

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE CHANCELLOR, HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, ALHAJI (DR) MUHAMMADU ABALI IBN MUHAMMADU IDRIS CFR, THE EMIR OF FIKA AND CHAIRMAN, YOBE STATE COUNCIL OF CHIEFS AND EMIRS AT THE 6 AND 7" COMBINED CONVOCATION CEREMONY OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LOKOJA ON SATURDAY, 21 OCTOBER, 2023

PROTOCOL

It is with a deep sense of humility and total submission to the will of the Almighty Allah that we welcome you all on behalf of the University Management to another epoch-making occasion, the 6 and 7 Combined Convocation Ceremony taking place, today, Saturday, 21" October, 2023. We gladly welcome the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR. Your Excellency, the University continues to count on your support in her efforts to move the institution to greater heights. We salute the Minister of Education Professor Tahir Mamman and the Acting Executive Secretary of National Universities Commission, Professor Chris Mayaki, whom we always lean on for support at every given opportunity. We appreciate the supervisory and regulatory roles of the Federal Ministry of Education and National Universities Commission in ensuring the sustenance and maintenance of quality and standard that have culminated in the accreditation of all our programmes. We acknowledge the presence of His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Kogi State, Alhaji Yahaya Bello, Executive Governors present, Honourable Members of the House of Assembly or their Representatives, and all our invited Distinguished Guests. We thank you all for honouring us with your presence at this occasion marking the sixth and seventh Combined Convocation of Federal University Lokoja.

I am delighted, as the Chancellor of Federal University Lokoja, to welcome all our invited guests as we celebrate with Parents/Guardians, Friends of the University, Celebrants, the Governing Council, Senate, Management and members of Staff. Candidly, this occasion is often one of my most treasured happy moments, as we are often overwhelmed with great joy and fulfillment when our students graduate and are celebrated. It is always a rare occasion wrapped with great pleasure, we believe, not only for the graduating students but for me (the Chief Celebrant), parents and the entire University community to celebrate our products and future leaders. This is, indeed, a joyous moment for us all.

In retrospect, the last convocation in 2021 marked an indelible print in the ever-growing history of this third generation University with the first convocation of her Postgraduate Diploma graduates. Today, the College of Postgraduate Studies has grown tremendously in students, programmes and impact. The University is fast expanding, especially in her permanent campus here at Felele. In fact, the population of public spaces has increased. This is a testament of our commitment to you parents guardians and supporters that we keep our bargain to place this University in the bastions of colleges and knowledge, globally. As a confirmation, our global and national university rating has increased and it is still soaring. It is because of such hard work and commitment borne out of our passion for excellence, that has afforded us the platform to gather here and celebrate our graduates. In keeping with our mission to train future leaders, who will contribute to development through innovative ideas, the school has worked tirelessly to make sure that no academic year is lost. This is against the backdrop of industrial actions, Covid-19 and other global

challenges. In addition, the University has expanded its programmes to accommodate the confluence nature of the state and the surrounding neighbours. To this end, the university plays a pivotal role of standard and leadership at the confluence by providing a prototype for others to imitate, It is this successful vision and mission we are gathered here to celebrate and to further pledge our continued support.

Allowing you a little glimpse of our strength of hard work, I proudly inform you that the University Postgraduate School has transformed into a College and now houses an Institute of Legislative Studies and Governance. We also have an Institute of Education and our Remedial school has also given birth to a Diploma School. I believe our stakeholders can pat us on the back and also willingly walk more miles with us. These landmarks are visible to the students, both Undergraduates and Postgraduates here to celebrate the investment of their hard work. The drive behind this vision is to ensure that we build a world-class University in the confluence that will dissuade prospective applicants from travelling outside the country for further studies. Thus, we are solidly committed in our resolve to move Federal University Lokoja to the next level of physical outlook and academic developments.

It is in this respect that having graduated the first set of Postgraduate Diploma in 2021, the University stands tall before you to present today not only undergraduates but graduates of Postgraduate Diploma and Masters in various disciplines and even professional Postgraduates. We are happy that academic activities in the College of Postgraduate Studies earnestly reflect the visionary drive of the Vice Chancellor. Detailed giant strides of the University will be enumerated in the Vice-Chancellor's Speech. New undergraduate programmes have started with a higher increase in students' population and more proposals for the establishment of more Faculties and Departments have also been forwarded to the National Universities Commission. We expect Resource Verification to be conducted in order for approvals to be given. Without seeming ungrateful, we appreciate the National Universities Commission for their proactiveness in our last resource verification requests while looking forward to more in the seasons to come. We, by the grandeur of this august gathering, look forward to their support at all times.

Furthermore, I would like to urge staff and students to cooperate with Management in its determined effort to re-write the history of the University as one that its product would be globally competitive. You must, therefore, have a renewed sense of commitment and dedication to your work and studies. While the Management will continue, in the face of dwindling resources, to provide municipal services to staff and students, you must eschew violence, examination misconduct, cultism, and other nefarious activities. These anti-social behaviours and other bizarre tendencies bring ridicule and disrepute to our society, your families and place your lives at great risk.

Your Excellency, the Visitor, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, we sincerely felicitate the Honorary Doctorate degree awardees for their meritorious achievements during their lifetime. We are also proud of those awarded First-Class Honours Degrees. We congratulate the combined year sets graduates for their meritorious attainment and their parents and wish you success in your future endeavours. You have toiled to earn the first degree which would invariably serve as the cornerstone of what you decide to do after your National Service. Again, you have learnt a lot while in Federal University Lokoja, as your

education has not been restricted to your subject areas alone. Dear graduating students, as you are aware, white-collar jobs are far-fetched. We, therefore, urge you to explore the entrepreneurial field, which is the new order. That is why your training has been both diverse and versatile to prepare you for your next bold steps.

We send you all, the Undergraduates and Postgraduates convocation celebrants, out as the University ambassadors. Federal University Lokoja is now your Alma Mata! We, thus, encourage you to make history for her and write her in the sands of time. As Alumni of the University, we implore you to key into our vision of making the University a unique citadel of learning that would compete favourably with older universities worldwide. Having graduated from here, you are stakeholders and should be interested in the progress of your Alma Mata by giving your support in whatever little way you can. We shall be enthused to have you back in the system to impact on the University.

To this end, we congratulate the University Council, Senate, and Management on several fronts, especially their commitment to duty and the sacrifices made to ensure the rapid development of the University. My sincere gratitude goes to the organizers of this historic event-the Convocation Planning Committee whose dogged determination and sacrifice have made the Combined Convocation Ceremony a reality. Once again, we express profound appreciation to all our guests for the great honour accorded us with their esteemed presence at this milestone celebration.

Long live Federal University Lokoja!

Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria!!

Thank you for listening and God bless you all!!!