

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY PROF. W. O. ELLIS, VICE-CHANCELLOR OF KNUST
AS CHAIRMAN TO THE 51ST HALL WEEK OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF QUEEN
ELIZABETH II HALL ON THURSDAY, 10TH MARCH, 2011 AT 2.00PM AT
NEWLY CONSTRUCTED TENNIS COURT OF THE HALL ON THE THEME
“REACHING OUT TO THE DEPRIVED; A SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL”**

Provosts

Deans and Directors

The Reviewing Officer

Hall Masters/Warden

Senior Tutors

Hall Executive

JCR Executive

Members of Queen Elisabeth II Hall

Invited Guests

Cadets

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I am very happy to share in the joy of this afternoon’s ceremony. As you may know, during this time of the year, there are a lot of programmes of this nature and I have had the opportunity to attend several of such programmes. I commend the Acting Hall Master and his corps of administrators for maintaining a conducive atmosphere in the Hall for sound academic work.

The theme for your official launch makes interesting reflection – “reaching out to the deprived; a social responsibility for all”. By the socio-economic structure of our economy and social structure, we more often than not leave a lot of people deprived of so many basic amenities for human survival and dignity. In our context, we can say that deprived people are those without the normal benefits of adequate food, housing (shelter) and health care, among others.

The consequences of deprivation in any form in any society results in social vices such as terrorism, crime such as armed robbery, disrespect, hatred, abuse, migration, immorality and treachery among others. As a result of these social problems, society has grappled with a lot of insurmountable problems, some of which have implications for national security, social order and tranquillity and society spends a lot of resources in an attempt to ameliorate the negative consequences of these social vices and integrate the deprived into mainstream society.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, human beings as social beings have a responsibility towards one another in our attempt to attain social justice and harmony. This is, indeed, the responsibility of all and as students and a university, we have a responsibility to train people to acquire skills to help the deprived earn a decent living for themselves. Again, we need to ensure that there is equitable distribution of our natural resources so that no part of our country and its members will remain deprived. As students, you can also show some love to friends who are less endowed by sharing in their burden, counselling them and offering support in whatever form possible.

The KNUST, has over the years, remained very responsive to the needs and aspirations of our society. In this respect, convocation members are required to offer service to the community as part of their promotion criteria. In order for the University as a whole to contribute to this aspiration, we are looking at the situation where we would annually adopt one deprived community, assess their basic needs, seek ways to help solve their developmental bottlenecks in collaboration with the relevant departments of the University such as the Department of Planning, Department of Civil Engineering, Department of Building Technology, Department of Geomatic Engineering and monitor the progress of the programme over a year or two. This is what I term as the *National Impact Programme (NIP) and the Community Impact*

Programme (CIP) to facilitate better interactions between the University and society at large in addressing their challenges.

I am aware of the several initiatives student bodies put together during vacations to help our society. A committee has been set up to address this issue and I hope that when the time comes, all student groups will be brought on board to ensure maximum impact.

As Karl Marx once said, “Society does not consist of individuals but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand”. We, as Africans, have known this fact since time immemorial and we must all be seen to be contributing our quota towards the liberation of the deprived in our society.

With these brief comments, I accept to chair this function. Thank you.