

**VALEDICTORY SPEECH DELIVERED BY JOSHUA UWEM ESSIEN
(19/57BC/01009) AT THE COMBINED 10TH & 11TH CONVOCATION
CEREMONY (2021/2022 & 2022/2023) OF KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY,
MALETE**

His Excellency, The Executive Governor of Kwara State;

Chancellor,

Acting Vice Chancellor,

Registrar and other Principal Officers of the University;

Honourable members of the University Senate;

Deans of Faculties;

Professors;

Heads of Departments;

Directors of Centers;

Members of Academic and Non-Teaching Staff;

The dignified Students of our great University.

Good day to you all.

Today marks the official conclusion of the academic journey of the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 graduating classes. For us the graduating students, we are elated about the successful end of this interesting, but challenging journey. Therefore, I feel honoured to stand before you as the valedictorian among many other brilliant graduands of this prestigious University in the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 graduating classes.

As my dream of becoming a graduate is finally actualized today, I express my deepest gratitude to God, the Almighty, for His guidance and blessings throughout my academic journey. Without His divine grace, I could not have been standing here before you today as a valedictorian.

As a State-owned University, the support of the Kwara State Government to this great University is indispensable. Therefore, I express my most sincere gratitude to the Executive Governor of Kwara State for his unrelenting support to this University.

Kwara State University has brought out the best in me and my fellow graduands. Hence, our inestimable gratitude goes to our esteemed Acting Vice Chancellor, Professor Shaykh Luqman Jimoh, for his exceptional leadership and unwavering commitment to academic excellence. Your vision and dedication have transformed our institution into a beacon of learning, fostering an environment, where students can thrive and attain their full potential. I also express a profound gratitude to the Registrar, the Bursar and the University Librarian, whose administrative prowess has contributed invaluable to distinguishing Kwara State University as a pacesetter University.

I thank all the academic and non-teaching staff of our dear University, who have contributed invaluable to our success story. I want to specially thank the Dean, Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences, and all the academic and no-teaching staff of the Department of Biochemistry. You are the best, out of whom the best has emerged! It is a privilege for me to have been trained by you.

The strong and unfailing support of my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Essien, made it possible for me to stand here before you today. So, I sincerely thank my parents for nurturing and raising me in the best way a child should be raised. I also thank all other parents seated here today for deeming it fit to train their children. Our dear parents, you have laid the best legacy by training us. By God's grace, you shall reap the benefits of this worthwhile investment.

The late Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon, which you can use to change the world." Today, we stand on the threshold of a remarkable milestone, the culmination of years of dedication, perseverance, and unwavering pursuit of knowledge. We, the graduating classes of 2021/2022 and 2022/2023, proudly gather here, not just as recipients of degrees, but as architects of our own futures, ready to embark on the transformative journey that lies ahead of us.

Our journey at Kwara State University has been a tapestry woven with the threads of resilience, innovation, and a shared passion for learning. Some say that school is a scam, but it is not. It is a treasure trove of wisdom, a sanctuary of knowledge, and a gateway to infinite possibilities. From

bonding with like-minded intellectuals and learning from scholars, who have walked the same path, to emerging with innovative skills and an aura of integrity, school is not a scam.

Christopher Columbus once said, "The world is your oyster; go out there and make it your own". So, for us the graduating students, as we step into the world that awaits us, let us maintain the high moral standards Kwara State University has inculcated in us. We must not relent in our drive to innovation, ensuring an unwavering commitment to making a positive impact to the world. Let us be the agents of change, the problem solvers, and the innovators that our society desperately needs.

I congratulate the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 graduating classes! As we aim for the stars, I pray God to direct our paths, enabling us to record more resounding successes in our future endeavours.

To our successors (the soon-to-be-graduating students) in this world-class University, keep learning with determination, and don't flinch. You are in the best hands; I am sure you shall also succeed. Best wishes!

To all our friends and visitors, who grace this epoch-making academic event today, thank you for sharing in our joy. As you return to your various destinations, may God grant you a safe journey.

God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria; God bless Kwara State; God bless Kwara State University; God bless you all.

Thank you!

Joshua Uwem ESSIEN
19/57BC/01009