

DAY 1

WEDNSDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2024

ADDRESS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR KAYODE OYEBODE ADEBOWALE, AT THE CONGREGATION FOR THE AWARD OF CERTIFICATES, DIPLOMAS AND ADMISSION INTO FIRST DEGREE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN ON WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2024

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration)

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (RISP)

Registrar

Bursar

University Librarian

Provost of the College of Medicine

Provost of the Postgraduate College

Deans of Faculties and of Students

Directors of Institutes and Centres

Heads of Departments

Members of Senate

Members of Congregation

President and members of the University of Ibadan Alumni Association

Members of the Students' Representative Council

Honoured Graduands

Parents and Guardians of our Graduands

Gentlemen of the Press

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted and indeed grateful to Almighty God for sparing our lives to witness another convocation ceremony in the history of our beloved university. It has been a year trailed by peculiar challenges, which are not unconnected to the economic state of our dear country, but we have waded through as God enabled us.

As I delightedly welcome you to the first day of the 2024 graduation ceremonies of the University of Ibadan, I must note that at 76, the University has continued to wax stronger in preparing human resource that meet both local and global standards as a contribution to the advancement of society. That the University of Ibadan has continued to rank

consistently among the prestigious universities in the world is an acknowledgement of its contribution.

The University of Ibadan, UI as it is fondly called, is the first University in Nigeria. It took off in 1948 with academic programmes in Arts, Science and Medicine. Today, the University is a comprehensive citadel of learning with 123 academic departments organized into 19 faculties, namely Arts, Science, Basic Medical Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Agriculture, the Social Sciences, Education, Veterinary Medicine, Pharmacy, Technology, Law, Public Health, Dentistry, Economics and Management Sciences, Renewable Natural Resources, Environmental Design and Management, Multidisciplinary Studies, Basic Clinical Sciences, and Nursing.

Six faculties-Basic Medical Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Public Health, Dentistry, Basic Clinical Sciences and Nursing-constitute the University's College of Medicine.

The University of Ibadan has a Distance Learning Centre with a population of over eight thousand (8,000) learners. The

Centre is the Open and Distance Learning arm of the university established to offer Open and Distance Education. Presently, the Centre runs sixteen programmes from five faculties, namely: Education, Arts, The Social Sciences, Science and Clinical Sciences.

The University of Ibadan has 15 halls of residence that provide accommodation for about 30% of the population of students on the regular mode of study.

The University of Ibadan is, therefore, a truly complex organization. Its governance is based on the Committee System. All the Boards and Committees report to the Council and/or Senate. In order to perform its main functions of teaching, research and community service, the University has been providing, to a large extent, basic services like electricity and water supply, security, health facilities and other municipal services to its staff and students.

The university has educated many notable alumni, including a Nobel Laureate in Literature, eminent mathematicians, scientists, politicians, lawyers, business icons, philosophers,

writers, monarchs, countless technocrats, recipients of the Nigerian National order of merit, Fellows of the various learned academies. Through its alumni and alumnae, the University of Ibadan has, in the past six decades contributed significantly to the political, industrial, economic, and cultural development of Nigeria. These graduates, staff and students are making great impact on the world through their discoveries, innovations and inventions in science, medicine, agriculture, business, and technology. No doubt, the University's commitment to academic excellence enables its products to fly high.

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed guests, proud parents, and most importantly, our graduating class of 2024, today marks a momentous occasion in your lives. As you stand on the threshold of this new chapter, I congratulate you on your academic achievement. In the face of the unprecedented economic downturns and social strains being experienced in our dear country, I must admit that your journey through the University of Ibadan was not easy. I believe you had had to face challenges and overcome obstacles. I am glad that, rather than give up, you defied the odds. As a result, you

grew resilient and formidable when the times got tough. You were shaped by our dedicated faculty, supportive staff, and enriching University of Ibadan experiences within and outside the classroom.

On this auspicious occasion, we celebrate not only your academic accomplishments but also your resilience, creativity, and perseverance. You have earned your degrees, but more importantly, you have developed skills, knowledge, and values that will serve you well in an ever-changing world. With the foundations that the University of Ibadan has given you, I have no doubt that you are already empowered to competently and courageously embrace the future. Nevertheless, as you venture forth, remember that your education is only a foundation, not a destination. The world needs your talents, your passion, and your unique perspectives. Go forth with confidence, empathy, and a commitment to making a positive impact.

Undoubtedly, you will face complexities, uncertainties, and challenges as you continue your life's journey, but know that those are often invaluable life opportunities in disguise. Draw upon the skills that you have honed here to navigate,

innovate, and lead. Stay curious, adaptable, and open to lifelong learning. You are joining a global network of alumni, united by a shared experience and commitment to excellence. Stay connected, support one another, and inspire others. You now belong to a global community.

It is laudable that the University of Ibadan has continued to produce globally competitive graduates despite the array of challenges and threats that the University faces. Deepening funding challenges and inconsistent educational policies are two major hurdles in the University's way of fulfilling its vision and mission. The current nationwide economic challenges make it even harder to scale the hurdles.

Nevertheless, I must acknowledge the intervention of the government in easing the challenges. I also commend the approval of new private universities. Despite the increase in the number of institutions, access to university education remains a daunting issue, as Federal and State universities account for more than 95% of the access. Therefore, there is a pressing need for renewed commitment to educational advancement through effective, consistent and harmonized policies. At Ibadan, we have been taking initiatives to seek support from our alumni network. It would be greatly

appreciated if the government could facilitate operations for public universities by enacting policies that provide a degree of financial autonomy without unnecessary restrictions.

Every graduate of the University of Ibadan is an asset for national reform across various fields of endeavours. On this note, I am pleased to welcome parents, guardians, guests, and well-wishers. I want to assure you that your labour has not been in vain. It is my prayer that the joy this day brings will last long in your lives. I would also like to commend and congratulate the graduands on successfully completing their programmes after a series of rigorous academic challenges.

To travel a thousand miles, one must begin with the first step. As you would journey far in relevance in your chosen endeavours, I believe the University has given you a good head start. It gives me great pleasure to see you graduate today, especially knowing that not everyone who started the program has been fortunate enough to reach the finish line. I sincerely thank the Almighty God for guiding you through this journey and helping you arrive safely. Given this achievement, you deserve this celebration of success. Indeed, the certificate of the University of Ibadan is not

offered to anyone on a platter; it demands hard work, commitment and diligence to achieve. This achievement deserves to be worn with pride.

Today as you graduate, the Ibadan certificate will be awarded to those of you who have been found worthy in character and learning. Character and learning are the two wings that enable graduates of our esteemed University to soar. I have no doubt that all of you present here have passed through the University and you have also allowed the great University of Ibadan to pass through you. As Vice Chancellor, I see you as treasures ready to be explored.

At this juncture, I would like to express my gratitude to our Commencement Speaker for the Convocation Ceremonies, **Mr. Kehinde Ogunwumiju**, *OFR, SAN*, the Managing Partner at Afe Babalola & Co. We thank you for accepting to be our speaker today.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the 2024 undergraduate convocation has a total number of 6,553 graduands from all the faculties, including the Distance Learning Centre and

affiliated institutions. Additionally, 111 Diploma certificates will also be awarded. Today, which is the first day of the convocation ceremonies, marks the graduation of students from the Faculties of Arts, Science, Basic Medical Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Social Sciences, Law, Public Health, and Dentistry.

The University acknowledges that there is so much left to do to fulfil its vision and mission, despite the significant challenges facing public universities, particularly the oldest in Nigeria. Those challenges notwithstanding, I am pleased to report that the university has achieved notable successes. Although it is impossible to cover all these accomplishments at this occasion, I would like to highlight a few key achievements in academic and human capacity building:

Conferences and Academic Gatherings

- The Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies participated in the 7th edition of the International Universities Debating Championship, an annual

academic tournament held between 24th and 29th May, 2024 in Qatar.

- The Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, in collaboration with NUSRET Education and Cultural Co. Ltd, hosted a one-day Education Symposium on 3 July, 2024. The theme was “Prophet Muhammad (SAW): Nurturing a Spiritual Ambiance within the Family”. The symposium was attended by 100 delegates from various departments at the University of Ibadan.
- The Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies hosted a 2-day collaborative seminar of the League of Imams and Alfas, Muslim Ummah of Southwest Nigeria (MUSWEN), from 18 to 21 September, 2024. The theme of the seminar was “Imams, Ulama, and Ummah in Yorubaland: Contemplating the Past, Critiquing the Present, and Envisioning the Future.”
- The University of Ibadan@ 75 Anniversary Committee held an international innovation conference with the theme: “Research, Innovation and Sustainable Development: Impacting the Glocal Community”. The conference held from 2 – 4 October, 2024.

- Faculty of the Social Sciences held her annual Ibadan International Social Science Conference from 3 -6 March, 2024 with the theme, Social Science, Contemporary Social Issues and the actualization of Sustainable development.

Fellowship/Recognitions/Grants/Awards

- Dr. I.B. Ayinla led a team of three students to Benin Republic for the International Collegiate Programming Contest (ICPC), where the students represented the University of Ibadan and won the West African Cup at the 2021 edition of the Arab/Africa International Collegiate Programming Contest.
- The following undergraduate students from the Department of Computer Science participated in the HUAWEI-ICT Competition Boot Camp held in Abuja from February 6 to 29, 2024: Lawrence Ogungum (300 level), Chibueze Ibekwe (500 level) and Tolani Adisa (500 level). They successfully qualified for the global finals, which will take place from 22 to 25, May 2025, in Shenzhen, China. The computing team ranked first, while the cloud team

secured the second place. In Sub-Saharan Africa, they are ranked 1st and 4th, respectively.

- On 11 October, 2024, Professor A.B. Adeyemo was appointed as the Professor of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) Endowed Chair in Computer Science.
- On 5 November, 2024, Professor O.F.W. Onifade was reappointed as Deputy Director, Academic, of the Distance Learning Centre.
- Dr. Khadijat T. Ladoja was selected to participate in the Empowering the Teachers (ETT) Fellowship programme from 15 to 21 January, 2024
- Six indigent students in the Faculty of Science were awarded a scholarship of One Hundred Thousand Naira each by the Modupeola-Ipadeola Opayemi Foundation for the 2022/2023 academic session.
- Chukwuma Chisom Bartholomew emerged as the national overall first-place winner in the 2023 edition of the National Essay Competition on Standardisation,

organized by the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO), the continental umbrella body for national standards bodies. Mr. Chukwuma entered the competition as a 3rd year student in 2023.

Guest Lectures/Personality Lectures

- The Department of Computer Science hosted Professor Clement Onime from Italy, alongside Dr. Solomon Gozau of the Department of Computer Science at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. They delivered a lecture during a conference held at the Department of Computer Science, University of Ibadan, from 26 to 29 February, 2024.
- Professor V.C.O. Njar, a distinguished professor of Medical Chemistry from the University of Maryland School of Medicinal Chemistry in Baltimore, USA, was hosted by the Faculty of Science as guest lecturer. He delivered a lecture titled: "The discovery and development of Galeterone and the next generation Galeterone analogs (NGGAs) for prostate cancer therapy" on Tuesday, 9 January, 2024.

- Mr. Abayomi Alli, the Manufacturing Director at Unilever PLC, delivered the Faculty of Science Alumni Lecture on Friday, 24 May, 2024.
- Dr. Kenton Dashiell, the Deputy Director General, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture delivered a Public Lecture titled, Recent Experiences at IITA to Improve the Impact of Research on Improving Food Security in Africa. It held on 13 May, 2024.
- Mrs. Didi Esther Walson-Jack, OON, mni on 23 October, 2024 delivered one of the UI@75 lecture series titled, Governance in Partnership: The Essential Collaboration between Civil Service, Political Leadership, and Academia.

Academic Excellence

- Students from our Faculty of Law achieved outstanding results in the recent Nigerian Law School (NLS) Bar Final Examinations. Out of the 144 UI students who sat for the examinations, 27 attained First Class honours. This is the highest number of First Class results among all Nigerian universities. In addition to the 27 First Class distinctions, 66

UI students also obtained Second Class Upper honors, while 44 graduated with Second Class Lower. We are confident that the one student who did not pass the exams will succeed brilliantly in the next attempt.

- Two outstanding Law students, Annastesia Ginikachukwu Ononuju and Akinjunmi Emmanuel Adebayo, emerged as first and third respectively, amongst the top six law students in Nigeria and have been honoured with the prestigious Body of Senior Advocates of Nigeria (BOSAN) Scholarship 2023 Award for their exceptional academic achievements and performance in legal education. The Award was presented during the 2023 Annual Dinner and Scholarship Awards of the Body of Senior Advocates of Nigeria at the Abuja Continental Hotel (formerly Sheraton Hotel), Ladi Kwali, Abuja. The event was attended by dignitaries, including the Attorney General and Minister of Justice of the Federation, Prince Lateef Fagbemi SAN; Former Minister of Education, Tahir Muhammed SAN; President of the Court of Appeal, Honourable Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem CFR; Senior Advocates of Nigeria; and other notable figures.

The Scholarship Award is an initiative of the Body of Senior Advocates of Nigeria to recognize and promote exceptional academic performance among first-class law students across Nigerian universities.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, let me, at this juncture, commend several members of our faculty, staff and students who have distinguished themselves in various ways both locally and internationally. Indeed, you all have upheld the prestigious status of our dear university in your various capacities. Thank you. I would also like to express deep appreciation on behalf of the University to all our numerous benefactors over the past year. Their names are listed separately in the order of proceedings. We pray that God will continue to bless your endeavours and multiply your resources!

Once again, I congratulate all our graduands on their remarkable achievements at this University. I encourage you all to persist in your pursuit of knowledge, as education extends far beyond the mere acquisition of certificates. Continually seek emancipation through knowledge, as the saying goes: 'knowledge is power'. As worthy ambassadors

of our great University, go forth and make your mark on the world!

As you embark on this new journey, remember that setbacks are only temporary while your potential knows no bounds. Life is a journey but not one on a flat and smooth terrain; rather it is a journey on undulating surfaces of valleys, plains and hills; sometimes smooth, other times coarse. The one who understands this is primed for great deeds. **Seeking for diamonds requires digging deep while looking for stones requires no effort since it dwells at the surface**

Congratulations once again, graduates! Go forth, make your mark, and help create a brighter future for all.

May God Almighty grant you all journey mercies as you return to your various destinations.

Thank you for your attention.

Professor K.O. Adebowale, FAS

Vice Chancellor