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SPEECH BY PROFESSOR PETER DONKOR, PROVOST, COLLEGE OF
HEALTH SCIENCES AT THE 17th OATH SWEARING AND
INDUCTION CEREMONY OF THE KNUST SCHOOL OF MEDICAL
SCIENCES, KUMASI, 4th SEPTEMBER, 2010

The Honourable Minister of Health, Dr Benjamin Kunbuor
Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Asantehene and Chancellor of KNUST
Vice-Chancellor, Professor Kwasi Kwafo Adarkwa
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Professor William Otoo Ellis
Registrar,
Provosts,
Chairman and Members of the Medical and Dental Council,
Chief Executive, Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital,
Distinguished Motivational Speaker, Dr Ebenezer Appiah-Denkyira
Dean of the School of Medical Sciences, Professor Kwabena Antwi Danso,
Deans and Directors,
Vice Dean and Chairman of Organizing Committee, Professor Yaw Adu-
Sarkodie,
Heads of Department, Senior Members, Senior and Junior Staff,
Parents, Guardians, Distinguished Invited Guests,
Graduands,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the College of Health Sciences, I welcome you all to this 17th Oath Swearing and Induction ceremony for new medical graduates of the School of Medical Sciences, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.

We are here to witness our new medical graduates take an oath in the presence of their teachers, guardians, family and the general public to uphold the tenets of their chosen profession, as well as be inducted into the noble profession of medicine by the Medical and Dental Council.

This occasion marks the culmination of years of hard work and single-minded pursuit of a dream by the graduands. For some this journey has

been characterised by long sleepless nights, endless examinations, non-existent social life, panic attacks, depression, emotional upheavals, suicidal thoughts, broken hearts, and broken relationships. In spite of all these impediments our young colleagues have achieved their ultimate dream of becoming doctors.

They entered medical school with the best grades and worked hard to earn their degree. From this day society will hold them up above all others and will expect them to be skilled, informed and up-to-date. The utmost in professionalism will be expected of them at all times and they will neither be judged by their entry grades into medical school nor by the number of prizes they will collect today but rather by how effectively they relieve their patients of their pain and suffering. They will be expected to be ethical in all their dealings.

In Ghana it is estimated that there is only one doctor per 17,700 citizens - the majority of whom practice in Accra and Kumasi. You have to remember that right now there are only two Ghanaian doctors at the Wa Regional Hospital. Many other places are crying for doctors. The fight against HIV/AIDS, infant mortality, and maternal mortality cannot be won unless we have skilled health personnel in the lead.

The College of Health Sciences, the School of Medical Sciences in collaboration with the Ministry of Health have plans to extend the training of medical and other health science students to district hospitals outside our traditional teaching hospital. This will not only increase the facilities available for clinical training and facilitate the expansion of intake but will also bring our students and specialist services closer to the community. The collaboration of the private sector in providing suitable affordable accommodation for our students and lecturers in these communities is needed.

As doctors it would be helpful for you to learn about other sectors of society, about the governance structure of the nation and the institutions that you will find yourselves in. This way you will understand better the challenges facing the national and local economy and would be less

inclined to embark on strike actions. Remember that you have the monopoly to heal the sick and you must not abuse that power. Being the only group with the skills to postpone death and prevent the premature loss of life you must learn to place the needs of your patients ahead of your personal comfort.

Many years ago, a young SSS graduate who turned up for medical school interview at this university was asked why she wanted to be a doctor. She said it was because she loved acting, and doctors were among the best actors, as in her view, they had perfected the art of covering up their personal pain and suffering from their patients. Those of us on the interview panel were taken aback by that response which was unusual, but insightful and revealing. Many of us felt our cover had been blown.

That student, who obviously made a huge impression on me is either on the way to becoming a doctor or is already one. I haven't met her since that day but I am still hoping to do so. Should she happen to be among this group I would like to meet her and congratulate her personally. I do hope she fares a lot better than all the medical actors who attracted her to the profession! I also hope she resists the temptation to act, remains true to her feelings as a doctor and still manages to take good care of her patients. Caregivers also need to be cared for and need not always be perfect. I encourage all of you voting doctors to seek professional help when the going gets tough. Acting tough when you are crumbling will not help as only a healthy, balanced and happy doctor can give of his or her best to their patients.

I entreat you to be grateful to your Maker for bringing you this far. There are so many people out there that did not even get the opportunity to enter university so you must consider yourselves a privileged lot. Your achievement has been a result of the sacrifices of several people including your parents, guardians, teachers, and administrative staff of the university. They all deserve your appreciation.

When the opportunity arises offer yourselves up for leadership positions in order to be able to promote the interests of your profession and positively influence its future direction. Think about your alma mater and how you can contribute to make it better than you found it.

Enjoy life to the fullest. Share your joy with your loved ones and make an effort to rediscover all the people who you asked to put their lives on hold for you.

Vice Chancellor, Distinguished invited guests, as I welcome you to this oath swearing ceremony, I wish to respectfully ask that all of you join me in saying a big AYEKOO to the graduands. AYEKOO!!!
Thank you.

Professor Peter Donkor
Provost, College of Health Sciences

SPEECH BY PROFESSOR KWABENA ANTWI DANSO,
DEAN, KNUST SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES,
AT THE 17TH OATH SWEARING CEREMONY,
SATURDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER, 2010. AT THE GREAT HALL KNUST

SALUTATION

Chancellor of the KNUST (or his representative)

Chairman of the University Council

Honourable Minister of Health

Vice-Chancellor, KNUST

Pro Vice-Chancellor

Registrar

Chairman, Ghana Medical and Dental Council

Motivational Speaker: Dr Ebenezer Appiah-Denkyira

Director General, Ghana Health Services

President, GCPS

Provosts of Colleges, KNUST

Director of Works, KNUST

Director of Health Services, KNUST

Deans of Sister Medical Schools here present: UGMS Accra, SMS UCC,
SMHS UDS.

Deans of Schools and Faculties, KNUST

Heads of Departments

Members of Convocation

Parents and Guardians

Graduating Doctors

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

All Other Protocols Observed

It is my pleasure to also welcome you to the 17th Oath Swearing Ceremony of the School of Medical Sciences and the Induction Ceremony of the Ghana Medical and Dental Council. Every year, the School organizes this ceremony to swear-in newly graduated medical doctors after successful completion of six years of medical training at KNUST.

It is my utmost joy to inform you that KNUST is adding 115 doctors to the pool of doctors in the country. As usual, these are another crop of highly trained young women and men comprising 58 females and 57

males. We have set a record today because this is the first time that the female to male ratio of doctors produced is in favour of the females.

Hopefully they will all stay and work to support health care delivery in Ghana and I sincerely hope that they will all promise to work in Ghana, at least for some years. This batch of doctors brings to one thousand five hundred and thirteen (1,513), the number of doctors so far produced from KNUST since the first batch graduated in 1982.

These young men and women deserve to be congratulated and I say to them AYEKOO. They have all toiled, sweated, allowed themselves to be formed and informed to finally make the mark today. From now on they have the legal and moral right to use the title 'Doctor'. They have indeed brought honour and smiles to themselves, their parents, guardians, loved ones, lecturers, the Medical School, the University and the entire nation.

What we are witnessing today would not have been possible without the support of all these stakeholders. I wish to thank them all at this stage. I wish also to congratulate the lecturers, the senior and junior staff of the School and University for working tirelessly against several challenges towards the achievement of this feat and all other objectives of the School. May the Good Lord bless and replenish us all abundantly.

Established some 35 years ago, the School of Medical Sciences has worked steadily and progressively to create a niche for herself. We are highly recognized and subscribed across the nation and the continent. In the just ended admission process for the 2010/2011 academic year, the School could only admit some 200 students out of the several hundreds of applicants. These applicants were mainly senior high school graduates but there were also a good number of graduate applicants. Overall, the response rate for those offered admission was 100%.

To address this increasing demand on admissions, the School, with the support of the University and College of Health Sciences, is working on several initiatives to build capacity towards expanded undergraduate intake as well as the introduction of new postgraduate programmes.

For instance, this year we are establishing a clinical skills laboratory at KATH to equip students with basic clinical skills so as to achieve a smooth

movement onto working on patients. We are also working towards a network of teaching sites involving suitable district hospitals for the purpose of expanding resources for clinical training. At the basic sciences level, the building housing the Department of Clinical Microbiology is to be expanded vertically to create larger and modern teaching laboratories.

By way of new programmes and in collaboration with the School of Graduate Studies, two new programmes have been started: MSc in Disability and Rehabilitation and MPhil in Anatomy and Cell Biology.

During the year the School made aggressive efforts to improve the staffing situation and new lecturers were employed. It is envisaged that other applications now being processed would continue to receive favourable consideration by the University's Appointments and Promotions Committee to further improve on the staffing situation.

Last year, I made a public appeal for support in cash or kind from all well-meaning sources to support our expansion agenda. I appealed to government, district assemblies, churches, mosques, corporate bodies, individuals, parents, guardians and indeed our alumni. It is gratifying to note that we had some response. I wish at this point to acknowledge Donyma Steel Company Ltd. of Kumasi for the support to the School in the 2009/10 academic year. Meanwhile the appeal is still on and the School shall be contacting identified organizations and individuals for this purpose.

Finally and before I leave the podium, let me say a word or two to you newly qualified doctors.

Your career journey into the medical profession starts after you have sworn your oath and been inducted into the profession. The totality of your output now as a medical practitioner, or whatever you choose to do in the profession, is going to be watched, assessed and judged by patients and non-patients alike. Whether you are described as a good or bad doctor will depend on your work and more importantly your attitude to work and the nature of interactions you have with people.

to you to stay away from the notion these days that your first working years should make you rich or famous. Rather strive for continued learning and professional development, personal mastery, advancement of your general knowledge and skills outside the medical profession, spiritual development and selfless service to your country, society and humanity. Your rewards will surely follow as the night follows the day.

You must always present yourself in readiness to create new resources rather than grab and utilize what comes your way. Remember, there will be plenty of opportunities for you to make all these happen wherever you find yourself. Also remember your alma mater, the School of Medical Sciences, and begin to contribute to her development for those behind you and generations yet unborn. By all means, and for those of you Ghanaians, do not abandon the shores of Ghana. Follow these pieces of advice and you will never regret! I wish you all great and prosperous careers! !

And to all of you gathered here, I say thank you for being part of this memorable occasion. May God bless all of us.

Professor Kwabena Antwi Danso
Dean, School of Medical Sciences

ADDRESS BY DR. K.O. ADADEY, CHAIRMAN, MEDICAL AND
DENTAL COUNCIL ON THE OCCASION OF SWEARING IN
CEREMONY OF NEWLY QUALIFIED DOCTORS OF THE KWAME
NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES ON SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 04, 2010

SALUTATION

I cannot start my address without first joining the many, parents, relatives, friends, teachers, admirers and many more well wishes to wish our young ladies and gentlemen who by dint of hard work, sacrifices, commitment and dedication have reached this landmark in their lives. This is on behalf of the Council and on my own behalf. So to you gallant sons and daughters of motherland Ghana we say AYEEKOO! Through the highly competitive nature of your selection into the course, through the tedious, rigorous and uncompromising nature of the training, your knowledge, no doubt has been tested to be adequate for the job ahead and the council is satisfied.

Now young colleagues, your professional life is about to begin. That is your Housemanship Training and this is where I want to sound a word of caution. This is a very critical period in your career and which must be taken very seriously. If you acquire bad habits at this stage it will follow you all the days of your life. You must consider this stage still as part of your training. You must not cut corners. Your dedication and commitment to duty and being a disciplined doctor must start from now.

For your benefit the Housemanship training programme has undergone a comprehensive review, all to improve upon it to make it more attractive and enjoyable. The Council is very much aware of what some House Officers go through in getting places to do the Housemanship. Not only you but also the health facilities are also having headaches in either not getting enough or the vacancies available are over-subscribed. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, as the supervising Ministry, a unit is being set up in the Council to take complete charge of placement of all House Officers over the two year period of the Housemanship. Of course all agencies whose facilities are being used for Housemanship Training will have equal say in the distribution. What this system will

correct is the agony House Officers go through in getting places, in particular, in moving from one rotation to the other. This means that right from the onset all your four rotations would have been mapped out for you to avoid the frustrations in searching for your next location.

I can imagine what went through your mind when you saw your name amongst the pass list. Did it occur to you immediately that overnight you have been catapulted into one of the most highly respected professions which should exude radiance, probity, honesty, accountability and humility?. Or maybe you are still in the dreamland. You have not as yet rediscovered yourself. If so then let this ceremony wake you up to the clarion call of the good people of this country.

Fellow young colleagues, the sky is the limit if you avail yourself of all the opportunities open to you and hold yourself in readiness to the challenges ahead. The Ethics Seminar that you were treated to was for a good purpose. It was to set the tone for the life long journey of a good medical and dental practice that you are embarking upon. All over the world it is estimated that only about 10% of all complaints lodged at respective medical and dental regulatory bodies stem from professional incompetence. This implies that the professional training is largely good. The rest of 90% are due to factors grouped under 'Infamous Act' including dereliction of duty, poor or complete lack of communication skills, dishonesty, cutting corners, sheer rudeness, unjustifiable pride, negligence and lust for material gains, display of no passion or unacceptable behavior towards colleagues and clients and total disregard of the down trodden.

How do you then become a successful practitioner? The weapon is your patient or client. In all dispensations, all papers and documents touching on best practices in the profession never fails to stress this point. Manage your client with all the knowledge and skills at your disposal, with great passion, with tender care, paying attention to detail under the circumstances and I promise you, you would have made it. This is because it is your clients who are going to make or unmake you. If you handle them with the care outlined above, they themselves will do all the Public Relations (PR) for you and what is more satisfying than to hear good and truthful things about yourself whilst alive. Fortunately, during the seminar you were introduced to sources of information to

help you to avoid being branded 'there goes the bad doctor'. Let me also emphasise that in this democratic dispensation the individual and specifically patients know where they stand in terms of their expectations from doctors. We are also very much aware of affirmative action groups and agencies. All these, put together, put a lot of responsibilities on us to be more wary, more accountable and all the time be on our toes. Nothing should be taken for granted. Whatever we do, fellow colleagues, let us do it in good faith, be evidence based and should be able to defend ourselves anywhere and any day.

Dear young colleagues, these things are not being emphasized to confuse or threaten you. Not at all. All stakeholders also have their respective roles to play to enhance your performance. For instance your employers must provide you with the minimum standards of facilities and resources to work with. The patients' responsibilities have also been indicated in the same document of the Patient's Charter. The Council through its mandate as was explained to you is all out to 'Guide the Practitioner' an assignment the Council has also stepped up its advocacy role to encourage other stakeholders to do their best to help you to succeed. I cannot end without mentioning the issue of Continuous Professional Development. It is important that you get yourself acquainted to its important role in keeping you up to date.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Honorable Ministers, Members of Council of State, Deans, Heads of Departments. Teaching and non-Teaching Staff of the School of Medical Sciences, the newly qualified young medical and dental practitioners it is my greatest pleasure and that of the Council to wish these young ones the best of luck and to practice their profession ethically so that in the next 20-30 years to come, they will stand tall and say yes we have made it.

Thank you for your attention.

Dr. K.O. Adadey
Chairman, Medical and Dental Council

SPEECH DELIVERED BY PROFESSOR KWASI KWAFO ADARKWA,
VICE-CHANCELLOR OF KNUST AT THE 17TH OATH SWEARING
CEREMONY OF THE SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES. COLLEGE,
OF HEALTH SCIENCES, KNUST ON SATURDAY, 4TH SEPTEMBER
2010 AT 10: 00AM IN THE GREAT HALL

Chancellor of the University or his Representative
Chairman and Members of the Medical and Dental Council
Honourable Minister of Health
Director of the Ghana Health Services
Regional Director of Health Services
Metropolitan Director of Health Services Pro
Vice-Chancellor
Registrar
Provosts
Chief Executive Officer of the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital
Dean of the School of Medical Sciences and other Deans
Heads of Department
Senior Members
Senior and Junior Staff
Parents
Newly Qualified Doctors
Distinguished Invited Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasure and honour to be offered the opportunity to say a word at the 17th Oath Swearing ceremony of the School of Medical Sciences. The 17th Oath Swearing ceremony presents a solemn but joyous occasion for our graduating medical doctors to swear their professional oath and, thus, become properly inducted into the medical profession as qualified medical doctors by the Ghana Medical and Dental Council.

I join other speakers to extend a hearty welcome to all participants of this morning's function, especially, the Chairman and Members of the Ghana Medical and Dental Council for their invaluable support and contribution. We have always been happy and ready to incorporate all

your suggestions and make good, the various queries raised during your periodic institutional visits. I also say a special welcome to our compatriots from the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) who have over the years, availed to us, the clinical facilities to facilitate the clinical training of our students.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, as I intimated earlier in my address, we have gathered here this morning to witness the 17th Oath Swearing ceremony of our School of Medical Sciences, at the College of Health Sciences. As you may be aware, the world over, it has always been a tradition that, even though all other graduates are deemed to have fully completed their programme of study after their graduation ceremonies, students of the medical profession have had to be specially sworn in as doctors by swearing what is popularly known as the "Hippocratic Oath", primarily on account of the sensitive nature of their profession. It is as important now as it has ever been for our Doctors to have an agreed statement of ethical principles.

From the above scenario, distinguished ladies and gentlemen it is imperative that, after the completion of their programme of study. Doctors need such a statement to make a public commitment to the professional responsibilities they are assuming. Thereafter, these principles should provide guidance in the increasingly difficult, ethical, life and death decisions they will make throughout their professional lives. It is, therefore, important for all of you newly qualified Doctors soon to be properly inducted to go through this ceremony to appreciate what society expects from you as well as have a full appreciation of all the ethical and moral dimensions of your professional practice.

In this respect, I am proud to announce that this morning's ceremony will see to the ushering of 115 Junior Doctors into the medical profession and I am equally happy to announce that, this figure is higher than last year's figure by 17. The graduating class is made up of 57 male doctors and 58 female doctors and this shows that our female compatriots are doing quite well in the sciences. Thus far, the School has trained a total of 1,532 doctors, majority of whom are found contributing their quota to

the nation's health care needs across the length and breadth of the country.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, with the ever increasing demand for many more applicants to be offered the opportunity into our Medical School and in view of our constraining resources, stakeholders have been exploring several initiatives to better position the University to respond appropriately to this challenge. Some of such initiatives have included the expansion of our infrastructure base such as the construction of a Clinical Students Hostel at KATH, construction of a complex for the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences and the procurement of a consignment of facilities comprising LCD projectors, PA systems, SMART Boards, human anatomic demonstration models and some laboratory equipment. In addition, a number of microscopes that were broken down in the School's laboratories have been repaired for effective laboratory work. The School is also working towards establishing a Clinical Skills and simulation Laboratory in the premises of the Students Hostel at KATH to teach students basic clinical skills as a means to improve overall clinical training.

In this respect, I am happy to inform you that, approval has been given for the School of Medical Sciences to run a Parallel BSc (Human Biology)/MB ChB programmes of study, effective this academic year. With the current intake of applicants pegged at not more than 150 students, it is desirable to consider a number of students for the parallel programmes. Following this initiative, it is expected that the School would be in a better position to admit more people to be trained as Medical Doctors and this way, our desire to provide greater access to medical education in Ghana would become more meaningful and more purposeful. In a related development, the School is seriously exploring the use of some of the District Hospitals in the Ashanti Region through an initiative called the "Network of Teaching Sites Programme". This will ease the congestion of clinical teaching at KATH, strengthen our philosophy of community oriented training and enhance service delivery at the participating District Hospitals. Thus far, contacts have already been made with some of the District Hospitals towards the realisation of this strategy.

I would at this juncture want to congratulate our newly trained Doctors for blazing the trail to achieve success today. Would you all be upstanding for a round of applause thank you and please resume your seats. I would also want to thank some individuals and corporate organisations for their immense contribution towards the success we are all witnessing this morning. I would like to make special mention of your parents and guardians who sacrificed to sponsor your education. I equally appreciate the tireless efforts of your lecturers and would all lecturers be upstanding for a round of applause thank you and please resume your seats. Agencies such as the "rest African College of Surgeons, KATH, the Ghana Health Service, the Ministry of health, the Food and Drugs Board, the Ghana Nurses and Midwives Council, the Medical and Dental Council of Ghana, and the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund), among others are all appreciated for their immense contribution to the success story we are witnessing this morning.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I would want to say a word to our newly qualified Doctors. It is obvious that being a health worker today is a very tall order, given that human health and its related issues have undergone tremendous changes. As you are fully aware, several disease conditions which were formerly treated with the application of anti-biotics are now not manageable as a result of the building of resistances. Therefore, as scientists, you need to be cautiously innovative and continually search for knowledge. You may not need to reinvent the wheels; several new orders and practices are readily available by the click of a button. Search for improved and better ways of managing health for the betterment of your clients.

Finally, please be guided by a true sense of brotherliness, sense of nationhood and help build mother Ghana to the state we can all be very proud of. On this note, I wish you all God's blessings in your future practice as healthcare givers.

Thank you.

Professor Kwasi Kwafo Adarkwa
Vice-Chancellor