



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA SPECIAL REPORTER

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

NO. 900

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2018

VOL. 56

NO. 6

**PROCEEDINGS OF INVESTITURE & SWEARING-IN OF
MRS. MARY CHINERY-HESSE AS CHANCELLOR
(AUGUST 1, 2018)**

CONTENTS

Order of Proceedings	2
Opening Address by Chairman of Council	4
Introduction of Chancellor by Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu, Vice-chancellor	6
Acceptance Speech by Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse	10
Remarks by Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana	29

ORDER OF PROCEEDING

- 11.30 a.m. – Arrival of Guests
(Songs by UG Jubilee Choir/Ghana Police Band)
- 12 noon – Academic Procession
- Council Procession
- Dawuro
- National Anthem: Ghana Police Band
- Hymn: Land of Our Birth
- Declaration of Purpose: Mrs. Mercy Haizel-Ashia,
 Registrar
- Welcome by Chairman of Council:
 Prof. Yaw Twumasi
- Investiture and Swearing-In of Chancellor:
- Introduction of Chancellor:
 Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu,
 Vice-Chancellor
- Omanyé* by Ghana Dance Ensemble/
 Abibigromma Resident Company
- Presentation/Blessing of Robe
- Robing
- Administration of Oath of Office:**
 Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo,
 President of the Republic

- Drum Appellation: Ghana Dance Ensemble
- Musical Interlude by UG Jubilee Choir
- Seperewa Appellation by Mr. Osei Korankye
- Inaugural Address by Chancellor:
Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse
- University Anthem
- Remarks by Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo,
President of the Republic
- National Anthem
- Musical Interlude (Patriotic Songs by UG Jubilee
Choir/Ghana Police Band)
- Closing
- Recession
- Joyful Drumming

OPENING REMARKS BY PROF. YAW TWUMASI, CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL

Good afternoon,

On behalf of the Council of the University of Ghana, I welcome you to this afternoon swearing-in of the new Chancellor of the University of Ghana. As the Registrar has told you and explained carefully, after diligent search and due process as outlined in the status of the University Act 806, Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse was elected by the Electoral College of the University to succeed Mr. Kofi Annan whose term of Chancellor of the University ended yesterday, 31st July, 2018.

Mr. President we are grateful that you have made the effort and the time to perform this function exactly on the 1st of August, thus providing a seamless transition from one Chancellor to another. Mr. President, the Office of Mr. Kofi Annan has worked closely with the Office of the Registrar of this University in planning this event. Mr. Kofi Annan is however unable to be with us today on account of ill health. Mr. Annan sent all the same his best wishes to Mrs Chinery-Hesse and to all our invited guests he sends his deepest apology.

Before I end this short welcome address, I will like to say, as Chairman of the University Council, I am immensely proud to be associated with such an eminent citizen and daughter of our country in the person of Mrs. Chinery-Hesse. The word eminent or distinguish tend to be used rather loosely and thus lacking in precession but it is an appropriate word to use in describing Mrs. Chinery-Hesse's achievements for wherever she has been and wherever she has worked she has stood above average.

She has had a commanding presence in her academic career, the Ghana Civil and Public Services, UNDP (United Nation Development Program) and the United Nation itself. Mrs. Chinery-Hesse was a brilliant student in Ghana, wherever she was and elsewhere, one of the best of her generations of men and women. She had absolutely no problem passing examinations and was at the top of her class. I can testify to this, for her twin sister, Maud and I have been friends for a very long time. Their twin brothers, who are much older, the Allotey, Oko and Atee have also been my friends for even much longer.

A product of this University, Mrs. Chinery-Hesse's first job was at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning after obtaining her first degree. She eventually chose to pursue a career in the Civil Service instead of being an Academic at Legon. She rose quickly through the ranks of the Finance and Economic Planning Ministry. I used to see her from time to time and I know that. She became a Principal Secretary, what is now called Chief Director in record time. Indeed she was the first woman to be appointed Principal Secretary in the Home Services as opposed to the Foreign Services where Mrs Nikoi was already, but much older.

Mrs. Chinery-Hesse subsequently left to work in a number of African countries as Resident Coordinator with the UNDP in Sierra Leone, Uganda and other African countries. She eventually served as the first woman Deputy Director of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

So in short, we have in Mrs. Chinery-Hesse, a person of great intellect, wide experience, solid background in Ghanaian, African and global economic affairs. She is familiar with problems of economic and administrative development in the third world. She also has unravelled and practical understanding of international political economy.

In conclusion, I will say that, it is therefore a delight for me to welcome you all to this afternoon's event. I will also thank Mrs. Chinery-Hesse for agreeing so readily to serve as Chancellor of the University of Ghana and thus continue to give service to the land of her birth and nation. Thank you all for coming to this historical event, thank you very much.

INTRODUCTION OF CHANCELLOR BY PROF. EBENEZER ODURO OWUSU, VICE-CHANCELLOR

His Excellency, Nana Addo-Dankwa Akufo-Addo,
President of the Republic of Ghana
Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse, Incoming Chancellor of the University of Ghana,
Mr. Kofi Annan, Outgoing Chancellor of the University of Ghana,
Chairman and Members of the University Council,
Pro-Vice-Chancellors; Registrar; and Provosts
Former Vice-Chancellors and Registrars
Deans and Directors
Members of Convocation,
President and Members of the Alumni Association of this University,
Honorable Ministers and Members of Parliament,
Former Members of Government and Parliament,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Esteemed Traditional Rulers,
Nananom, Nii Mei, Naa Mei,
Employees and students of the University,
Members of the Press Corps
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good afternoon. It is my pleasure to introduce Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse who will soon be sworn in as the Chancellor of the University of Ghana.

Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse, née Blay, has had an illustrious career both in Ghana and beyond. In the United Nations and in numerous other organizations, she continues to be an important voice on economic development issues, an ardent defender of human rights, particularly women's rights, as well as an active advocate for African imperatives, conflict resolution and mediation.

She holds an Honours Degree from the University of Ghana in Sociology and Economics and was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws (*honoris causa*) by her alma mater, the University of Ghana, in 1991.

She pursued her Post-Graduate Programmes in Development Economics at the University of Dublin and at the World Bank Institute in Washington D.C. where she was inscribed as a Fellow of the Institute. She is an Old Girl of Wesley Girls' High School and Mfantshipim School.

Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse has chucked a number of firsts, she was: the first African woman to be appointed Resident Coordinator of the UN Systems and Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme; the first female product of the University of Ghana to be given an *honoris causa* (Honorary Doctor of Laws); the first woman Deputy Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), a position with the rank of Under Secretary-General of the UN. This gave her the distinction of being the first African woman to attain a position of Under Secretary-General in the history of the United Nations; and the first African woman to receive the prestigious Gusi Peace Prize for International Diplomacy and Humanitarianism, usually referred to as the Asian equivalent of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse began her career at the United Nations as the Resident Coordinator of the UN Systems and Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme, serving in New York, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, the Seychelles and Uganda.

She was subsequently appointed as the Deputy Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO). She also served as Chairperson of the UN's Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions for several years, and was the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Expert Group of Eminent Persons on Structural Adjustment and Women, which produced the landmark Report, "Engendering Adjustment".

Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse, after her retirement from the United Nations, was appointed Chief Advisor to the President of the Republic of Ghana in the Cabinet of former President, His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor. She was Vice-Chairperson of the National Development Planning Commission, and a Member of the Board of the Centre for Policy Analysis.

In her youthful days, Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse worked in the Civil Service of

Ghana and rose to become Senior Principal Secretary (Chief Director) of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning in Ghana and a Member of the National Council for Higher Education in the 1970's.

Among her countless high-profile posts, are membership on the Council of African Advisors of the World Bank and on the Eminent Persons' Advisory Panel of the Organization of African Unity which crafted the strategy to convert the OAU to the African Union. She was also a Member of the Council of the University of Ghana from 2006-2009.

Other significant appointments held by our Chancellor-elect, include membership of the Zedillo Commission of Eminent Persons on Financing for Development, and the UN Blue Ribbon Panel of sixteen wise world leaders on Threats, Challenges and Change, tasked to rewrite the global security architecture and reform of the United Nations, especially the Security Council.

She was a Board Member of the prestigious Global Humanitarian Forum in Geneva, Switzerland, with several Nobel Peace Prize Laureates. For many years, she served as Chair and Member of the Board of Trustees of the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland.

Presently, she serves, among others as Chair of the Goodwill Ambassadors of the Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Training Centre; Chair of the Board of the Centre for Regional Integration in Africa; Board Member of the foremost African Think Tank, the Centre for Conflict Resolution in Cape Town, South Africa; and as Friend on the African Union Panel of the Wise and on the Pan-African Network of the Wise (Panwise).

Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse has received several prestigious awards and decorations, both nationally and internationally. This includes the highest National Award, the Order of the Star of Ghana.

Distinguished Guests, this is the profile of the great lady who has been elected to be the Chancellor of this great institution. Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse, is

married to Barrister Lebrecht James Nii Tettey Chinery-Hesse, a Legislative Drafting Consultant. Please join me to acknowledge the presence of Barrister L.J. Chinery-Hesse, who is here to support his wife on this historic occasion.

Ladies and Gentlemen, behold, the Chancellor-elect of University of Ghana, Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse.

Thank You.

**ACCEPTANCE SPEECH BY MRS. MARY CHINERY-HESSE
ON THE OCCASION OF HER INVESTITURE AS
CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

Your Excellency the President of the Republic of Ghana,
Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo,
Chairman and Members of the University Council
Vice-Chancellor and other officials of the University
Former Chairmen and Members of the University Council
Former Vice-Chancellors and other officials of the University
Members of Convocation
Honourable Ministers and Members of Parliament
Former members of Government
Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Esteemed Traditional Rulers
Alumni, Staff and Students
Members of the Press Corps
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish my father, R. S. Blay of the Adahole Clan, and the Blay Family of Eikwe and Esiam, that proud first lawyer of Nzima, were here; and I also wish my mother, Aunt Lady of the Mould Family of Winneba and Jamestown, British Accra were alive to have witnessed this Ceremony. I am sure though that they both are looking down from Heaven with broad smiles of joy, pride and gratitude in their hearts

This Event, celebrated with so much pomp and pageantry, showcasing elements steeped in Ghanaian Culture and Tradition, I am sure will be equally etched in the memory of all of you beautiful and kind people who have made time to honor me with your presence.

I am truly humbled by the dignified presence of such a galaxy of distinguished personalities filling this Great Hall, for the single purpose of witnessing this Special Day. I am referring to invited personalities who have gravitated to this Great Hall from far and near.

His Excellency the President of Ghana himself is here. Sir, I am deeply grateful to you; high officials in Government; the former President of the

Republic from whose high office I served the nation, His Excellency J. A. Kufuor; our esteemed Traditional Rulers; my own family, my dear, very supportive and understanding husband, my long suffering children and grandchildren, my twin sister Maud Blankson-Mills with whom I graduated on the same day, extended family relations, my school mates from the great School Wesley Girls' High School, and from Mfantsipim School, the beautiful Ladies of Volta Hall, my brilliant Colleagues from the Ghana Association of Retired International Civil Servants, etc, etc, etc. I recognize all of you.

For my part, I recall like yesterday that day in 1961 when I was in my final year at this same University of Ghana when President Kwame Nkrumah, at this same Great Hall was invested as the first Chancellor of this Institution, when the University obtained full and autonomous status. Never in my wildest moments did I dream that a day will come when I would be elected to sit on that Chair; truly coming full circle, from the status of in statu pupillari to Chancellor of my great Alma Mater. What an honour and what a pleasant beam of light to brighten up my twilight years. I thank God. I am humbled. It is only right that I thank all those who have expressed confidence in me, that I could bring some positive additionality to the affairs of the University by supporting my Election to this high Office. I especially thank the University Council and the Academic Board. I promise I will not let you down.

I am filling the shoes of great ones. Beyond the Heads of State who occupied the Chair in ex officio status, Mr. Kofi Annan, my immediate predecessor opened doors for the University to critical funding sources. These have been important in the increasing recognition gained by the university's research centres, particularly in the area of agriculture; in improving access to international digital knowledge databases; and in the funding of Postgraduate scholarships.

Nana Wereko Ampem, the first Chancellor elected by the University community had been associated with the University for many years before he became Chancellor. He had given leadership to the University of Ghana Medical School Council as its first Chairman. Under his auspices as Chancellor, the University engaged in important processes to re-evaluate and re-energize itself. These involved, for the first time in many years, a consultative process for putting in place a strategic plan for the University and the appointment of a Visitation Panel.

And now, I have been deemed fit to sit on this Chair. I do not think that anybody can deny the historical nature of today's Ceremony. The University of Ghana invests its first Female Chancellor in the year it is celebrating its founding 70 years ago; its Platinum Anniversary.

That, I am sure will be the headline of many media sources. And why not? All my predecessors have been male. As my dear friend and Colleague of the African Union Panel of the Wise, Speciosa Kazibwe Wandira, the first Woman to be appointed Vice president on the continent of Africa-this in Uganda - put it, today's event marks one more instance of a woman smashing the glass ceiling in our public space. Specioza, you are personally at this function, Your Excellency, leading a group of equally formidable African Women of timber and caliber to deliver a strong message that we aren't finished yet.

Even as I deem it appropriate that I dedicate my election to this high office to Ghanaian Womanhood, I have to commend your effort, Speciosa, with others to mobilize Wise Women under the rubric of FEMWISE to take their place at the mediation table in the fight to silence the guns on the African Continent. We have a responsibility to ensure that Women's voices no longer remain muted.

In logical terms though, one would have expected the appointment of a woman Vice Chancellor, then probably a female chair of Legon's Governing Council first. Hardly was I expecting a conservative premier university, to leap frog from female Pro-Vice Chancellors and Registrar, straight to Chancellor. I salute the University for this ground-breaking appointment, in the annals of University leadership.

The Chancellorship position just conferred on me is one I humbly accept, cherishing more the associated responsibilities than any inherent privileges.

The Chancellor should not be just a ceremonial face, but also an unseen lead advocate, I promise not to simply make myself available for ceremonial events and handshakes at graduation. Like my predecessors have done, I promise to put all the skills I have honed from the School of Life, and the extensive network I have developed in the process at the disposal of the University of Ghana.



Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse

Chancellor



Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic, Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse, Chancellor of the University and Principal Officers processing to the Great Hall



Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic in a group photograph with Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse, Chancellor of the University, and Members of Council and Members of Convocation.



Mrs. Mercy Haizel-Ashia, Registrar, declaring the Purpose of Gathering



**Chairman of Council, Prof. Yaw Twumasi
delivering the Opening Remarks**



Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu, Vice-Chancellor, introducing the Chancellor



Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic



Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse, being robed by Chairman of Council, Prof. Yaw Twumasi, Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu, Vice-Chancellor and Mrs. Mercy Haizel-Ashia, Registrar.



Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse, Chancellor, taking the Oath of Office



Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse signing the Oath of Office



Prof. Yaw Twumasi, Chairman of Council, and Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu, Vice-Chancellor, symbolically enstooling Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse, Chancellor



Presentation from Representatives of Volta Hall to Madam Chancellor



Presentation from Representatives of Wesley Girls' High School to Madam Chancellor



Presentation from Representatives of the Queen Mothers' Association from the Ga Traditional Area



Presentation from Representatives of the Family of Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse.



Principal Officers of the University in a photograph with the President of the Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo



Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic with other Officers of the University.



Madam Chancellor's Family



A cross section of audience at the ceremony

It is a fact that the University of Ghana has made many strides in its gender composition since my time here as a student. However, this progress continues to be uneven. As a human institution, even as we salute the University in this regard, we have to accept that some mistakes have been made in the past.

There have been certain aspects of Legon's history which the University has happily put behind, and may have amply atoned for. Mr. President, I crave your indulgence to refer to just one example.

Untypical of Legon, the entire university looked on in silence, while one prominent part of its space, indeed the Senior Common Room of one Hall of Residence, was pronounced Out of Bounds to Women, and this legibly inscribed. Apparently, Management of that Hall of Residence never forgave women as a whole when on one occasion an ugly fracas developed between two women guests in that senior common room; you can guess what triggered the incident. I am sure some other decision would have been made if it were two men caught in a similar situation.

The ban on women visiting that space was wisely lifted in the 1990s, when the Hall in any case, became a mixed gender hall, accommodating men and women students, and appointing men and women hall fellows.

Today, the University of Ghana can be proud of its revised basic laws and statutes; it can be proud of gender ratios in its current enrollment and admission patterns. Legon can be proud of the successful launch of sexual harassment policies; and it can express pride in having established a Center for Gender Studies and Advocacy that coordinates gender-related issues and advises the University.

While the proportion of undergraduate students who are female has grown appreciably, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, the sciences and post-graduate studies still need to make progress in this regard.

The situation with faculty has improved much more slowly and University management continues to be largely male dominated.

We need to continue to improve these numbers, and also create favourable conditions and conducive environment for female students and faculty to thrive at the University of Ghana.

The University has to work hard to reach a point where 'firsts' will be a thing of the past and women's leadership at the University becomes routinized and taken as given. We will work at it.

In accepting to become Chancellor of University of Ghana, I am aware of the fact that I am joining the Institution at a crucial time in the history of global higher education, including in Ghana, calling for critical reappraisal, to confront the need to redefine their mission in the light of the many changes taking place in our world that affect their current *modus operandi*. For example, the nature of faculty/student engagement is fast changing. The young generation has access to technology which gives them the possibility to acquire knowledge much beyond what a lecturer might offer them. This calls into question the traditional role of teachers as repository of all that a student needs to pass examinations. A good lecturer now is rated highly if he has the knack to empower his students to reach out for knowledge wherever it can be found. The Internet with its many search engines has given the death knell of lecturers as gurus.

Issues of the relevance of academic programmes have attracted a lot of attention. The global commentary on the future of higher education increasingly stresses the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to the development and progress of nations. In Ghana, this conversation has correctly championed the promotion of STEM. The sciences are critical for invention, innovation and technological advancement. This does not, of course, imply the neglect of the humanities and the social sciences in the curriculum and in research support, since there are significant complementarities between the social sciences and the humanities and the physical sciences.

Our Countrymen have complained about the apparent disconnect between the curricula of our Universities and the World of work, such that there now is a very vocal Association of Graduate Unemployed. This would be a

contradiction in terms at the time I graduated in 1962. Jobs relevant to our training were waiting. In fact, we were spoilt for choice; in certain instances, we felt like a kid in a candy shop. May Ghana in the very near future recapture this glorious state of affairs.

Your Government, Mr. President, I know is seized with this same agenda, and you are assiduously introducing relevant educational policy reforms towards its attainment. I salute, Sir, for your foresight.

Of course it is easier said than done. There is the vexed question of university funding. Employers continue to complain about African university graduates not having the necessary skills required for the job market. Certainly the dialogue between Town and Gown must improve. A veritable conduit must be created for this, and my ILO experience should come in useful. African nations must prepare their institutions of higher learning to provide the knowledge required for the essential and desired knowledge economies which will drive our development agenda.

Fortuitously, the University of Ghana has already taken several important steps to tackle some of the growing challenges. I refer specifically to the adoption of a Strategic Plan for the period 2014-2024 aimed at overcoming many of the challenges, and making the University of Ghana shine even brighter. That is why it is gratifying that it is at this time that the University is enjoying academic eminence, favorable ratings in global university rankings, and at a time Legon is basking in the glory of very productive research centers. We are indeed proud to host pace-setting African Centers of Excellence, funded by the government of Ghana with a loan from the World Bank, of which this university has two.

But if this is a time this university glows in academic splendor, it is also a time this great University nurses a pain within.

In recent times, this University has endured rather unflattering media publicity, and has spent a good deal of time fending off assaults on her public image. It is not necessary to list at this time the projects which have blown us such ill wind.

Let me salute efforts made by you, Mr President, Your Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo and your Government, for the initiatives and interventions you have made towards the resolution of the problems. I as well salute the University Governing Council and management past and present, including past Vice-Chancellors for various attempts made in bringing the crises to near resolution.

I promise to bring to bear as well, as the Chancellor, the formidable skills I have garnered in my many international interventions to throw oil on troubled waters to stem conflict, and even death. We do not have the habit of sweeping dirt under the carpet. We will confront any difficulties and all will be amicably resolved.

My vision for the University is for an Institution:

- Rooted in Ghanaian and African realities.
- Authoritative in its research on Ghana and Africa at the highest levels of quality by any international measure.
- A home to and welcoming to scholars of international standing from all over the world, and to students from a rich variety of cultures and backgrounds.

My luck is that Legon already has what it takes to attain this Vision.

Mr. President, Your Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Dear Friends, as I conclude, and as I accept formally the position of Chancellor of this great Institution, the University of Ghana, I would like once again to pledge to give of my best in making Legon soar like the eagle, and remain the brightest jewel in Ghana's Tertiary Education Crown.

Thank you for your attention, and God bless us all!

**REMARKS BY NANA ADDO DANKWA AKUFO-ADDO,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA**

Second President of the fourth Republic, His Excellency John Agyekum Kuffuor,
Former President of the Republic of Liberia, His Excellency Dr. Amos Sawyer,
Members of the Council of State,
Chief of Staff of the office of the President,
Ministers and Deputy Ministers of State, Mr. Justice Julius Ansaah,
The Chancellor, Chairperson and members of the University Council,
The Vice-Chancellor,
Pro Vice-Chancellors,
Registrar and Members of faculty,
Esteem Clergy,
Nii La and the Traditional Authorities,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Mr. Chinery-Hesse and family,
Fellow Ghanaians and Fellow Africans,
Friends and lovers of Legon and Ghana,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am very glad to be here this afternoon at the investiture ceremony of an outstanding Ghanaian who has become the Chancellor of Ghana's premier university, my alma mater, the University of Ghana, Legon. Offspring of one of the prominent figures of the United Gold Coast Convention, the first Nationalist Party, UGCC, of blessed memory, the eminent jurist, the late R.S Blay. She is one of the first female alumnae of the University.

Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse is taking as Chancellor from one of Ghana's most illustrious son, former Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Kofi Annan under whose stewardship the University has attained the rank of the best in West Africa. I thank Mr. Kofi Annan who served his two terms of his mandate for his invaluable service to the nation. It is not every day that one picks up a mantle of leadership from such as Kofi Annan. So Madam Chancellor, I am sure that you know that you have your work cut out for you.

Nonetheless, I believe the University could not have picked a worthier successor than you. Your worth of experience, Chief Director at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Resident Coordinator of the UN Systems and Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Program, member of the governing council of the University, Advisor to the Second President of the fourth Republic, H.E. John Agyekum Kuffuor should ensure a seamless transition and put you in good stead to help spur on the University unto greater heights. I commend the authorities of this University, for the excellent choice of a distinguished person, one who is also happily a firm believer of academic freedom.

As the first female Chancellor of any Ghanaian public university Mrs. Chinery-Hesse blazes again, the trail for other women to follow. And moreover I am sure the University will definitely fill the added benefit of that special quality that a woman can bring to leadership.

One of the most important immediate challenges that will confront this university and others will be the dramatically increased population of students who will be seeking admissions in some two years as a result of the Free Senior High School policy. I urge you Madam Chancellor and all the heads of our tertiary institutions to begin making adequate preparations towards this and future years. The Free Senior High School Policy will be a permanent feature of our educational architecture. We cannot be caught off guard as the saying goes “the best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today”.

Chancellor, Chairperson and members of the University Council, the Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellors, and members of faculty, students, Ladies and Gentlemen, I assure you of the government's steadfast commitment and continuous support to the University of Ghana and indeed to all other universities in the country. It is my expectation and hope that, Legon will continue to produce graduates who are moulded to take on the opportunities and possibilities for higher achievement through innovation and creativity in today's technology-led knowledge-driven global economy and who will thereby help generate prosperity for the mass of our people in our time.

I pray the University of Ghana has a happy 70th anniversary celebration and may it continue to proceed in truth and integrity to make our nation proud.

And as on the occasion of any anniversary, let us remember to honour those who have gone before, especially those who fought violently for the establishment of this now renowned institution of learning such as that incomparable Ghanaian of destiny, the great scholar, statesman and apostle of freedom, Joseph Boakye Danquah whose mighty effort led the way to make it all possible.

I would want in concluding this brief intervention at this most auspicious of proceedings to share with you especially with the young people on this campus and indeed young people generally everywhere in Ghana. One fundamental belief that shapes everything I do and that is that we have it in us to be the best generation, the generation that fulfils the dreams of the great patriots who brought our nation independence. The generation whose work will give full meaning to the words of our country's motto "Freedom and Justice". The generation that will build a new Ghanaian civilization, the equal of any on the face of the planet.

Once again Chancellor, warm congratulations and I wish you the very best of luck and God's guidance in your discharge of your large responsibilities. Enjoy every bit of this moment, you deserve it and have earned it a hundred folds. May God bless Mary Chinery Hesse and us all. And may God bless our homeland Ghana and make it great and strong.

I thank you for your attention.

Thank you.

