

OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



UG'S CELEBRATION OF THE DAY OF SCIENTIFIC RENAISSANCE OF AFRICA (DSRA)

THEME:

“GHANA ASKS: LEGON ANSWERS”

ADDRESS BY:

**PROFESSOR NANA ABA APPIAH AMFO
VICE - CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 2022
CEDI CONFERENCE CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

Pro Vice-Chancellors,

Registrar,

Provosts,

Deans, Directors, Heads of Department,

Our Distinguished panel composed of eminent personalities for
this all-important discussion,

Faculty, Staff and Members of Convocation,

Past and Present Senior Officers of the University,

Alumni and Students,

The Media,

Invited Guests,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good afternoon to you all and a warm welcome to this programme,
a high-level panel discussion to mark the climax of activities held
in commemoration of the Day of Scientific Renaissance of Africa
(DSRA). DSRA is celebrated on June 30, each year to remind
African governments and its people of the critical roles played by

Science and Technology in national development. The celebration is also held in recognition of the continent's significant contribution to the rise and development of modern-day Science and Technology.

Upon recommendations from the University of Ghana Pursuit of Excellence Taskforce (UG-POET), (a team constituted to develop key strategies in the realization of the university's research and visibility agenda, and chaired by Professor Chris Gordon), this year, for the first time, the University of Ghana is actively participating in the celebrations. The simple but very important reason for this celebration is to serve as a strategy to drive the overall growth of the University as a world-class research-intensive university and to draw attention to the scholarly works, innovations and development championed by members of the community including our hardworking faculty and students. This also reverberate my first KSO as Vice-Chancellor to reinvigorate impactful research in the (applied) sciences and humanities as well as the fifth KSO which is to increase UG's visibility.

Being the inaugural edition of these celebrations at the University of Ghana, I took a personal interest and followed most of the

proceedings of DSRA organized by the various Colleges; and I must admit that I was impressed at the level of participation, diversity of programmes, events and research outputs showcased. I use this opportunity to commend Prof. Felix A. Asante, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Innovation and Development), for his oversight responsibility as well as Professor George Obeng Adjei, Director of ORID who doubled as Chair for the university-wide implementation committee and your team, together with the Committees who superintended the various activities at the college level. I commend my Provosts for leading the activities in the Colleges. Let me use this opportunity to declare that this was not intended as a one-time event and that by this year's impressive celebration we have declared June as the UG Research month. We will continue to celebrate DSRA as an annual event.

In spite of what we have all seen here at UG this past month, there is more work to be done and I entreat Provosts to sustain the momentum and drive this initiative for many more years to come as a strategic tool to promote the attainment of the University's vision of becoming world-class research-intensive university.

To ensure that the celebration reflects the depth and diversity of research and innovation emanating from the University, each College was tasked to host a series of activities that showcases the contribution of its' constituents to the global advancement of knowledge. These college-led activities organized by Departments, Schools, Institutes and Centres included Public Lectures, Exhibition of Scholarly Works, Roundtable Discussions, Seminars/Webinars, Artistic Performances, Workshops on Scientific Writing, Open Day, Research Fair, Panel Discussions and media interactions. The last one I noticed was a radio discussion on selected health issues in Ghana.

As I indicated during the climax of the College of Humanities celebrations on Monday, in our quest to become a world-class research-intensive University, we do not simply seek to champion innovative research work published in top-tier journals but more importantly, we seek to positively impact society, through offering suggestions for problem solving, providing scientific basis for decision making, and more effective and efficient policy alternatives for reforms and development of our nation and the continent.

Under my leadership as Vice-Chancellor, a number of measures are being rolled out to bridge the gap between researchers, policy makers and (if you like) the ordinary people. Through the Office of Research, Innovation and Development and the Institute of Applied Science and Technology, the University has created a platform to connect researchers and inventors to industries, agencies, organization and even individuals who need those services.

An online portal, UG Tech Online has been developed to serve as a conduit for this purpose. The Portal showcases the economic, social, environmental and cultural impact of the University's research on businesses and the society. It also provides an opportunity for the University to mobilise resources to scale up technologies developed by researchers to facilitate technology transfer and or commercialization.

Last Monday, the University collaborated with The Conversation Africa to offer training on how to write articles based on scientific research for lay audiences. This is intended to help our researches

to publicize our research non-scientific ways and to reach a larger non-technical audience, and hopefully the people who matter when it comes to research uptake. I will continue to drive the aspirations of the University through these and other initiatives. Remember, two key words underlying my leadership are technology and humanism. We want to use diverse means to bring our research closer to the people who matter, as we “create a sense of ownership and commitment among students, faculty, staff and alumni, to promote creativity and innovation” (VC’s sixth KSO).

The theme for the DSRA celebration is “*Ghana Asks: Legon Answers*” with specific focus on the challenge of managing plastics. We are privileged to have accomplished academics and industry players as discussants for this very important topic of managing plastics. The panel of experts with rich and diverse background include Professor Ivan Addae Mensah, Emeritus Professor of Chemistry, and former Vice-Chancellor; Professor Agyeman-Badu Akosa, Professor of Pathology, UG and former Director General, Ghana Health Service; Professor Kofi Sefa-Dedeh, Emeritus Professor of Food Technology Engineering, and former Dean, School of Engineering Sciences; and Dr. Fatima

Denton, Director of the United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA). They will bring to the discussion in-depth knowledge on this subject and examine the impact of plastics from multiple perspectives as well as the challenges and opportunities relating to its management.

I am very excited to for the opportunity to Chair the Panel Discussion today and I am confident that the month-long celebration of the Day of Scientific Renaissance of Africa by UG and its stakeholders, has paved an innovative pathway for the recognition of UG's world-class researchers embodied in research, technology developments and knowledge production generally.

Once again, I welcome you all and wish us fruitful deliberations intended to sharpen our scientific discourse and propel national development as we work towards the sustainable development goals.

Thank you for your attention.

Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo

Vice-Chancellor

30th June, 2022