

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE 6TH CONGREGATION OF THE
METHODIST UNIVERSITY COLLEGE GHANA
ON MARCH 28, 2009 BY
HIS EXCELLENCY PROF. J.E.A MILLS,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church Ghana and
Chairman of Council of the Methodist University College
Ghana

Members of Council of State,

Chairmen of Council of Sister Universities,

Honourable Members of Parliament

Your Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Nii mei, Naa mei

Nananom

Members of the University College Council

The Vice Chancellor, University of Ghana

Vice Chancellors, Presidents and Principals of sister
Universities and Colleges

Members of the Clergy and other Distinguished Guests

Members of Convocation, Students and Staff of Methodist
University College Ghana,

Graduands

'President's Speech - 6th Congregation

Ladies and Gentlemen

I feel honoured to be invited within two months of my assumption of office as President of the Republic of Ghana to be the Guest of Honour at the 6th Congregation of the Methodist University College Ghana.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the purpose of our gathering here today is to celebrate the graduation of a batch of students who successfully pursued various programmes of study in this University College. I wish to congratulate the graduands, their parents and staff of Methodist University College Ghana.

Though the Methodist University College Ghana is only nine years old, there is no gainsaying that it has already chalked tremendous successes on the educational terrain and has a ray of hope for Ghana. Statistics from the Methodist University College's Principal's Annual Report, show that from a humble beginning with 213 students in November, 2000 the University College now has a total student population of 3,688.

I want to commend you for promoting gender balance with remarkable success. Going by figures cited in the Principal's speech, Students enrollment this academic year by gender is 1,874 male and 1,814 female; a record ratio of almost 50:50 now.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have noticed another very encouraging fact about your statistics for which I commend you very highly. I am still referring to gender balance. As all must know by now, the National Democratic Congress pledged to have 40% female and 60% male in Government appointments. We believe there must be affirmative action on issues of gender. Your statistics indicate that 49.19% of your student population is female and 50.81 % male. Your administrative support staff shows a similar trend: 34.14% female and 65.85% male. It is to be expected that you will sustain this balance, and even improve on it, as our women folk deserve every opportunity to develop themselves.

For this reason, I will urge you to do everything possible to train and recruit more females to join the academic staff where as at now you have only 12.67% female and 87.32% male. I hope that many of your female students will take advantage of various schemes that my Government will put in place for the training of women in various areas of human endeavour and join your academic staff to move your University College on to achieve yet greater heights. I have no doubt at all that this University College is destined to be one of distinction.

I am confident of this fact because this University College was established by The Methodist Church Ghana, and I know what the Methodists are capable of doing as far as education is concerned. The Methodist Church in Ghana has been involved in the provision of education and national development since 1835. The successes of Methodist schools over the years can be attributed to the good administration and management practices as well as good moral principles that are instilled in pupils and students at all levels of the educational ladder .

I salute The Methodist Church Ghana and all who helped in diverse ways to establish this University College. I say *kudos* to all who in one way or the other continue to support the University College in its growth and development. I pledge my full support for the vision of the founding fathers of this noble institution.

I am very much aware of the quality of education offered by the Methodists from the basic to secondary and now to the tertiary level. The Methodist church by this institution, which is already rated among the best in the country and have produced excellent students who are now playing very unique roles in society, is contributing immensely to the development of Ghana and many other countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, one area of priority to my Government is the development of the human resource base of the country. I am, therefore, particularly happy to see institutions like yours joining hands with Government to accomplish this objective.

It is also the priority of my government to promote the private sector for accelerated economic growth and development. As you all know, the N.D.C. government believes in social democratic principles of government. The establishment of private tertiary institutions in Ghana, therefore falls in line with the NDC manifesto of creating jobs and investing in the people. These institutions are serving a dual purpose of being an investment in the private sector and helping to develop the much needed human resource base of Ghana.

The establishment of private tertiary institutions is a welcome development as it has come at a time when the Government alone is unable to absorb the entire cost of providing education for the increasing population of our nation. These institutions are welcome as partners with government to provide adequate educational opportunities. Government will provide the necessary support to these institutions. However, they must justify the investment made in them by producing graduates in those areas that can meet the challenges that face us as a nation today. Government is also committed to making the students' loan accessible to all who qualify

for and have. gained admission to any of our country's universities.

For Ghana to meet the demands of the competitive world there is the need for a more innovative and career-oriented higher education system that will meet the socio-economic and educational needs of the country. I am confident that the Methodist University College, is equal to the task as, I believe, are all the other Private Universities.

There is the crucial need for a revolution in the teaching and learning process and the curriculum to produce graduates the nation desperately needs; graduates who combine ethical life with knowledge. Being skillful is good but being spiritual is a plus. What Ghana needs today are God-fearing, honest and skillful citizens of character who will manage our national resources in a prudent manner for the welfare of our people.

For any tertiary institution to be able to achieve excellence, its policy should be to give high quality and relevant education. There is the need for the building of

a conducive environment and culture in which students can genuinely have the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for the world of work. This therefore places a great deal of responsibility on the Management of all universities both private and public to employ lecturers with the requisite qualifications, experience and exposure, to work in these institutions. The Ministry of Education under the N.D.C. Government will not hesitate to revoke the accreditation of universities and programmes that fail to comply with the established requirements.

To the graduands: I urge you to look into the future with hope and determination. Our dear nation Ghana offers a wide range of opportunities for you, but you will need to be entrepreneurial in your outlook to be able to make it in our present day competitive economy.

As you step into the future let the motto of MUCG be your guiding principle: Excellence, Morality and Service. I believe, if you are able to hold on to this you

will not only succeed but excel in every field of endeavour.
Once again I say congratulations.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the opportunity to
share this memorable day with you.

GOD BLESSS YOU.