maka Moses Ndimukika, Executive Secretary of the Uganda Union of SDA Church , Kampala , Uganda** for accepting to come to bless our students. Thank you for the wonderful message which was edifying. May the good Lord lead you as you carry the burden of spreading the mission of the Church.

Our appreciation further goes to the Baccalaureate Speaker **Prof. Vicent Injety, President of the Adventist University of Africa, Nairobi Kenya** who brought home the message to all of us. We thank God for the treasures of inspiration to the graduating class 2021

To the Commencement Speaker who is also our Guest of Honour **Pr Dr. Geoffrey Mbwana, Vice President of the General Conference of the SDA Church, USA** we would like to honour you with words of appreciation and encouragement. You have been always interested in the development of this University, your continued support to your alma mater is highly appreciated, your achievements as a professional Administrator and Educator, a few can match. God bless you in your Ministry.

Dear beloved guests,

I welcome you all to the third day of the three-day of the 2021 graduation ceremonies of Bugema

University. I am highly delighted to welcome, through our various virtual platforms, parents

guardians, guests, well-wishers and Alumni to this joyous occasion, marking the 27th

graduation of the University.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, before I present my speech, I want to state we begin our graduation celebrations on a sombre note, as I announce that some of our students lost their lives before completing their programmes, while others passed on after successfully completing their studies. I also wish to note that, we lost two Faculty Members one of them was Mrs Zipporah Mupaghasi who was the Head of Department of Accounting and finance in the School of Business another one was Mr. Mpattason Nathan who was also a lecturer in the same school. May I request you, Sir, and the whole congregation, physically gathered here, and all those following this function virtually, to observe a minute of silence as we remember them.

Thank you.

Introduction

Mr. Chancellor Sir, Bugema University settled for Human Capital Development through Open and Distance electronic Learning (ODEL): Towards Vision 2040 as the befitting theme for this year's Graduation Ceremony; From Zero to Hero. BUGEMA has taken heed of the fact that Education is a transformative philosophy that interweaves teaching, research, community service, innovation and industrialisation with the aim of modernising and re-industrialising our Countries. The heritage-based philosophy underpinning Education clearly articulates a very important value of 'self-belief' arising from an understanding that for a nation to gain the respect of the community of nations, it must understand, appreciate and affirm its own heritage, that includes its human capital among other diverse natural endowments.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE YEAR ENDING

1.UNIVERSITY PROJECTS

RUFORUM PARTNERSHIP

The university has developed partnership with RUFORUM, a regional University forum which has been helping the University in reaching out to local farmers area.

Under this program, the University has established linkage with the local farmers by providing them with, farm supplies that include seeds, fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides, Agricultura extension services and tractor services all geared at improving agriculture production and productivity among farmers in the area.

We have utilized the opportunity of having students offering courses in agriculture to use these students to offer training to farmers under training to farmers and this is poised to strengthen us in this area.

Through the Faculty of Agriculture, BUGEMA is going to continue making significant contribution towards human capital development in the Agriculture sector through its students graduating with various qualifications in the area of agriculture. It is our hope and trust that the programmes will add to the gravitas and dedication that you, Sir, have personally demonstrated in your farming endeavours. It is a no brainer that, Government programmes and initiatives referred to above, need graduates with requisite Management skills like those our graduands possess.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, BUGEMA is currently running some farming projects to reinforce the programmes currently on offer. A range of farming activities take place at our farms. These include; Dairy farming, Bee farming, goat rearing, maize production, Banana Production, Commercial forestry, potato and vegetable production. Rather than asking you to travel around for an in loco tour of this project, we decided to put up a video presentation which you, and our

guests, will have occasion to view in the comfort of this graduation venue.

In this regard, I believe that, apart from generating income for our university, we must avail our farms to the Faculty of Agriculture for purposes of forging, what some universities call, work integrated learning (WIL), as well as using them for Research and Innovation. As BUGEMA, we are open to benchmarking best practice with sister universities.

On behalf of BUGEMA, I would like to tender our profound gratitude for the support that you, our Chancellor, continues to render to us in order that we can deliver on our mission and mandate. Thank you, Sir.

2.THE VOCATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Your Excellency and Chancellor, BUGEMA's projects have of late extended beyond the traditional academic programs. One small, but significant achievement, we made in 2021, was the successful, through the Bugema University vocational school in partnership with ADRA Uganda and other partners, to get involved in skilling refugees in Bidi bidi refugee camp, in Yumbe District, such services will be extended to other needy communities as part of our community outreach.

3. ICT INFRASTRUCTURE

Your Excellency and Chancellor, Education 5.0 will only become a reality when our Universities are properly resourced technologically, in line with the imperatives of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). For our purposes as an e-learning University, a robust ICT infrastructure is a requirement for effective Teaching and Learning, Research, Community Engagement and innovation. Cognizant of this fact, Management adopted a deliberate thrust towards the upgrading and rehabilitation of obsolete ICT infrastructure.

4.THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

The COVID-19 pandemic was a gamechanger in the whole country and the in the education sector. BUGEMA was equally affected even though it is an ODeI University. However, unlike other Higher Education institutions, we got some soft landing since we had already developed a virtual learning management system (e-learning platform), from MOODLE as early as 2017. The COVID-19 challenge spurred us to invest in the training of our staff with the necessary competencies to develop multimedia learning content. Learning materials – modules, course notes, video tutorials were availed online through the e-learning platform. In addition, students were encouraged to upload assignments, projects, dissertations and theses, online. The WhatsApp platform became a handy and effective way of communicating with students, posting instructions and notes to them, and getting their feedback. Because of the COVID-19 lockdown, we were forced to provide academic staff with data bundles so that Teaching and Learning could continue.

I am proud to say that BUGEMA managed to have all levels of students writing end of Semester examinations in all our Campuses. The University's e-learning delivery mode, that existed before the intrusion of COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with the University's multi-campus structure, made this possible

5. TURN AROUND STRATEGY

Mr. Chancellor sir, the University through its turnaround strategy plans to carry out a Staff and Skills Audit at BUGEMA, with the aim of assessing the extent to which the university was ready for the delivery of Education 5.0, among others. Re aligning the auxiliary production units, Right sizing all academic and Non-academic units, all these efforts are intended to alleviate the Covid-19 pandemic effects. Based on the report presented to University Council in September 2021, the BUGEMA University management crafted a Plan of Action which has since been acknowledged by the NCHE.

6. BUGEMA'S 2021 GRADUATING CLASS

With specific focus on today's graduation, BUGEMA is sending forth well-nourished BUGEMA ambassadors to the world to scale-up the production of goods and services for the betterment of their families, workplaces, communities and the nation at large. A total of 734 graduands from the Eight Schools of the University are being graduated today.

Drawn from the 734 graduands, 457 males and 308 females (the break down is bigger than the summary total who include Hon. Charles Chan Angwuei Wek, the Minister of State for Labour in Northern Bahal-el-Gazal State. Government of South Sudan, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Development Studies, with emphasis in community Development. (The graduands talked about as representing others here are not indicated) These graduands were selected to represent others physically here. The rest are to being graduated virtually, as the nation responds to the COVID-19 pandemic.

TO THE CLASS OF 2021

You are indeed a great class, the Second class to graduate virtually in our history. Your stories will go down the history books and you have demonstrated that you can push on no matter the circumstance and I urge you to keep pushing on forward. As your theme goes **From Zero to Hero** Only you can provide a way forward in not only managing this pandemic, but by defining our new normal. You have done it before and I have no doubt you will do it again.

I leave you with the wise words of Maya Angelou that say, "If you're always trying to be normal you will never know how amazing you can be."

7. CHANCELLOR'S PRIZE

Mr. Chancellor Sir, it would being seriously remiss if I failed to acknowledge an innovative addition to our graduation. The University made decision to institute the Chancellor's prize, to be awarded to two female and two male top-performing students. The Chancellor's prize is indeed a very far-reaching development and marks the first of its kind

in our history as a University. I could not argue more. Thank you, Mr. Chancellor.

CONCLUSION

As I conclude my address, Mr. Chancellor sir, I want to assure that, BUGEMA will continue to review its programmes and delivery methods in order to give effect to Education 5.0. and Vision 2040. Such a curriculum should necessarily be informed by the demands of the 4IR. Going forward, more programmes will be introduced in different faculties in support of the Government's industrialisation and modernisation agenda.

Finally, I once again congratulate our graduating class. You have earned it and we wish you a wonderful and joyful day of celebration.

I thank you.