

Text of the Address Delivered by the Vice-Chancellor, University of Ilorin, Professor Is-haq O. Oloyede on the Occasion of the Professional Initiation and Induction Ceremonies for the Medical Graduands of the College of Health Sciences, University of Ilorin at the New Auditorium of the University on March 11, 2008.

THE WORLD IS WAITING FOR YOU

The Registrar, University of Ilorin, Mrs. O. O. Oyeyemi,

Other Principal Officers of the University,

The distinguished Guest Speaker of today and Former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ibadan, Professor A.O. Falase,

The Registrar, Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria,

The Provost, College of Health Sciences, Professor B.J. Bojuwoye,

The Chief Medical Director, University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital (UITH), Dr. S.A. Kuranga,

The Deans of the Faculties of Basic Medical and Clinical Sciences,

Deans of other Faculties,

Directors of various University of Ilorin Directorates,

Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee,

Other Principal Officers of the UITH,

Your Royal Highness,

Parents of our Medical Graduands,

Our Dear Medical Graduands,

Invited Guests,

Great Unilorites,

Gentlemen of the Press,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today marks another significant milestone in several respects. Not only is today notable in the history of our dear University, it is also a special day for our College of Health Sciences and indeed a memorable day in the lives of our medical graduands as well as their parents and guardians. It is a day of abundant joy and jollity; a day of fulfillment and accomplishment; a day of glory and glorification; a day that will be etched permanently on

the minds of these budding medical professionals, who had scaled all heights, fathomed all depths and burnt the midnight oil to attain this feat. We cannot but thank Allah for today.

In the same vein, today's programme is also a special occasion for me, being the first of its kind since my assumption of office as Vice-Chancellor. My hope is that our graduands will continue to do the University proud in the discharge of their duties as custodians of healthcare delivery. As an alumnus of this University, the first to occupy this seat, I charge you to continue to fly the flag of the University higher and higher through your contributions to humanity via your calling as medical doctors. It is said that health is wealth and it is a privilege of be a health provider.

In line with the special nature of today, I want to specially welcome our renowned and celebrated scholar of international repute, astute administrator and versatile academic, Professor A.O. Falase, to our University. As a former Provost of the College of Medicine and Vice-Chancellor of the premier University of Ibadan, none could be more qualified than him to deliver a lecture that this occasion requires. I want to thank you most sincerely for creating time out of your busy schedule to attend and address this gathering. I am confident that our young medical graduands will benefit a lot from your highly esteemed intellectual endowments. We thank you sir for honouring our invitation and we wish you physical and mental health coupled with long life so that our dear nation may continue to tap from your brain for long.

The significance of healthcare delivery, as an important component of the Millennium Development Goals, cannot be over-emphasized. This is because the attainment of other goals is contingent upon it as all developmental efforts crumble without the necessary health to accomplish them. Colleges of Health Sciences thus have enormous responsibilities to discharge in terms of manpower training and ground-breaking research. The usual mantra of financial limitations is not tenable. People only resort to excuses and hide under the canopy of lack of money when they are bereft of ideas. Money is never sufficiently available, a reality of life. A positive mental attitude is having a conviction that money is not a problem and that whatever a man can conceive, he can also achieve. Education for all, health for all, food for all, etc. should not be empty slogans; they can all be achieved when we rise up squarely to contributing meaningfully to their attainment without allowing mental cobwebs to distort our thinking and limit our abilities.

At this juncture, I want to acknowledge that the University is proud of our College of Health Sciences. That we are ranked one of the best three Medical Schools in the country is a testimony of our hard-work and versatility. Our innovative Community Based Medical Education and Service Programme (COBES), for instance, has distinguished us remarkably from the rest, earning us national and international acclaim and commendation. As a deservedly designated WHO Centre of Excellence, we must not rest on our oars by not only sustaining our ranking but further improving it. The sky cannot even be our limit as we strive to be on top.

My administration is seriously committed to taking the College to greater heights. In December 2007, less than three months after my assumption of office, we committed more than twenty million naira (₦20 million) to the procurement of teaching and research equipment for the College as a measure of upgrading our facilities and producing more qualitative medical manpower. I use this opportunity to urge the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria to consider upgrading the admission quota of the College from the

present 100 to 200 in order to correspond with our admission quota for the MB;BS programme granted by the National Universities Commission.

To our esteemed medical graduands for whom we are primarily gathered here today, I say congratulations. I quoted at a forum last week an author who said “not all dreams are born alive. Some are aborted. Others are stillborn” and I think the quotation is still relevant. I felicitate with you on the successful attainment of your dream of becoming medical doctors. You yourselves know that not all of you that started together are here today. Others’ dreams have been aborted. Others’ dreams are stillborn. But your own dreams have come alive and become a permanent reality. I congratulate you once again.

Your life is dedicated to the service of humanity as evinced in the Hippocratic Oath you are taking. *The world is waiting for you* to demonstrate the excellence for which your College is noted and for which your predecessors are respected. The world is waiting for you to contribute your quota to making it a better place to live in. The world is waiting for you to make it “better by far” based on your professional training and competence. The world is waiting for you as our ambassadors of distinctive character and learning. Go change the world!

I encourage you to register with the University Alumni Association and make your own contributions to its activities. The University needs you in the drive of fulfilling its vision and accomplishing its mission. As it is said, to whom much is given, much is expected. The University is proud of you as its worthy ambassadors. Be proud of the University by identifying with it and contributing to its continuous greatness. Develop yourselves further and ensure you are ICT-(Information and Communication Technology) compliant. ICT is today relevant to the practice of medicine, especially telemedicine and its related sub-fields. Always remember that to be outstanding, you have to stand out.

I also congratulate all your parents and guardians. I share with them the joy of this occasion and thank God for them too that they live to witness today. I appreciate the tireless efforts of your lecturers and support staff of the University of Ilorin generally and the UITH in particular. They have all contributed immensely to your success. A round of applause for them, please!

Finally, I assure you that you will find the presentation of our Guest Speaker and eminent Cardiologist, Professor Falase, eye-opening, inspiring, challenging and motivating. I therefore urge you all to listen attentively to him. I wish you a pleasant initiation and induction into your profession. I wish you more future successes and a fruitful and fulfilling medical career.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for coming; thank you very much for your kind attention.