LET THIS INVESTMENT COUNT



Convocation Address of the Vice-Chancellor
Professor Wahab Olasupo EGBEWOLE, SAN
On the occasion of 41st Convocation Ceremonies on
Wednesday, October 21, 2026

Protocols,

With great delight, I stand before you today with a heart full of joy and gratitude to Almighty God for the privilege of witnessing another harvest of successful, well-trained graduands and worthy ambassadors of this great University.

Every convocation is a harvest season. Three, or four, five or six years ago, we planted seeds when we offered you admission into this great institution. Today, by the grace of God, we are not harvesting weeds; we are harvesting bountiful crops of well-trained, competent and promising young graduates.

I therefore wish to begin by expressing my profound appreciation to all those whose contributions have made this day possible, because no success is achieved in isolation.

To our Visitor, the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, we say a big thank you to His Excellency. Thank you for keeping faith with university education in Nigeria despite the competing demands on our national resources. The interventions of Your Excellency through the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) and the Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND) have helped to keep the doors of educational opportunity open to many students, including those who might otherwise struggle to finance their education, or even unable to have access.

To the Honourable Minister of Education, Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa, we express our sincere appreciation for your leadership, your reform initiatives and your continued support for this University, widely recognised as one of Nigeria's most sought-after institutions and a leading centre of academic excellence and research.

To our Governing Council, thank you for your foresight, sound governance and unwavering commitment to the stability, peace and progressive development of this University. Your guidance has helped to sustain the enviable reputation of the University of Ilorin as the first university in research quality.

To my dear colleagues, the dedicated members of staff of this great University, this moment belongs to you as much as it belongs to the graduands. You are the ones who transformed timetables into lectures, theories into practical knowledge, ignorance into understanding, and young school-leavers into university graduates.

You marked scripts late into the night, supervised projects under demanding deadlines and mentored our students with patience and dedication. On behalf of Council and Senate, I thank you for your sacrifices, professionalism and commitment. You have played an indispensable role in making this training and graduation possible. To those of you who attended to students in your offices to assist on their records, sort out their financial issues, fix their hostels, attend to their health and other issues, we commend you all.

And to the real financiers of this occasion, our parents and guardians, I salute you.

I have some idea of what these degrees have cost you. Some of you went to extraordinary lengths to sustain your children's education. Some took loans. Some took on additional jobs. Others prayed and fasted while their children prepared for examinations.

Today, I say to you, your labour was not in vain. You invested in these young men and women, and today, you are witnessing the fruits of that investment. We thank you for trusting us with your children and for partnering with us in shaping their future.

To our dear graduands, I offer my warmest congratulations!

We are immensely proud of you. Your investment in education has been worthwhile, and you have given us every reason to celebrate.

You did not waste those sleepless nights in the library while others were sleeping. You did not waste those hours spent waiting in queues, nor those anxious moments before examination results were released. You persevered. You endured. You remained focused.

Many began this journey with you, but not everyone could make it to this day. Some encountered challenges that took them off course. You stayed the course, and that perseverance is one of the greatest achievements we celebrate today.

You have now been found worthy in both character and learning. And at this University, character comes first.

We are not merely releasing degree holders into the world; we are releasing ambassadors of the University of Ilorin—young men and women expected to uphold the values, discipline and integrity for which this institution is known.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, this ceremony is not merely an emotional celebration. It is also statistical evidence of our academic productivity and institutional commitment.

Your Excellencies and distinguished guests, I am delighted to present to you our harvest for this year.

At this 41st Convocation Ceremony, we are presenting a total of **11,213 graduands in the first-degree category**. Of this number, 365 earned First Class

Honours; 4,367 earned Second Class Honours, Upper Division; 5,102 earned Second Class Honours, Lower Division; and 1,006 earned Third Class Honours. The remaining 373 graduands fall within the other degree classification category as stated in the University's official records.

Our professional programmes have also produced graduates who are prepared to serve society in critical fields. These include 19 graduands in Medicine and Surgery (MBBS), 89 in Nursing Science, 73 in Pharmacy, 41 in Optometry, 89 in Physiotherapy, and 32 in Veterinary Medicine.

For our higher degrees and diplomas, I am pleased to announce that a total of **4,939 graduands** have successfully completed their programmes. This number comprises 160 Postgraduate Diploma recipients, 901 recipients of Master's degrees across the various faculties, 114 recipients of professional Master's degrees, 2 Master of Philosophy (MPhil) graduands, and 251 Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) graduands, alongside other categories of higher-degree and diploma awards reflected in the University's official records.

In addition, a total of **3,511 graduands** will graduate through our Centre for Affiliated Institutions.

These numbers are more than statistics. They represent individual stories of resilience, determination, sacrifice and achievement. Each graduate has a story of challenges overcome, opportunities embraced and dreams pursued. The numbers demonstrated the commitment of our University to enhance the development of our nation.

Many of our graduands are also leaving with additional professional and specialised training qualifications, including those associated with ICAN and U-

INSPIRE. These qualifications further strengthen their professional competence, employability and capacity to contribute meaningfully to society.

We therefore have every reason to be proud of our products and of the distinguished young men and women we are sending to change the world today.

Dear graduands, the core message I wish to leave with you today concerns the enormous investment that has brought you to this defining moment. That is why I have chosen to charge you with a simple but profound statement:

Look around you. Your mother is in new attire sewn for today. Your father travelled from afar. Your lecturers are seated in full academic regalia. Your family members and loved ones have gathered to celebrate you. They are all here because of you.

As I said earlier, your degree is the product of three major investments: **parental investment, institutional investment and self-investment.**

The first is parental investment. The money that could have been used to build a house went towards your accommodation. The money that could have bought a car paid for your textbooks, learning materials and internet data. Savings were sacrificed, comforts postponed and personal ambitions sometimes set aside to give you a better future. Your parents and guardians invested in you because they believed in what you could become. Dear graduands, do not let that investment go to waste. Honour their sacrifices. Support them when you are able to do so. Make them proud, not merely by what you earn, but by the kind of people you become.

Let your parents be able to look at you and say, with joy and satisfaction, that every sacrifice they made for your education was worthwhile.

The second is institutional investment. This University invested its name, reputation, facilities, resources and integrity in you. For more than five decades, the University of Ilorin has worked diligently to build a reputation for academic excellence, stability, discipline and character. Today, we have entrusted that reputation to you. When you leave this campus, you will carry the name of UNILORIN wherever you go. Your conduct, professional competence and personal integrity will shape how others perceive this institution. You are, in many ways, the University's living ambassadors. Wherever you find yourself, remember that your actions can strengthen or diminish the reputation of the institution that trained you. Do not allow this investment to be wasted.

The third is self-investment. You invested your youth, your time, your mental energy and your determination in the pursuit of this degree. You faced examinations, deadlines, disappointments and moments of uncertainty. You made choices, endured challenges and kept moving forward.

You could have chosen dishonesty, shortcuts or other paths that promised quick rewards. Instead, you chose to pursue your education and work towards this achievement. That investment must count. Your certificate is not the end of your journey. It is the beginning of a greater responsibility. The world is waiting for you, and Nigeria needs you.

Our nation faces serious challenges, including unemployment, insecurity, inadequate healthcare, food insecurity and moral decline. These challenges are real, but they are not insurmountable. They demand capable, creative, ethical and compassionate people who are prepared to turn knowledge into solutions. You must be part of that solution as you have been so inspired by our University. Do

not go into the world merely to join the growing queue of complaints. Go out there to create value and make desired positive change.

Whether you are employed or become an employer, add value. Wherever life takes you, let your presence make a positive difference and make positive impact in your community.

Let your parents proudly say, "Our investment in education was worthwhile."

Let this University hear your name mentioned for good and say, "That is our product."

Above all, let society look at your life and conclude: **this one is different.**

At the University of Ilorin, our institutional DNA remains rooted in adding value and contributing meaningfully to national and international development.

For emphasis, I would like to highlight a few recent achievements that demonstrate the quality of our students, the value of our institutional investment and the culture of innovation we continue to nurture.

First, three undergraduates of our University secured a combined grant of **₦150 million** in the Federal Government Students Venture Grant (FG-SVG) competition. The award recipients are Abdullahi Usman Babatunde and Abdulrazaq Abdulrasaq Alatare, both of the Department of Information Technology, and Shehu Abdulrahman Mogoban of the Department of Optometry and Vision Science. Each student received a grant of ₦50 million to support a separate project proposal. This achievement demonstrates the capacity of our students to develop innovative ideas and translate them into practical solutions with the potential to create economic and social value.

Second, on 9 March 2026, Mr Oluwagbemiga Ojobaro, a 600-level student of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, won the 2025 WVA/MSD Veterinary Student Scholarship. The competition attracted more than 1,000 veterinary students from across the world. The scholarship carries a cash award of **US$5,000** and is a competitive global initiative established by the World Veterinary Association in collaboration with MSD Animal Health to promote advancement in animal health. Another 600-level student in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Ogundipe Olamide Grace, received a summer studentship grant of **£2,950** from Applied Microbiology International (AMI), United Kingdom. These achievements affirm that our students can compete successfully on the international stage and earn recognition for their talent, hard work and dedication.

Third, on 27 July 2026, six undergraduates of the Department of Telecommunications donated weather-forecasting equipment valued at approximately half a million naira to UNILORIN 89.3 FM Radio Station. The equipment, a Quadrifilar Helix Antenna system, is expected to strengthen the station's capacity to provide timely, accurate and consistent weather information to its listeners. The students are Idowu Peter Diovine, Solomon Sunday Oluwasomidotun, Akira Mercy, Ishola Odunayo Mary, Bello Abdulwadud and Anuwa Ezekiel Olanrewaju. Their initiative exemplifies the spirit of service, innovation and practical application of knowledge that we seek to instill in our students.

Furthermore, the Department of Microbiology received a scientific equipment consignment valued at **€59,846.02**, approximately ₦100 million, for the XSTAR Project Nigeria. The state-of-the-art laboratory equipment includes a Luminex MAGPIX system, an ultrasonic bath, microplate shakers and other advanced

scientific instruments. This investment will strengthen our research capacity and provide opportunities for scientific investigation, innovation and collaboration.

Distinguished guests, these achievements are not isolated successes. They reflect our continuing commitment to investing in people, research, innovation and infrastructure.

As part of the activities marking this 41st Convocation Ceremony, we have identified a project for commissioning to underscore our determination to provide an environment that supports teaching, learning, research, and the pursuit of excellence.

We recognise that a university's greatest asset is its people. Accordingly, our investments in infrastructure and research are ultimately investments in the present and future generations of students, scholars and professionals who will serve our nation and the wider world.

Ladies and gentlemen, and my dear graduands, as I conclude, I ask you to remember three things as you leave this University.

Remember your parents and guardians, whose sacrifices helped bring you to this day.

Remember this University, which has equipped you with knowledge, discipline and the values required to make a difference.

And above all, remember Almighty God, who has sustained you and brought you safely to this important milestone.

We have given you knowledge. We have encouraged you to embrace character. We have entrusted you with the discipline and values for which UNILORIN is known.

Now, go out into the world and provide solutions.

Wherever your certificates take you, may favour go before you. May wisdom guide your decisions, courage strengthen your resolve, and integrity distinguish your character.

May you find opportunities to excel, the humility to keep learning and the compassion to serve others.

On behalf of the Governing Council, Senate and Management of the University of Ilorin, I formally congratulate all our graduands on this remarkable achievement.

Parents and guardians, congratulations. Members of staff, thank you for your dedication. Distinguished guests, thank you for honouring us with your presence.

And to our dear graduands, as you step into the next chapter of your lives, carry this message with you: **LET THIS INVESTMENT COUNT!**

I thank you all.